

Time for Food



Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits in a Global Perspective

Patricia Lysaght (ed.)

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Patricia Lysaght (editor)

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Foreword

The aim of the 18th Conference of the International Commission for Ethnological Food Research (SIEF), organised by the Department of Ethnology, Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland, was to focus on the theme of everyday food and meal habits from a variety of perspectives – regional, national, transnational, ethnic, ethical, and organic – on the basis that these standpoints reflect the interconnectedness of food production and food consumption today. The ethical and organic viewpoints are of particular interest because of the challenges they set for the principled management of world food systems and the global trade in food, in order to cope with a growing worldwide population. Many regulations concerning food are still enacted in national contexts, but transnationalism as a reality and as a process has also to be borne in mind when considering food policies, consumption trends, and meal habits.

An aspect of food culture of special interest to ethnologists and anthropologists is the transformation of food into dishes since regional and national contexts are then often to the fore. But multicultural and transnational trends also mean that we can now speak about dishes that have spread to many parts and cultures of the world; this is a dimension which also needs to be addressed by food scholars, something which was attempted in the course of the conference.

What is also new in today's situation is not that food is a commodity, but that food is a commodity which is being promoted by means of different motifs and symbols against a background of ongoing changes in food habits. Behind all of this lies a world system in which niche marketing of foodstuffs, with its knock-on effects on food consumption and lifestyles, is used when found to be economically effective. Generally speaking, then, nationally and internationally, food production and consumption are affected by agricultural policies, market strategies and conditions, and health questions regarding the provision of safe and healthy products. Our ethnological platform, on the other hand, is essentially concerned with food preparation and consumption trends against a backdrop of cultural dimensions and cultural messages. What consumers do, at individual and family levels, with their ideas about food as inherited habits, or as ways of creating new habits, is our concern. Food intake also has a social dimension, be it in the context of a family meal,

or of an individual eating in a fast-food restaurant in the presence of other anonymous consumers. Food also has deep community and communicative traits. A growing awareness of the various dimensions of food, several of which were addressed during the conference is also common to most lay people today – many of whom wish to promote certain ideas about food in terms of their own lifestyle preferences, and/or seek to find justifications for their food choices. The food discourses that are so common nowadays inevitably impact on the day-to-day food choices of many people.

But the meal is often also a celebration of the partakers – even in everyday food situations, as was apparent in papers presented at the conference. It can thus have deep identity dimensions, evident, for example, in ethnic and regional variants of food and meals. Indeed, such variants can also be subject to new, constructed meanings – for the promotion of regionalism, for instance. Thus the variety of theoretical approaches, as indicated above, which framed the conference theme and discourse, and which has informed this volume of proceedings, has served effectively to elucidate the many interrelated aspects of food as a multi-dimensional research field and as a rich storehouse of cultural meaning.

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Time for Food – Introduction

Patricia Lysaght

The 18th International Ethnological Food Research Conference, the theme of which was 'Time for Food. Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits', took place in Turku, Finland, 18 – 21 August 2010. Hosted by the Department of Ethnology, Åbo Akademi University, the conference attracted participants from across the Nordic world and elsewhere in Europe, north and south, as well as from Russia, the USA, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. A selection of the papers presented at the conference published in this volume is arranged in groups according to the main emphasis of each, though some overlapping between sections inevitably occurs. Included are four keynote lectures, focusing on such central issues in food culture studies as food ethics, ecology, identity, and lifestyle choices, delivered by scholars from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Norway, respectively.

Keynote Lectures

The question of ethics, while arising in many of the contributions, was specifically dealt with in two keynote lectures at the conference. Dr. Håkan Jönsson – a specialist in applied cultural analysis and a lecturer in this area in a new joint Master's programme organised by the ethnological departments of the universities of Lund and Copenhagen – has focused on some of the ethical issues, based to some extent on his own experience, which can arise in applied projects in food ethnology, and how these can possibly be resolved to the benefit of both food ethnology and the stakeholders concerned. Dr. Jönsson points out that the question of ethics in applied ethnology is a matter of growing significance in the Nordic area since doctoral students, including those specialising in food ethnology, are increasingly being funded by external private stakeholders, who presumably have, therefore, a vested interest in the outcome of their research. In addition, job opportunities for (food) ethnology graduates are to be found more and more in the private sector rather than in academia and the professional museum world – areas in which such graduates traditionally found employment. Thus, matters such as intellectual independence, and the viability of maintaining an outsider stance in potentially comprising circumstances – in food marketing situations, for example – rather than seeking a negotiated insider solution, are some of the issues discussed by Dr. Jönsson in his paper.

Dr. Christian Coff's paper, representing the second keynote lecture on the topic of ethics in the context of food culture, examines how food can be used to express ethical concerns and values and how food ethics can influence daily life – in terms of attitudes to food production and consumption, animal welfare, environmental sustainability, health, well-being, trade and quality systems, and so on. From a methodological point of view, Dr. Coff explores how semiotics can be deployed to analyse the role of food in ethical relationships in everyday life, pointing out that the meaning of food as sign can vary from the point of view of the suppliers and receivers of food, thus making food a subject of ethical discourse involving the potential for both dissent and agreement.

In her keynote lecture and paper Yrsa Lindqvist has examined how food issues are shaped by a variety of forces, how they in turn shape other aspects of life, and how they themselves can be reshaped in new contexts in modern times. In elucidating the cultural processes involved, against a background of Finnish food culture in the twentieth century, she utilises a historical perspective in proceeding from an era of subsistence food production, through industrialisation and urbanisation, to a modern-day consumer society focused to a considerable extent on lifestyle, but with a growing ethical, ecological, and identity awareness, which is concerned, not just with the health and well-being of the individual, but of the earth itself.

Focusing on regional innovation in the ecological food sector in Norway and based on case studies, Dr. Torger Gillebo, in both his keynote lecture and paper, has discussed how the concept of food identity could guide a commoditisation strategy in the the eco food sector, thus enabling it to become a key player in the regional/national food industry and, in the process, to safeguard the health, soil, and economy, of rural districts.

I

In looking at the role of food in multicultural and transnational contexts (Part I), the question of authenticity almost inevitably arises. In her paper in this volume, Nancy Yan examines how Chinese cuisine is challenged in terms of defining its authenticity in different cultural scenarios, and argues that perceptions of it, and attempts at defining it, are affected by its immediate and historical contexts. She points out that, as culture is fluid, ideas about cultural authenticity also shift and undergo reconfiguration in different contexts, and argues that the same applies to Chinese cuisine in different

local, national, transnational, and muticultural situations. She thus suggests that a more profitable approach to the concept of authenticity is to rethink the requirement of uniqueness in its definition and to recognise instead that it is dynamic, flexible and multiple in nature.

Drawing mainly on newspaper advertisements, Déirdre D'Auria charts the progress of Italian-style dishes towards becoming everyday choices in Irish kitchens in the course of the twentieth century. Imported initially to serve the taste of the titled and upper classes in Ireland, Italian ingredients were available in exclusive provisioning establishments, especially, but not exclusively, in the capital city, Dublin, from about the middle of the nineteenth century. Newspaper recipes would suggest that by the early twentieth century, pasta, rather than being a luxury food, was becoming a more accessible and economical option for the average Irish household, and its suggested modes of preparation and use indicate that it was being adapted to Irish cooking methods and dishes. From the mid-twentieth century, a new phase in Irish people's attitude to Italian food began, due initially to pilgrimage travel to Rome, especially after the Holy Year of 1950, and then, increasingly as a result of holiday travel, especially in recent decades. These factors, together with the opening of Italian restaurants in Ireland, and the influence of cookery schools and cookery books, has led to Italian-style cuisine becoming very popular in the Irish kitchen.

The immense national, transnational and cross-cultural popularity of the curry dish, Chicken Tikka Masala – apparently invented by a Bangladeshi chef in an Indian restaurant in Glasgow in the 1970s, when he improvised a 'gravy' for a customer's chicken dish, and now the most popular curry meal in the UK – has led Una A. Robertson to express surprise at the length of time which it took for specifically curried foods to enter the general culinary repertoire in Britain and become everyday meals in the UK. It becomes evident from her detailed survey of cookery books that there was no lack of recipes for curries and dishes prepared 'in the Indian way' from about the mid-eighteenth century onwards in the UK, largely arising from its colonial engagement in India. Yet it was not until 1926 that the first Indian restaurant opened in London. As the number of curry houses multiplied, however, especially from the 1960s, curry became an accessible and affordable dish outside the home. The promotion of the benefits of curry by TV programmes, cookery books and magazines from around the 1970s, and the ready availability of essential ingredients for a variety of curry dishes, resulted in curry becoming an everyday meal within the home also. Thus, curry can indeed be regarded as an everyday food in the UK today.

Professor Eszter Kisbán's paper deals with the revitalisation of an old Hungarian fatty breed of pig, the *mangalica*, in the 1990s, its changed role in Hungarian foodways, and its Spanish connection. The *mangalica*, which was formerly the main domestic breed of pig in Hungary, was nearly extinct by the 1970s, as it had given way to the lean 'white' pig which was raised specifically for its meat, and still remains the mainstay of pork production in Hungary today. Traditionally, the main virtue of the *mangalica* pig was considered to be its abundant thick fat, while nowadays, it is its meat which has come into focus. The revitalisation of the *mangalica* breed has had a transnational dimension. Arising from a Spanish-Hungarian joint project, it was discovered that *mangalica* ham could be successfully dry-cured in Spain, using Spanish technology and know-how, to yield *jamon mangalica*, thus sealing the fate of the breed for the better, as a niche market had opened for a quality product and farmers were encouraged to breed the animals. Thereafter, *mangalica* pigs have been raised and slaughtered in Hungary and the ham has been processed in Spain. However, nowadays, fresh *mangalica* meat from the carcass is no longer readily available for domestic use in Hungary, as was the case in former times, as producers sell directly to processors. It would also appear that *mangalica* meat accounts for only about a half of one per cent of average pork consumption per capita in Hungary today. As the fresh pork is in short supply, it is expensive, and it is regarded as a prestige food and a special delicacy – one that can only occasionally be found even in luxury Hungarian restaurants.

Professor William Lockwood's paper, based on primary field research, is concerned with the ethnic history of a type of frankfurter sandwich called a 'coney', named after the Brooklyn, New York, seaside resort, and served with a special coney sauce in restaurants called 'coney islands'. These restaurants are ubiquitous in the southeastern corner of the state of Michigan, but are also to be found throughout southern Michigan and to some extent elsewhere in the USA as well. Professor Lockwood details the roles played by American communities of European ethnic backgrounds, principally Greeks, Macedonians and Albanians – who often emigrated from the same home village or region of their respective motherlands as part of a more general process of chain migration – in the evolution of the coney and the restaurants in which it is served, from early twentieth century origins to the present day. A number of competing origin stories concerning the coney exist among Greeks in Detroit, and Macedonians in Flint and Jackson, Michigan state, with the various groups claiming the honours in this regard for themselves. A culture of secrecy surrounds the coney sauce served in the different coney

islands, and a well-defined coney eating-etiquette also exists. An authentic workingman's food in southeast Michigan, the coney is also appreciated by young and old, lay person and professional, rich and poor, despite its high calorie and cholesterol count in these days of health and well-being awareness, and it remains a cultural icon associated with special events and community pride in its regional settings to this day.

Dr. Yvonne Lockwood's contribution to this volume, concerning the changing Finnish-American coffee table, is part of a study in progress of coffee and coffee culture among Finnish Americans and Finnish nationals in the USA – a culture which draws on local, regional and class-related cultures of the homeland, Finland, as well as on mainstream American culture, and on the cultures of other ethnic and immigrant groups around them. The primary field research for the study has been carried out in the upper Midwest states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan, and e-mail research has been undertaken with Finns resident in Illinois, North Carolina, and Colorado, USA. As the coffee table has held a central place in traditional home-visiting events in Finnish America, it has well-recognised associated customs, rituals, performance etiquette, and respect and status connotations, for both host and guests. As an arena where both food and other aspects of culture intersect, the study of coffee-table culture among Finnish Americans is thus a useful barometer by which to measure aspects of stability and change in Finnish-American culture. Dr. Lockwood notes that while coffee and coffee-table culture among Finnish Americans was highly-structured in the twentieth century, it shows growing evidence nowadays of acculturation as coffee-table patterns display increasing indications of instability and change, with knock-on implications for concomitant traditions of visiting and hospitality among the Finnish-American group as a whole in the United States.

II

Moving on to deal with everyday meal habits in national, regional and local contexts (Part II), Professor Dr. Maria van Winter's paper, starting from a late medieval perspective, compares the daily meal patterns of two Low Country upper class households, one clerical and the other secular – the Benedictine monastery of St. James in Liège in 1388, and the court of Catherine of Kleves, Duchess of Guelders, at the Valkhof castle of Nimwegen, from 1457 to 1459, respectively. In the case of the Benedictine monastery, Professor van Winter deduces evidence of daily meal patterns from a Latin text containing dietary

advise, with medical implications, which can be dated to 1388, and which was provided by an older monk for a younger counterpart. With regard to the court of Catherine of Kleves, the evidence consists of the low-Dutch 1457-1459 kitchen accounts of Valkhof castle when the Duchess was in residence there. Bearing in mind that both households were still subject to the Catholic Church's prescriptions concerning fasting and abstinence, which would have affected the daily menus of both households, especially during Lent and the Ember Weeks and, in the monastic context, at other times of the year also, and that both had access to foreign produce and a variety of freshwater fish due to their situation on main water arteries, the Meuse and the Waal respectively, Professor van Winter concludes 'that the cuisine of both households conformed to the standards of the well-to-do classes of their age'. She also found that while fish, meat, fowl, eggs, butter and imported olive oil (for use as cooking oil during Lent and the Ember Weeks when butter and animal fat was not allowed) were on the menus of both households, vegetables, fruit and legumes played a much more important role in the monastic diet than was the case at the court of Catherine of Kleves. Professor van Winter also points to the clear link between food and health evident in the advice which the young monk got from his older colleague in 1388, noting that awareness of this connection is 'thus not an invention of the twentieth century'.

Commenting that regional eating habits have been a focus of scholarly attention in ethnological food studies for a considerable period of time, Professor Nils-Arvid Bringéus introduces the topic of regional drinking habits, specifically apple juice and apple cider, in the Swedish context. Dealing initially with apple juice, he refers to a range of traditional drinks consumed in different parts of Sweden – *svagdricka* (small beer) and *drickablandning*, a mixture of beer and milk, in Scania, *standebilla* in Gotland, a juniper drink especially in Småland, and a whey drink called *blanda* or *blanddricka* in parts of northern Sweden – and mentions that 'unfermented apple juice, called "must", was also part of this spectrum of beverages'. Drawing on mid-eighteenth century and early nineteenth-century accounts from southern Sweden, Professor Bringéus provides details of the preparation and seasonal context of an apple drink, made of wild or crab-apples cooked in water with a little added flour and milk, which gave it a gruel-like consistency. This was a summer beverage kept in a gruel tub in the kitchen and, as with another common beverage, small beer, any thirsty person was welcome to take a drink from it by means of a ladle kept ready for use. Professor Bringéus charts the progress of apple cultivation in Sweden in the

twentieth century noting that the commercial cultivation of apple trees, which began in the country at the turn of the twentieth century, had become widespread half a century later. The apple juice factory movement from the 1930s led to apple juice becoming a regional beverage in apple-growing districts and resulted in its playing an important role in Swedish popular housekeeping. Large-scale commercial apple-juice production enjoys major success in Sweden today, as the beverage is suited to the current emphasis on fruit and organically cultivated products for health and well-being. The attempt by apple producers to sell off their surplus apple-production for the manufacture of alcoholic cider took several decades to achieve, however, not least because of an adherence to temperance views. It was not until the 1990s that Systembolaget (the state organisation of retail shops for the sale of wines and spirits) began to import cider, and it was as recently as October 1992 that cider products were listed under their own heading in the Systembolaget price list. Of the nine brands marketed, two were Swedish (while four were British and three were French) and, in 1994, a Swedish pear cider was added to the list for the first time. Professor Bringéus points out that, unlike apple juice, which is an everyday beverage, cider appears to be more of a social beverage with hardly any connection to a particular season or holiday. Like wine, it is drunk at any time of year.

The provision of food for everyday meals in traditional Cypriot society is examined with regard to time by Professor Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou. She concentrates mainly on the last century of Ottoman rule (the late eighteenth century to the late nineteenth) on the island, and on the period of British rule from 1878 to 1960. She points out that every activity concerned with the production and preservation of foodstuffs in a traditional society required that a certain amount of time had to be devoted to it, and that it had to be undertaken at the right time of the year, in order to bring it to fruition. This traditional knowledge and know-how was passed on from generation to generation. It is evident from her detailed descriptions of the laborious manual processes involved in the production of basic and supplementary foodstuffs that an enormous amount of time was needed for these activities and that food production was subject to the seasonal cycle of the year. Professor Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou also points out that the established everyday meal pattern during the period in question was that people ate three times a day and that the basic foods for peasants, shepherds and workmen consisted of bread, olives, onions, cheese, and pulses, and vegetables cooked with olive oil on the hearth. In the home, food was served using a common plate placed on a large straw tray called a *tsestos*. While the

elite of Cyprus under Ottoman Rule had access to a variety of imported foodstuffs and foreign luxuries, gradual Europeanisation of the island continued under British rule, and intensified after independence in 1960. A variety of influences, including tourism, returning immigrants, workers from the Far East, and shops selling products imported from all over the world, have also impacted on traditional Cypriot food habits, as Cyprus is transformed into a market economy and a modern consumer society. Professor Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou notes that, as a reaction to the threat of globalisation vis-a-vis food and eating habits on the island, 'a strong tendency to preserve and promote traditional food with all its regional variations and communal differentiations, as an essential aspect of cultural identity' has also become apparent.

Rather than dealing in detail with the food content of everyday meals, Professor Eldbjørg Fossgard's paper focuses on the social dimensions of the everyday meals of the middle classes and the farming community in Norway in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She pays particular attention to the manner in which attitudes to children are reflected in the meal event and how these changed during the time-period under discussion in her paper. She notes the emergence of 'childfree meals' in the course of the nineteenth century during which adults took their meals in the dining room while the children ate theirs in the kitchen or nursery, away from the trials and tribulations of the adult world, and the reaction that later set in to this form of dining arrangement. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the meal, with the children present at the dining-table, was regarded by the middle classes as a forum for the socialisation of children and for the imparting of parental values and table manners to them. With regard to the farming community, Professor Fossgard notes that middle-class ideas about family life, the shielding of children from the adult world, and the acquirement of good table manners, took longer to permeate rural society in which meals helped to shape the workday and also reflected the patriarchal structure of society, both in terms of the allocation of places at table (with the father, the household authority figure, sitting at its head), and the apportionment of victuals 'according to the established rules of food entitlement'.

The social dimension of meals is also taken up by Giada Danesi in her paper. She uses the concept of commensality – fellowship at table – to analyse food events of French and German young adults in order to identify possible common trends as well as cultural differences in their meal habits. Arising from interviews with, and participant observation of, young adults in France and Germany, concerning meal events, it was found possible to identify

different kinds of eating contexts, characterised by location, occasion, food-event duration and participation, and also to distinguish different types of social interaction between commensals during these food events. It was found that food played a different role depending on the context of a meal and the type of interaction envisaged or occurring during the performance of a meal. On some occasions, the food itself was the reason for the meeting of young adults, while in other instances food was used as an excuse in order to bring people together for a social event. The research also pointed to different attitudes to commensality between the groups involved – as far as the German young adults were concerned, sole eating in certain contexts was a fairly common and an acceptable practice, while for French young adults commensality remained a central element of food events and the meal was strongly regarded as a social act.

The meal habits of Cypriot schoolchildren and their associations with socio-economic factors in the last decade of the twentieth century is the subject matter dealt with by Professor Antonia-Leda Matalas and co-authors Chrystaleni Lazarou and Demosthenes B. Panagiotakos in their paper. They present the results of a national cross-sectional study conducted among more than a thousand schoolchildren, whose mean age was 10.7 years, in twenty-five primary schools, in both urban and rural areas of Cyprus. This study was undertaken against the background of a society which has experienced socio-demographic change and a shift to a flourishing market economy and a consumer society. Major changes in life-style and health have also occurred as a result and, nowadays, one in two Cypriot adults is considered to be obese. Information about the children's residence environment, socio-economic status and meal habits was obtained by means of questionnaires completed by the children and their families. The study revealed that thirty per cent of the children involved in the study were overweight or obese and that ten per cent of these were excessively overweight. This data confirmed previous research findings indicating that one child in every four in Cyprus is obese or overweight. Other significant findings included information on the frequency with which main meals, snacks, fast-food and breakfast were eaten by the children, and their participation in family meals. Data on the latter element pointed to the ongoing cohesiveness of family life in Cyprus, expressed *inter alia* in the continuing organisation of meals in which children and members of the extended family participated, despite modernisation, the fast-food explosion, and the myriad possibilities provided by restaurants and cafés, for example, for eating outside the home.

The meal habits and eating patterns of another group – this time, young Australian women – forms the subject matter of Jennifer McArthur's and Samir Samman's paper. They deal with this group's definition of a 'meal', their intake patterns, and the nutritional implications of their eating habits. Noting the existence of food intake studies for Australian females in their infancy, adolescence, and senior years, the authors stress the need for information on young women's food management behaviour also, so that nutrition experts can disseminate knowledge about foods, their preparation, combination, manner of consumption, and benefits, in order to establish healthy eating patterns among this group of the Australian population. The study participants consisted of a group of forty, apparently healthy, educated, Australian young women, from diverse backgrounds, who provided information about their food intake by a variety of agreed means over a research period of four months. Apart from indicating that about thirty-three per cent of breakfasts, forty-two per cent of lunches, and thirty-nine per cent of dinners consumed by the group were nutritionally incomplete, the study also showed that an eating event (breakfast, lunch or dinner) was classified as a meal by the young women on the basis of the time of day at which it was consumed, rather than by content or manner of eating. Spontaneity – courtesy of restaurant dining and quick and effortless reheat technologies for convenience food – appears to be characteristic of the attitude of young women to food intake in everyday life in Australia today, for whom the meal has apparently lost much of its definitional, temporal and preparational contexts, as well as its nutritional impact.

Using the articles submitted by food scholars to a four-volume *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia* (2011) of which he is editor, Professor Ken Albala, carried out a survey of perceptions concerning the state of family meals eaten together in the home from a cross-cultural perspective – even though a direct question on the topic was not put to contributors to the *Encyclopedia*. In carrying out the survey the following variables were tracked in the articles: a) 'are family meals in decline?' (b) 'are convenience food and appliances replacing traditional foodways in the household?' and (c) 'is fast food replacing healthy meals eaten in the household?' Having provided a statistical breakdown of the contributors by gender, discipline or profession, and location (that is, whether the contributor was a native of the area about which s/he was writing, or not), Professor Albala found that only sixteen authors (9.6 per cent in total) had directly addressed the topic of the erosion of family meals. This would appear to indicate that it was not a major topic of concern for the majority of the authors, either because it had already

happened in the culture about which they were writing, or because it had not yet occurred. With regard to the second question concerning whether convenience food was replacing traditional foodways in the home, fifty-four authors (35% in total) addressed the topic, without having been asked the question directly. Of these, forty per cent were natives who had presumably seen the change happen in their own area, and most were from non-industrialised nations or from those in transition, or from nations which had become recently industrialised. With regard to fast food, it was again native authors writing from an insider position and representing nations where industrialisation was underway or had recently occurred, who considered fast food a threat to traditional foodways. It was not mentioned by any of the US authors, perhaps because fast food had already become traditional in the USA, to some extent, at least. It would appear then that while the erosion of family meals is not prominent on the agenda of the average food encyclopedia contributor, convenience foods and fast food are seen by cultural insiders, especially in emerging or recently industrialised areas, as constituting a danger to the stability of traditional foodways and meal habits.

III

The role of homegrown foods, open-air retail markets, and wholesale provisioning, in contemporary foodways, is examined in Part III.

Set against a background of radical change in traditional food provision in Slovenia over the last four to five decades, due to factors such as urban migration, the increased urbanisation of rural areas, the growth of industrial food production, easier movement of goods, and greater consumer purchasing power, Professor Maja Godina Golija's paper looks at the role of home-grown foods in the Slovenian diet, in both urban centres and in rural areas, in the course of the last two decades especially. According to recent ethnological and sociological research, the growing of vegetables and fruit and their preservation for home consumption are widespread activities among Slovenians, with a sizeable portion of the population also making their own meat products, such as sausages. Among the reasons which can be postulated for this interest in the home-growing of foods for family consumption are: the rural background of the majority of the population, with its emphasis on the tilling of the soil and the production of crops, ideas about healthier and better quality food, and a concomitant distrust of

industrially-produced foodstuffs, as well as new concepts of leisure and a healthy life-style in which organic and biodynamic gardening play a part.

Nives Rittig Beljak's, Mirjana Randić's and Orlanda Obad's paper is concerned, firstly, with food choice in a situation in which a wide variety of victuals, including many mass-produced industrial and relatively inexpensive foodstuffs are now available in the marketplace, and, secondly, the means by which producers and the market have sought to attract consumers who wish to purchase products that are wholesome and good for their health. This is done by the use of labels such as 'organic', or by the use of green-coloured packaging, or an 'eco' logo, or by stating that the product is '100% Croatian', that is, domestically produced, or that it is 'traditional' and, increasingly, that it is 'home-made'. The latter expression has regional connotations and is the term agreed upon by vendors and purchasers in respect of fresh, seasonal and locally-produced agricultural produce sold in open-air markets in which Croatians traditionally buy about sixty per cent of their raw foodstuffs. It is regarded as a more inclusive and convenient term than 'traditional' and less ambiguous than the label 'organic'.

The rhetorical title of Adelia Hanson's paper, 'Does Anyone Cook Anymore in the United States?' hints at a substantial decline in the home preparation of everyday food based on raw agricultural products, and a consequent sharp change in meal habits and food consumption in the United States. This is borne out by the details of the paper which indicate that, in the USA, home cooking has declined by forty per cent since 1965, and that by 2003, processed food was already accounting for eighty per cent of food eaten in the home. This situation has had very severe knock-on effects in terms of nutrition and health in the United States, a country in which about thirty-three per cent of adults and sixteen per cent of children are considered to be obese. The author also gives a number of examples of programmes run by governmental agencies, non-profit organisations, schools and universities, to combat obesity and to improve eating habits at national and state levels. Farmers' markets are seen as being part of the approach to encourage a healthier diet – albeit for the well-educated, better-income sections of society, rather than for lower-income groups in areas of urban poverty. First Lady Michelle Obama's project for combatting childhood obesity through education is also mentioned.

Helen Tangires's contribution examines the role which wholesale produce markets have played in the provisioning of everyday meals, and in the shaping of eating habits in urban contexts, especially in large cities of the United States, over the last century or so. As an important link in the

marketing of the food supply of large cities, a programme for the construction and regulation of massive wholesale produce markets trading in fresh food was promoted across the country by the United States Department of Agriculture from the early decades of the twentieth century, reaching its peak in the 1930s, but continuing in operation until the early 1950s. Dr. Tangires suggests that the moral and ethical arguments put forward by the proponents of the wholesale markets during their hey-day – that is that they could lower food prices, enhance food safety, reduce waste, supply the ethnically diverse consumers in their catchment areas with desired ethnic foods, and promote direct marketing of local produce between producer and consumer – still resonate today as consumers are concerned about food traceability and product wholesomeness, the promotion of local foods, environmental health, and the availability of food products from around the world to meet the demands of increasingly diverse urban ethnic communities.

IV

Perceptions of organic, ecological and ethical food in terms of food choices for household meals, well-being, and future food availability, are dealt with in Part IV.

Against a background of increasing consumer interest in Norway in local and organic food, sustainable development, and environmental awareness, and in view of political measures undertaken to promote organic agriculture and to encourage organic food consumption, such as the introduction of organic food into publicly subsidised and organised food services, Dr. Gun Roos's paper examines perceptions of organic food among cadets in Norwegian Defence, after organic food was introduced by the army food service in 2007. The study was part of the European project iPOP – Innovative Public Organic Food Procurement for Youth – the brief of which was to conduct case studies concerning the public serving of organic food to young people in the participating European countries. Norwegian Defence, which serves food to approximately ten thousand personnel every day, and has over fifty kitchen units for the preparation of meals, was selected for one of the Norwegian case studies. Norwegian Defence recruited cadets for two focus groups in the autumn of 2008 – one group in the Air Force Academy in Trondheim, which served organic food in its mess halls, and the other in the Military Academy in Oslo, which did not – with whom Dr. Roos conducted research on their perceptions of organic food. Her paper in this

volume, based on the qualitative data arising from that focus group research, relies on critical discourse analysis in order to determine and examine the main ideological constructs and ideas utilised by the cadets that served to shape and constrain their perceptions of, and approaches to, organic food, at both philosophical and pragmatic levels.

Dr. Maria Frostling-Henningsson's paper is concerned with issues surrounding the choosing of food products for everyday meals in the home and the dissonance which can arise between consumers' ideas and intentions in relation to food choice, and their actual choice of food products, for home meals. It is based on a qualitative analysis of the strategies employed by thirty-four Swedish households – nine with small children, fourteen with teenagers, and ten 'empty-nest' households (whose children had recently moved out) over a period of approximately a year and a half (January 2008 to August 2009), as they coped with dilemmas concerning food choice and meal arrangements to meet different, and often conflicting expectations and requirements of household members. The theoretical framework guiding the study is Alan Warde's antinomies of structural oppositions about cultural values mobilised to make decisions about what food to choose, Daniel Miller's theory of shopping, and Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance. A pictorial representations technique (Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique [ZMET]), to elicit unconscious, non-verbalised thoughts concerning food and meal choices was used in the study to complement more traditional in-depth interviews. The analysis reveals, *inter alia*, that compromise in relation to food choice is a fact of life in contemporary households consisting of a number of individuals, and that children and adolescents influence household food choice to a greater extent than formerly. The degree to which adolescents are influential with regard to the choosing of organic food for household consumption, because of their knowledge of environmental issues and recognised animal welfare standards, is also emphasised in this study. On the other hand, organic food was apparently less favoured among some senior citizens who felt that traditional ways of cultivating crops, which were tried and trusted over successive generations, were safer and less of a health risk for the consumer, while organically-cultivated products – which, in their opinion, could involve idiosyncratic production processes – could, it was felt, pose an implied health risk for the consumer.

But what does the future hold for food availability and meals in the light of factors such as the effects of climate change, local and global environmental crises, depletion of some natural resources, and the loss of biodiversity, firstly, on food production systems, and, secondly, on the growth and ageing of

populations, on food safety, health and well-being requirements, and on changing tastes and expectations? Questions such as these, and their implications for the future of food consumption and planning in Finland, were issues under discussion in the project entitled 'What's for dinner tomorrow?' (MIRHAMI), co-ordinated by the Finland Futures Research Centre. More specifically, the task was to develop research tools and strategies to understand and outline the dynamic complexity of everyday life, to create scenarios for food and eating in the everyday life of Finland in 2030, to find out whether ecological food had a role to play in the scenarios put forward, and if so, what changes in the form and content of ecological food were likely to occur in the context of the different scenarios envisaged, and how these were linked to food traditions in Finland. All of these matters are dealt with by Anna Kirveennummi, Riikka Saarimaa, Leena Jokinen and Dr. Johanna Mäkelä, members of the MIRHAMI project, in their paper in this volume, the central focus of which is the presentation of four scenarios for the future of food consumption in Finland and the role envisaged for ecological food in that context.

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Patricia Lysaght
President ICEFR

Ethical Aspects of Applied Ethnological Food Research

Håkan Jönsson

Introduction

The discipline of ethnology in the Scandinavian countries is undergoing substantial change. The student groups that were traditionally drawn to the field are not attracted to it to the same degree as they used to be, and their traditional job opportunities within the museum sector are decreasing. Fortunately, new job markets are opening up for graduates in ethnology as new groups, such as corporations, state institutions and NGOs, are approaching ethnology with new-found curiosity as they look to cultural analysis as an important developmental tool in their operations.¹ Evidence of their interest can be found in the successful consultancy agencies set up by ethnologists in diverse fields such as trend ethnography, city planning, diversity management, and user-driven innovation.² Other signs of interest are reflected, for example, in the fact that the majority of the doctoral students in ethnology at the University of Copenhagen are in receipt of external funding, provided by both the public and private sectors.³

The food sector is one of the areas in which the application of ethnographic approaches has had a noticeably vitalising effect. This is evident in terms of the research, development and marketing approaches of industry, and also in regard to the work of public authorities in relation to food- and health-related issues. It was not until I engaged in a study of the food industry for my doctoral dissertation that I began to realise the potential of this industry from the point of view of the ethnologist. Up to then, I had regarded the food industry as a study object only and I never imagined that I would professionally intervene in the activities of companies that I had studied at

¹ Rapaille, C., *The Culture Code: An Ingenious Way to Understand Why People Around the World Live and Buy as They Do*, New York 2006; Sharpe, D.R., 'The Relevance of Ethnography for International Business Research', in Marschan-Piekkari, R., Welch, C., (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research for International Business*, Cheltenham 2004; Mariampolski, H., *Ethnography for Marketers. A Guide to Consumer Immersion*, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2006. Pillsbury, Barbara L.K. 'Applied Anthropology and Executive Leadership', *NAPA BULLETIN* 29 (2008): 131-51.

² Hult, I. 'The First Year in Business: The Things I Wished I had Known when I Started', *ETN* 5 (2008): 39-49; Ehn, B., Löfgren, O., 'Ethnography in the Marketplace', *Culture Unbound* 1 (2009): 31-49.

³ Fredriksson, C., Jönsson, H., 'Introduction', *ETN* 5 (2008): 5.

that time. Gradually, however, I began to see that ethnographic methods could provide an understanding of the everyday life of consumers – information which would obviously be of importance to food companies, but which most of them did not seem to have.

Since then, a growing interest in the connection between food and culture, by many food companies, has become evident (although the idea that companies have about the concept of culture is often quite vague). The search by companies for consumer experts to advise them in their attempts to project experiences of joy, taste and refinement onto their products, had led some of them to look to ethnographers with new-found appreciation. From a meta perspective, this trend can be seen as being part of major structural changes occurring within the global economy. The production of 'added value' – the immaterial aspects of food products – is receiving more and more attention in the food industry today, as is the case also in other businesses. The 'culturalisation' of the economy and the implications of this for the food sector, is an interesting field of research,⁴ one which I have discussed elsewhere.⁵

Evidence of increasing interest in food culture is not limited to commercial enterprises; food-related institutions, authorities, and academic disciplines are increasingly approaching the ethnological food researcher in the belief that he/she possesses cultural knowledge which is of use to them. Working with these different types of stakeholders means that new possibilities of benefit to ethnological food researchers arise. But, this form of engagement also raises new ethical questions for ethnologists. Is it ethically acceptable for an ethnologist to sell his/her ethnological knowledge and expertise to a commercial food company? How will authorities use their newly-purchased knowledge of different food cultures in health and integration policies?

In recent years, I have had the opportunity of working with several applied projects, both as a research consultant leading development projects, and as a teacher in a new master's programme in applied cultural analysis (MACA) – a joint programme organised by the ethnological departments at Lund and Copenhagen universities, respectively. Currently, forty graduate students, representing every continent in the world, are enrolled in the programme.⁶ In this article, I would like to focus on some of the ethical implications of

⁴ Lash, S., Urry, J., *Economies of Signs and Space*, London 1994; DuGay, P., Pryke, M., (eds.), *Cultural Economy*, Oxford 2002; Löfgren, O., Willim, R., (eds.), *Magic, Culture and The New Economy*, Oxford 2005.

⁵ Jönsson, H., 'Food in the Experience Economy, in Lysaght, P., (ed.), *Changing Tastes. Food Culture and the Processes of Industrialization*, Basel 2004, 259-68.

⁶ See www.maca.ac: accessed 28.2. 2011.

ethnological food research that emerge as one starts to deal with applied projects.

This article is based on my own experiences with applied projects. I hope it will be followed by other articles on the ethical dilemmas (and benefits) associated with applied ethnological food research. Although there is a sizeable body of published work on both ethics⁷ and applied anthropology and ethnology,⁸ I believe there are still some ethical aspects of relevance to these areas that need to be discussed.

Discussions on ethics in the anthropological field tend to focus on the implications of field work in terms of the close and personal relations that usually arise between the field worker and his/her informant. In American anthropology, especially, there have been controversies about the manner in which field work has been carried out among native populations.⁹ The American Anthropological Association (AAA) which has distinct guidelines on ethics 'advocates that all ethnographic researchers should cultivate a strong foundation for the ethical conduct of research with human populations'.¹⁰

Other disciplines in which the question of ethics has been repeatedly discussed are medicine and health. In recent decades, ethnographic approaches have become an integral part of health research. The way ethnographers have dealt with the issue of ethics has also been subject to criticism. Examples of this are their denials that there are any ethical problems involved in ethnographic approaches, or their untroubled emulation of the ethical perspective established in medicine, that is, that informed consent is the primary tool for dealing with ethical problems in this field.

Didier Fassin has called attention to the need for a serious discussion concerning ethical issues in ethnographical research, and also for the establishment of models for dealing with ethical matters grounded in the ethnographic tradition itself:

It took social scientists over a century to free themselves from the natural sciences paradigm. It might take them some time to get rid

⁷ Fassin, D., 'The End of Ethnography as Collateral Damage of Ethical Regulation?', *American Ethnologist* 33, no. 4 (2006): 522-4; Fine, G.A., 'Ten Lies of Ethnography: Moral Dilemmas of Doing Field Research', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 22 (1993): 267.

⁸ Willigen, J. van, *Applied Anthropology: An Introduction*, Westport, CT 2002; Kedia, S., Willigen, J. van, (eds.), *Applied Anthropology. Domains of Application*, Westport, CT 2005; Pink, Sarah, (ed.), *Applications of Anthropology: Professional Anthropology in the Twenty-First Century*, Oxford 2005; Sunderland, P. L., Denny, R., *Doing Anthropology in Consumer Research*, Walnut Creek 2007.

⁹ O'Dell, T., 'What's the Use of Culture? *Culture Unbound* 1 (2009): 15-29.

¹⁰ American Anthropological Association Statement on Ethnography and Institutional Review Boards Adopted by AAA Executive Board, 4 June 2004.

of the biomedical model of ethics. But rather than merely criticizing it, sociologists and anthropologists should – and some are working on it – invent their own model.¹¹

Working in the spirit of Fassin, I will try to establish a model for ethics that is not primarily related to issues of methodology or to the research process (fieldwork), but based on expectations from the different stakeholders who seek the advice of ethnological food researchers.

Recalling the different projects of which I have been a part, either as an ethnographic consultant or as a teacher in applied cultural analysis, it is evident that the external partners I have worked with have had different reasons for approaching food ethnologists in general, and me in particular, for advice. Broadly-speaking, these reasons can be divided into four categories. They need assistance in terms of:

1. 'Traditional' food products and concepts
2. Eating habits intervention
3. Preserving threatened traditions
4. Intermediating between actors

The first three categories are quite obviously expressed expectations or definite requirements on the part of the stakeholders, whilst the fourth is a structural matter that tends to arise during a project. In this paper, I will present some relevant cases illustrating these four categories and discuss the ethical dilemmas which they often evoke.

'Traditional' Food Products and Concepts

In recent decades, food companies have displayed a growing interest in products for which added value can be achieved in the marketplace by virtue of the label 'authenticity'. There are several reasons for this. First of all, their interest in culinary heritage is a symptom of the increasing importance of the place of origin of food products. The internationalisation of markets has led both producers and consumers to reinterpret the local as something different; and place, it has been argued, is one of a few remaining 'natural monopolies'.¹² From a consumer perspective, food with a specified place of origin may serve to relieve some of the 'anxiety' associated with food consumption. When there are some one hundred and thirty varieties of

¹¹ Fassin *op. cit.*, 2006, 524.

¹² Harvey, D., 'The Art of Rent. Globalization and the Commodification of Culture', in Harvey, David, (ed.), *Spaces of Capital. Towards a Critical Geography*. New York 2001, 394-411.

yoghurt in an ordinary supermarket, it is not always easy to know which one to choose. Thus, a yoghurt bearing the label 'traditional' may then seem to be both a safe and a tasty option.¹³

The idea of front-loading authenticity as a valuable label is not new. From the late 1960s onwards, the food industry has been marketing products bearing labels such as 'old-fashioned' and 'traditional'.¹⁴ But a new dimension in relation to food, at least from a Scandinavian perspective, has undoubtedly come strongly to the fore over the last decade or so. Originating in the restaurant business, the search for the 'pure', 'clean' and 'traditional' has increased dramatically in the course of the last ten years. The New Nordic Kitchen – a concept that some of the most renowned chefs in Scandinavia have embraced – has led to the reinvention of the idea of *terroir* in a Nordic context. Thus, in Scandinavia, the term *terroir* is understood as conceptualising not only the actual soil of Scandinavia, but as also incorporating other specifics of a place, such as its culture and history.¹⁵ *Terroir*, as a concept, has not been an easy matter for scientists to handle as they are used to separating such factors as planting, breeding, soil and preparation, from history and culture. But ethnologists are among the few research practitioners who actually know something about *terroir*, in the sense that they realise, that any explanation about why people eat as they do in a particular region, cannot be based solely on an evaluation of the natural geographic conditions of the area in question.

This emerging trend has also been picked up by large production companies. I was involved recently in a Swedish dairy company's development of new products and concepts – specifically a variety of butter with a somewhat more traditional look and production process than the regular kind, and a new line of sour-cream varieties with distinctive regional flavours. The fact of getting involved in the development of industrialised food products requires that both the researcher's role in this process and the limitations of combining industrialised food production with traditional manufacturing methods from the pre-industrialised era, need to be considered. The provision of input and inspiration for the product developers, and suggestions about ingredients and flavours traditionally used in the region, was the easiest part. When discussing how to convert such

¹³ Jönsson, H., 'A Land of Milk and Money: The Dairy Counter in an Economy of Added Values', in Löfgren, O., Willim, R., (eds.), *Magic, Culture and the New Economy*, Oxford 2005, 105-116

¹⁴ Belasco, W., *Appetite for Change. How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*, New York 1989.

¹⁵ Trubek, A., *The Taste of Place. A Cultural Journey into Terroir*, Berkeley 2008.

knowledge into industrialised food production, it became obvious that some of my ideals would have to be relinquished. I was fully aware of the fact that the proposed new varieties of sour cream would bear only a weak resemblance to their pre-modern hand-made predecessors. But I also assumed that by using locally-grown herbs and vegetables to supply traditional flavours, the claims of product authenticity by the producers would be credible. However, it turned out to be more problematic than expected to use locally-grown ingredients. The milk used was local, but it was not possible to use some of the herbs produced by local growers. Even though they were cultivated in the area, none of the dairy company's ingredient suppliers could offer local ingredients that met the hygienic and usability standards required for the production line in question.

It became an ethical dilemma for me, when, at a certain point of the consultancy process, I had to decide whether I could continue to support the claims of the manufacturers that the new product lines were being built on regional traditions. In my mind's eye, I had the image of a researcher who sells out his professional knowledge for profit, despite his awareness that there may not be sufficient substance behind the claim that the product was traditional, and it was not a pretty picture. However, following fruitful discussions with the company about how their claims on the packages and brochures might be formulated in order not to exaggerate claims to authenticity on behalf of the product, in the end, I came to the conclusion that I had nothing to object to about how the products were being presented. If nothing else, I felt that the products in question would, hopefully, stimulate new interest in regional culinary traditions among a younger generation, and, after all, there are obvious limitations to how traditional a modern industrialised product can be, with or without the locally supplied ingredients.

The second dilemma was how to treat the company's interest in ethnological knowledge. Should the researcher's knowledge be seen as open-source information or as a commercial product? I asked myself whether I should charge for the information which I had supplied, or whether I should just be happy that someone was interested in this knowledge about food culture, and thus view the provision of it as a way of fulfilling the so-called third mission of the university, that is, to interact with the surrounding society. My pragmatic solution to these questions was and is to provide general information cost free, but to charge for the provision of information about specific products or for concept development. I thus submit an invoice for work done just as any other consultant would do. My solution is based

on my belief that, as a researcher, I should disseminate ethnological knowledge about food culture and traditions to as many people as possible, and, so far, I have found no reason to exclude food companies from this endeavour. Naturally, when it comes to specific products, I usually have to carry out targeted research which is not part of 'regular' research and education. The line between the two domains is not clear-cut, but still, as far as ethical guidelines go, the distinction outlined above has served me well so far.

Eating Habits Interventions

I sometimes get approached by people working in the areas of nutrition and public health who hope that I will be able to assist them in changing people's eating habits. Nutritionists and health planners tend to blame what they vaguely refer to as culture when trying to explain why people eat the wrong kinds of food. This is not a new phenomenon. Problems such as why workers eat sausages instead of nutritious inexpensive meat or offal, or why soldiers are in bad physical shape, or why immigrants supposedly have strange eating habits, have been present for a long time. To these phenomena can be added wartime policies – attempts to make people eat nutritiously in times of scarcity. Prominent anthropological scholars such as Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead and Mary Douglas, have all, at one time or another, participated in health programmes to which they have been recruited in the hope that they may procure the key to making people abandon their culture in order to become rational individuals.

For ethnologists, the ethical problems start when it becomes necessary to decide whether to get involved in such interventions since the idea that culture as such can be seen as being a problem is somewhat foreign to ethnological scholars. It is easy to distance oneself from people wanting to change culturally-rooted habits by saying that they are naïve, or by taking part in a struggle for cultural capital by condemning the eating habits of other groups. Another reason for not taking part in food and health projects is the tendency of such projects to turn individuals into categories. For example, the fact that immigrants have poorer dental health than that which applies to native Swedes, tends, for some reason, to lead policy makers to the conclusion that all immigrants should be treated as a homogenous category. A third problem is that it is quite easy to become a cross-disciplinary alibi in a food and health project without being able to change the foundations of the project, no matter how wrong these may seem to be from an ethnologist's point of view.

Even though it is often necessary for me to inform people in other fields of endeavour that there is no such thing as a universally good diet, and even though I often hesitate before taking part in projects where I see that I may face the risk of signing recommendations for strategies with which I cannot possibly agree (for example, interventions based on categories as mentioned above), I still find it problematic to just take an outsider position in these circumstances. I consider that it is far too easy to stand aside and then to critically regard others as being superficial, or as having a false view on rationality and health, without creating or offering an alternative strategy oneself. Undeniably, there are many people who suffer from poor eating habits which have severe effects on their health. But instead of just criticising dieticians and others who offer professional advice for the purposes of changing eating habits, I think it is relevant to also ask if we, ethnologists, might actually do something to promote healthier eating habits by offering advice based on methods and knowledge gleaned from our own discipline.

I have no best-practice case from my own participation in food- and health-related projects to offer as an example, but I have had the opportunity of discussing these issues with the Danish ethnologist, Mine Sylow Pedersen, who had the following excellent example to share. In Denmark, 68 % of school children participate in organised sports in clubs, typically at one of the 1100 existing Danish sports centres, all of which also sell food and beverages at these venues. Most of the foods sold are fast-food items, and French fries are one of the most popular choices, particularly with adolescents. These products are often described as 'junk food', a low-nutrition food containing high quantities of fat and sugar. This paradoxical situation at facilities where young people engage in sports activities, and at the same time eat unhealthy food, was the starting point for a project aimed at developing healthy fast-food items for children and adolescents at sports centres.

By focusing on the social and cultural meaning of eating at sports cafeterias, Sylow Pedersen was in a position to propose some new analytical tools for use by the food industry – a partner in the project – in relation to fast-food products. She stressed the need to focus on the social and cultural meanings of food by examining how food plays a significant role in the interactions of young children and adolescents. By doing participant observation in the cafeteria, she soon found out that the attraction of French fries was not so much about taste or symbolic value, but rather that a portion of French fries was easy to share with friends. Since most of the adolescents did not have money on a regular basis, the one or ones who had some cash on a particular day, bought French fries to share with the others. This was a

vision of an eating community that was easy to communicate to the food industry. From the departure point of cultural analysis, recommendations were delivered to the food industry representatives in order to help them in formulating proposals for the development of new healthy fast-food products. The recommendations had to meet two standards. Firstly, they had to be short, precise and useful for the industry. Secondly, they had to meet the complex social and culturally-specific criteria described by the children and adolescents. The most important advice given to the food industry was that 'Products had to be capable of being shared and have a "grown-up" feel to them (not too much "mom")'. The participating food companies found this advice to be very relevant, and started developing new lines of healthier fast-food products for serving in the sports cafeterias¹⁶.

Sylow's project serves to indicate that ethnologists can successfully interact in food- and health-related programmes, since it demonstrates how applied ethnological knowledge may have immediate effects on the practices of the participants. However, one must also be aware of the fact that when making the translation from detailed ethnography into short, precise, and useful recommendations for the industry (or for other stakeholders, such as dieticians, political/governmental institutions, or consumers), cultural insights may sometimes become too simplified and, as a result, important aspects may get 'lost in translation'. While the actual products that emerged from Sylow's project suffered somewhat from this syndrome, nevertheless, they made the industry think in new ways about their fast-food products.

Preserving Threatened Traditions

This category may be the one most familiar to ethnologists still working at universities. Organisations such as Local History Societies or, more recently, Slow Food organisations, which want to keep old traditions alive, often come to the ethnologist in order to find out what truly authentic food is. At first glance, this query may seem unproblematic – in view of the amount of material already generated by ethnological food research, and in terms of the resources available in the folklife archives, which contain a wealth of detail on food traditions in different regions and nations, which it should be possible to share with anyone who is interested in it.

But, the situation is not always that easy. The search for food authenticity is often connected to a static view of the past as opposed to late-modern life in which change is quick and unrelenting. Indeed, decades of ethnological

¹⁶ Sylow, M., 'Tempting French Fries: Cultural Analysis as an Approach in the Development of Healthy Fast Food', *ETN* 5 (2008): 13-26.

food research have shown that food is culture, and culture is subject to constant change. There is no such thing as a traditional food culture.

In short, many of the proponents of traditional food adhere to a conservative agenda, which forces us, as researchers, to consider our own position in the political landscape. There are some parallels here to the discussion on the use made of history in building national and regional identities during a period of upheaval in Europe in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁷ Ethnologists, at that time, found themselves at the centre of a debate about the identities associated with places and nations, that occurred both within and without academia.

In Scandinavia, a clear division arose at that time between ethnologists who were emphasising the constantly-changing process of national and regional identities, and neo-conservative political parties proclaiming the essentialist view that nations and regions are deeply rooted in history and bear authentic values from a distant past. The outcome of this situation was the emergence of two groups unable to enter into dialogue with each other. It would be a pity if people interested in food traditions were to see ethnologists only as constructionists. As for myself, I try to establish a dialogue even in situations where I feel that there is a hidden (or open) political agenda that I do not share. After all, there is knowledge of actual food traditions that definitely should be made known to more people than a few ethnological food researchers and some private enthusiasts. A dialogue can often be initiated by asking questions, such as: why, for example, do the traditions of the wealthier farmers in the Swedish countryside of the late nineteenth century seem to be 'more authentic' than workers' food from the 1950s, or contemporary food traditions, such as the eating of Pizza in family homes? Who is supposed to cook the traditional food, and what effects might this have on gender structures? These kinds of questions can sometimes provoke animated discussions – which is good – but most often they become a starting point for a discussion of the important role which food plays in the creation of communities, something which in turn can lead to a search for forgotten aspects of food traditions – which is even better.

In the last few years, the gastronomic turn in the Scandinavian countries has seen a growing interest in food traditions among a younger generation in the various regions. The success of the internationally-renowned restaurant NoMa in Copenhagen and its ideological foundation, the so-called New Nordic Kitchen (mentioned above), have opened the eyes of many ambitious

¹⁷ Löfgren, O., Hannerz, U., 'The Nation in the Global Village', *Cultural Studies* 2 (1994): 198-207; Hylland Eriksen, T., Jenkins R., (eds.), *Flag, Nation and Symbolism in Europe and America*, London 2007.

chefs to the possibilities of using more-or-less forgotten ingredients and cooking traditions in their kitchens. The combining of ancient fermentation techniques and molecular gastronomy creates new sensory experiences. When coming to the aid of ambitious restaurateurs in their search for inspiration, the ethnological researcher, who realises that chefs tend to mix different epochs, regions and traditions in a manner that has absolutely no basis in actual culinary history, may find him/herself in an ethical predicament. But, since the manifesto for the New Nordic Kitchen clearly states that the mission behind its interest in different culinary customs is not to follow traditions literally but to innovate based on tradition, the ethical predicament diminishes. In contrast, it is often more challenging, ethically, to try to help groups who see themselves as being the custodians of culinary authenticity and who enrol the food ethnologist to be their champion in the struggle.

Intermediating Between Actors

The last category that I would like to discuss, based on my own experiences in applied projects, is rarely stated in the original definition of the project, but it is often the most important outcome. I started to think about intermediation in 2007 when I was leading a project aimed at developing Culinary Tourism in Österlen, a region in the southeast of Skåne, in Southern Sweden. As a result of the project, a number of small enterprises started a co-operative association. The mission of the association was and is to attract domestic and foreign tourists to Österlen as a culinary destination – Culinaria. By 2008, thirty-two enterprises had joined the association, which held its first major event, the Österlen Food Trail, in May of that year.¹⁸

Although the Food Trail project was successfully completed, it is relevant to ask in what way ethnological skills were factors in its success. It is quite obvious that in the initial pilot stage of the project, our cultural analysis of the region, and the search for authenticity in culinary matters, were a fundamental part of the research carried out for the project as a whole. But in the latter stages of the project, I found myself dealing with a huge amount of practical details, and, above all, with trying to solve the conflicts between the different actors which, for some reason, constantly arose. There were serious tensions between the entrepreneurs, the project managers (including myself), and the representatives from the local and regional authorities.

¹⁸ See www.culinaria.se, and Jönsson, H., 'The Cultural Analyst – an Innovative Intermediary?' *ETN* 5 (2008): 75-82.

However, I came to realise that even in the latter stages of the project, my cultural analysis skills were of value. To push forward the idea of the association, I had to convince the entrepreneurs and the public organisations involved, that each had something to gain from the collective effort required to make the association function. Therefore, I made a basic life-mode analysis that allowed me to understand the entrepreneurs' values and daily experiences. This knowledge showed me how to re-ignite their enthusiasm for a project that, at one point, was falling apart. I had to make the same analysis for the public representatives so that they would remain positive and not feel excluded from the process. In summary, with my training as a cultural analyst, I was able to assume the role of an intermediary in a project in which a diverse range of people – food producers, restaurateurs, travel agents, public relations experts, public servants and academics – had to work together in order to make the basic concept work.

After the conclusion of my work with the Österlen Food Trail project, I was engaged as an ethnological consultant by the Skåne Food innovation network in order to conduct a Foresight, a preliminary evaluation for its regional food innovation system. The Foresight procedure normally involves three stages: 1) *thinking*, where images of the future are created; 2) *debating*, where different actors who can shape the future meet to discuss possible ways forward, and 3) *shaping*, that is, implementing the outcome of the debating phases.¹⁹

In a previous analysis of the Food Trail and Foresight projects,²⁰ I pointed out that while these projects were diverse in scope, they both required intermediation. Regarding the Foresight procedure, intermediation was required in an effort to get diverse actors to synchronise their agendas in order to ensure that there would be a successful outcome to the Foresight project.

I also suggested that the training provided by the disciplines of ethnology and anthropology, which includes an analysis of a group's culture in order to better understand its mechanisms, is of benefit in the intermediation process. While engaged with these projects, I intervened in their daily activities, and carried out the intermediation process while working together with the actors.

¹⁹ Frykfors, C.-O., Jönsson, H., 'Reframing the Multilevel Triple Helix in a Regional Innovation System: A Case of Systemic Foresight and Regimes in Renewal of Skåne's Food Industry', *Journal of Technology Analysis and Strategic Management* 22 (2010): 7, 819-29.

²⁰ Jönsson, H., 'Kulturanalys som innovationsverktyg' ('Cultural Analysis as an Innovation Tool'), *Kulturella Perspektiv* 2010, 1.

Some innovation researchers have claimed that most innovation nowadays occurs at the interface between previously separated spheres or businesses, and that in order to achieve success in the innovation process, major obstacles linked to differing traditions must be overcome along the way.²¹ Cultural analysis could be used in situations where it is necessary to overcome the initial mistrust between actors who have different agendas and traditions. In the project described above, two very different industries – food and tourism – were successfully joined. This indicates that food ethnologists have a potential role as intermediaries between dissimilar industries such as health and tourism (in the Spa industry, for example), or food and fashion (for example, celebrities' food courts and clothing boutiques). Obviously, the intermediating function is not limited to the commercial sector. For example, cultural analysts have a role to play in developing better health-care for marginalised groups, in the lobbying for sustainable development projects, and in linking academia with the public and private sectors in co-operative projects.

The ethical problems involved in intermediation are, at least, twofold. Firstly, the question arises as to who is supposed to benefit from the intermediation? In a case where it is the participants in the current project who should benefit, the ethical problems are not that relevant. However, if there are hidden stakeholders involved in the project, then careful consideration about the intermediary's role is required. For example, during the 1960s and 1970s, the US Department of Defence financed anthropological projects in both South East Asia and South America. A hidden purpose of the funding support was to establish contact with the native people of the countries involved for the purposes of controlling political situations in the regions.²² This situation gave rise to an ethical debate within the anthropological community on how to deal with expectations from funding organisations who may have hidden agendas.²³

There is also an ethical issue involved, one which pertains to the education and training of cultural analysts. Should such training include instruction in applied intermediating skills? As teachers, my colleagues and I have, perhaps,

²¹ Etzkowitz, H., Leydesdorff, L., 'The Transformation of University-Industry-Government Relations', *Electronic Journal of Sociology* 2001, 1-1; Geels, F. W., 'From Sectoral Systems of Innovation to Socio-technical System. Insights about Dynamics and Change from Sociology and Institutional Theory', *Research Policy* 2004, 33; Lagnevik, M., 'Food Innovation at Interfaces: Experience from the Öresund Region', in Hulsink, W., Dons, H., (eds.), *Pathways to High-Tech Valleys and Research Triangles*, Wageningen 2006, 209-23; (Wageningen UR Frontis Series, vol. 24).

²² O'Dell, *op. cit.*, 2009, 15-29.

²³ *Idem.*

placed too much emphasis on the outsider position of the cultural analyst. It is also possible that the tradition of academic independence in the humanities may be counterproductive if one wants to make a difference outside of academia. Although we, as ethnologists, would not hesitate to take an insider perspective in the study of culture, we would have second thoughts about an ethnologist playing an insider role at a shareholders' meeting. Perhaps it is time for ethnologists to rethink that attitude. By taking on the role of insider in projects, the cultural analyst might be in a better position to offer important services to clients and also to make that difference that inspired most of us to study cultural analysis in the first place.

Conclusions

The recently-emerging interest shown by companies and authorities in cultural analysis in general, and food ethnology in particular, has created new opportunities and challenges for Scandinavian Ethnology. Apart from the study of cultural heritage, the tradition of applied work is otherwise undeveloped in Scandinavia, where we have generally assumed a sceptical attitude towards the Anglo-Saxon versions of applied anthropology, such as marketing anthropology. The image of a free and idealistic intellectual actor, although not without its limitations, has been the predominant role model in our research work. I recognise that, sometimes, it may be important for an ethnologist to maintain an analytical distance from the field studied. However, we might also ask ourselves why we do not use our analytical abilities to study everyday-life questions concerning food and health, for example, by working with the actors and institutions that constantly have to deal with these important topics. If we do not work with them, someone else will. Business economists and marketing managers are already successfully using aspects of cultural analysis in product development and marketing.

In light of the issues which I have raised in this article, I can see a productive future for applied projects in ethnological food research, but ongoing dialogue about the ethical issues that arise when carrying out this type of applied work, is necessary. I hope that this article has contributed to that dialogue, by expanding on previous discussions on ethics in research, which, albeit useful, have their limitations when it comes to applied projects. Much has been written about methodological issues, concerning, for example, participant observation, and especially about reflexivity, that is, the role of the researcher in the research process. This has created an awareness of the fact that there is no such thing as an independent researcher coming from a pure outsider position. The researcher always affects the object of research.

In applied projects, this is not a problem that needs to be analysed, as the point of applied projects is that they *should* have immediate effects on the problem with which that project is dealing. Within the action-research tradition, the ethical position of a researcher who actually tries to change the world and not only to analyse it, has been debated.²⁴ Applied projects are, however, somewhat different from most action research, where the result of the research is taken into account *after* the research has been concluded. In applied projects, the collection of empirical material and the application of findings are done simultaneously.

These specific characteristics of applied projects call for a rethink about research ethics – both from the end-user and the researcher perspectives. It is not enough to have guidelines about what to do with the collected material, since these may be of little or no assistance if the researcher is not prepared to deal with the stakeholders' expectations on the outcome of the project. My attempt in this article has been to initiate an ethical discussion on applied ethnological food research. The different categories of expectations that I have discussed here may appear different for other types of applied projects, but I am convinced that it is both necessary and relevant to always carefully consider how stakeholder expectations should be ethically handled.

²⁴ See, for example, Whyte, W. F., (ed.), 'Action Research for the Twenty-first Century: Participation, Reflection, and Practice', *American Behavioural Scientist* 32, no. 5 (1989): 499-623; Reason, P., Bradbury, H., (eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*, Thousand Oak, CA 2001.

Signs and Traces of Food Ethics in Everyday Life

Christian Coff

On comprend enfin que les espèces naturelles ne sont pas choisies parce que 'bonnes à manger' mais parce que 'bonnes à penser'.¹

For Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009) the symbolic meanings of food meant that, in an anthropological context, food was a compelling point of entry for studies of how societies are structured. His argument was that by studying food cultures it was possible to learn more about societies and their culture than just by interviewing the members of these societies themselves.

Apart from this methodological approach, Lévi-Strauss's statement also reminds us that, from the perspective of everyday life, taste is not only about physiological attributes of the sense receptors on the tongue; taste is also constructed by, and dependent on, our thinking about food. If we appreciate a specific kind of food, this is not due to physiological taste alone; rather it is also because it is good to think about that kind of food.

On the other hand, if we do not like a specific kind of food, it might well be because we do not like the thought of it. An example of this concerns the meat of an animal's heart. Although this meat tends to have a rather neutral taste, many people dislike it, and link their dislike to the idea of eating the heart of a living creature, something which they find repulsive. The wider, cultural reasons for food dislikes may have religious, cultural, ethical, or political dimensions, or may derive from scientific knowledge, to name but a few of the possible influences involved in this matter. Food studies within disciplines such as ethnology, anthropology, sociology and philosophy, suggest that people think about food in many different ways. Food is part of culture, tradition, memory, pleasure, prestige, politics, exclusion and inclusion, place, safety, biotechnology, identity, care, medicine, gastronomy, trade, distinction, table manners, agriculture, public relations, nature, sex, shopping, innovation, logistics, science, cooking, globalisation, gifts, health – the list could be extended almost indefinitely! Food is central to life and, therefore, intrinsic to many of its aspects.

The aim of this paper is to explore how food can be analysed in terms of signs and codes of everyday life, and especially how food can be used to

¹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Le totémisme aujourd'hui*, Paris 1962, 132. Although the popular quotation, 'Food is not only good to eat but also good to think' is often attributed Lévi-Strauss, I have not been able to find it in his works.

express ethical concerns. After a brief description of the concept of food ethics,² the paper moves on to deal with how food can function as signs of relationships in everyday life, while building on the understanding that food ethics concern relational aspects of human existence. People judge foods in terms of quality and values, and food choice can, for instance, demonstrate care for others, recognition, ignorance, or disdain.

Finally, and on a theoretical level, the paper investigates how semiotics can be used to analyse the role of food in ethical relationships in daily life. In attempting to apply a semiotic approach to food, the following questions are relevant: How do foodstuffs function as signs of ethics in everyday life? How are foods used in order to send signals about ethics? And, how are signs of food ethics perceived?

From Ethics to Food Ethics

Ethics are concerned with relationships. Ethics come into existence in the presence of the 'other', or, as Emmanuel Lévinas (1906-1995) puts it: 'We name this calling into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the Other ethics'.³ Thus the good life cannot *only* be my good life; it also includes that of others, since my good life is unthinkable without that of the 'other' – that is, his or her good life. Thus, I must also be able to imagine or 'think' about the good life of others, by putting myself in their position.

In short, ethics are about reasoning and judging, about rights and wrongs in relationships. Ethics only become an issue that needs attention if there is a chance of causing offence or harm to others. On this basis, food ethics can be seen as being concerned with avoiding harm and offence to others in the course of our dealings with food, consumption, and eating. C. Coff, M. Korthals and D. Barling have identified four major structural areas within the field of food ethics, as shown in Table 1 (next page).

Each of the four areas intrinsic to food ethics dealt with in Table 1 can play a role in everyday life. Food security, for instance, may be an important concern for parents of young children. On a more mundane level, concerns about food security can come into play even when considering whether there will be enough food for everybody at dinner.

Food safety is, indeed, a matter of everyday concern for many people and, globally, much food legislation is enacted and implemented for the purposes of increasing food safety. The instances of contaminated milk powder in China in 2009 and of animal feed in Germany in 2011, are examples of how

² The term 'food ethics' first appears in Ben Mephram's book, *Food Ethics*, London 1996.

³ Lévinas, E., *Totality and Eternity*, The Hague 1979, 43.

Table 1: Areas in Food Ethics.*

1. **Food security** deals with the just and fair supply of food to human beings. With more than 800 million starving or undernourished people in the world, this is probably the most pressing ethical question.
2. **Food safety** deals with the safety of the food produced. Food should not endanger the health of consumers due to the presence of pathogens or pollution in the food. There are ongoing discussions about what safety means in relation to food, and whose definition of safety should be followed.
3. New developments in **nutritional research** and technology, such as personalised nutrition, functional foods, and health foods, challenge existing norms and values about food. This also includes food-related diseases such as obesity, cardio-vascular diseases and cancer, and their association with food culture, because they raise issues of responsibility and respect for 'non-healthy' lifestyles and food production methods.
4. **Ethical questions raised by specific production practices and conditions in the food chain.** This concerns animal welfare, the environment, sustainability, working conditions, the use of new (bio and nano) technology, research ethics, and so forth. These ethics relate to the production-history of food, that is, how, and under what conditions, the food was produced.

* Coff, C., Korthals, M., Barling, D., 'Ethical Traceability and Informed Food Choice', in Coff, C., Korthals, M., Barling, D., Nielsen, T., (eds.), *Ethical Traceability and Communicating Food*, Dordrecht 2008, 9.

food safety can be jeopardised on a substantial scale. At a household level, concerns about food safety tend to relate to kitchen hygiene.

Nutritional research and the development of functional foods, raise many food ethical issues in everyday life. If, for example, personalised diets based on functional foods become more widespread, the way in which we think about the common meal will definitely change.

Lastly, the production history of food plays a growing role in many societies as is evident from the increasing demand for food-production methods that are not only sustainable, but also friendly from both climatic and welfare points of view.⁴

⁴ See Coff, C., *The Taste for Ethics. An Ethic of Food Consumption*, Dordrecht 2006, for a more detailed description of food ethics.

Food ethics are applicable to many different situations, and can range from the work of enlightened professionals to end-users who may be uninformed about most issues relating to food ethics. When considering the everyday-life aspects of food ethics it is necessary to focus on the situations in which food ethics play a role: food ethics apply to relational situations in which people interact with food as a 'medium' and in which there is an element of concern for the other(s) involved. Some of these relational situations include:

Shopping for food

Cooking

The common meal (with family, friends, community, network, business, in religious ceremonies etc.)

Eating out

If these are situations in which food ethics can and often do play a role, then it is necessary to ask: *how* do food ethics play a role in these contexts, and for *whom* do they play a role? One approach to the study of these issues has been to investigate areas of political and ethical consumption. Such studies ask who the ethical consumers are, and what their motives, means, and actions might be in this regard. While these studies form part of a reflexive and an everyday-consumption situation, they do not, however, entirely capture the *everyday* context and experience of people *interacting* while shopping, cooking for each other, and eating together.

Food as a Sign of Relationship

Food has a vital metabolic function for all human beings. We may regard this indispensable position of food as being a major reason for the many meanings and uses of food which we encounter in different cultures. Dietary rules are an example of how human beings attach meaning to food. Dietary rules prescribe specific eating habits and, thus, also specific forms of behaviour that are of importance, not only for cultural reasons, but also for an understanding of an individual's identity. The British anthropologist, Mary Douglas (1921-2007), wrote as follows about religious dietary rules:

... the dietary laws would have been like signs which at every turn inspired meditation on the oneness, purity and completeness of God. By rules of avoidance holiness was given a physical expression in every encounter with the animal kingdom and at every meal. Observance of the dietary rules would thus have been a meaningful

part of the great liturgical act of recognition and worship, which culminated in the sacrifice in the Temple.⁵

Douglas here regards dietary laws as *signs* that inspire meditation. As food is usually consumed every day, it is essentially omnipresent and it is thus a very powerful sign that can remind us, on a daily basis, of our religion, cultural belonging, or personal identity. Food is an 'item' which, as a sign, can direct our thoughts in specific directions depending on our relationship to food.

What is indicated above is that food, through being a sign, functions in terms of relationships. As a sign, food represents something for someone. To give another illustration of this we can look at the writings of the German sociologist, George Simmel (1858-1918), on the sociology of the meal.⁶ According to Simmel, individuality is transgressed and elevated into community and social interaction during a shared meal. The social meal rejects egoism since the sharing of food binds individuals together in a community and in a form of common identity. In this way, egoistical satisfying of hunger is ignored and food is shared instead. Thus, the common meal possesses the ability to establish solidarity and community feeling. In the common meal, food becomes a sign of a positive relationship to other human beings, and a sign of friendship.

The English researcher, Leslie Goften, touches on food as a form of relationship when he writes that:

food not only symbolises cultural values, but also forms a medium through which social relationships are expressed, from the intimate, face-to-face relations within the family, to the relations between regions and nations.⁷

Food is a medium through which relations – from close to global relations – between human beings are expressed. We use food to express ourselves, to understand others, to convey our feelings, opinions, preferences, sense of belonging, ethical and political stands, and cultures. Food is also used as a means of communication; however, this form of communication is not necessarily verbalised as, in many cases, it is more likely to take place by means of non-verbalised signs and actions.

⁵ Douglas, M., *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London 1966, 58.

⁶ Simmel, G., 'Sociology of the Meal', in Frisby D., Featherstone M., (eds.), *Simmel on Culture. Selected Writings*, London 1997, 130-5. First published in 1910.

⁷ Goften, L., 'Bread to Biotechnology: Cultural Aspects of Food Ethics', in Mephram, B., (ed.), *Food Ethics*, London 1966, 121-2.

At this point we should remember that food is not restricted to social context as it can also be understood in terms of a relationship to nature. Food originates ultimately from nature as it is based on living organisms (minerals being excluded, of course). What we eat is derived from selected parts of our surroundings – it may involve wild and/or domesticated animals or plants. For example, our eating habits mould landscapes through the environmental impacts of farming, and they also shape the working conditions in, and architectures of, the food sector in terms of industries and commerce. So, whether we like it or not, the way we eat establishes a relationship with nature, as well as with our immediate society, and with other people.

Since food functions in context, it is also part of the relational aspect between two or more parties. Since food is also a component of relationships it becomes part of ethics and of food ethics. The remainder of this paper will, therefore, investigate how the semiotic approach of the American philosopher, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), can be used as a framework for conducting research on everyday-life interactions and relationships involving food ethics.

Signs of Food Ethics in Everyday Life

As I have already suggested, food and foodstuffs are signs, which we use for communication purposes. We make use of foods and foodstuffs to send signals and messages to others and some of these messages contain codes ethical in character. For example, giving (good) food to somebody is widely interpreted as a sign of care for that person. The denial of food to somebody could be regarded, on the other hand, as a sign of ignorance and a lack of recognition of that person, or even as a deliberate attempt to harm him/her. Food can be likened to a language: we use it to communicate about ourselves, our concerns and attitudes, our intentions, and so forth. A dinner can communicate a variety of meanings, such as 'we are in a hurry', 'I am tired', 'I love you', 'I am tired of you', 'animal welfare is important to me', 'biotechnology is not dangerous', and so on. A meal may also serve as a finale to a business negotiation underlining the communal aspect of the project.

Health is another issue about which food communicates. As Anne-Lise Middelthon has demonstrated, the classification of food as either healthy or unhealthy is an ongoing concern of many societies today. In fact, she argues, that health considerations are fundamental to our attitudes to food today as feeding and eating are considered as fostering either salvation or damnation.⁸

⁸ Middelthon, A.-L., 'The Duty to Feed and Eat Right', *Revista della Società italiana di antropologia medica* 27-28 (2009): 212.

In order to explore the meanings of food from the semiotic perspective, we can look to the triadic model of Charles S. Peirce (1958). Amidst many definitions of signs in Peirce's work, one of his more elaborate definitions is that a sign, or *representamen*, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity.⁹

Thus, we have three components in this understanding of sign: something – sign – somebody. Furthermore, 'to stand for' entails that information about some other thing be conveyed through the sign to somebody. The thing that the sign *represents* is called the *object* of the sign, or the *signified*,¹⁰ and the 'somebody' is called the *interpretant*. Semiosis is the process in which the sign has a cognitive effect on its interpreter¹¹:

Signified – Sign – Interpretant

Thus, according to Peirce, signs are not objects or material things, as they only exist in the mind of the interpreter. A weathervane is only a sign of wind direction for someone who knows how weathervanes function. However, a weathervane is, of course, a material object, but the sign is not the same as the weathervane itself. The model in Fig. 1 (below) illustrates the idea of applying the triadic model to the role of food in intersubjective relationships. On the left is Peirce's general model for triadic relations and on the right is the model as it can be applied to food:

Following Peirce we can say that the *food sign* is not the food itself. The food sign only exist in the mind of the interpreter as the food functions as a sign to the *interpretant* for something else.

This something else, called the *signified*, is what the food sign represents for the *interpretant* – in this case, the eater of food. The kind of object or signification to

which the food refers depends on the *interpretant*. For a Westerner, then, a carrot may be a sign of health and may also be considered as being a part of a healthy diet, whereas, for some African peasants, a carrot may signify a low prestige kind of food only eaten at times of severe food shortages. The

⁹ Peirce, C. S., *Collected Papers*, vol. 2, Boston, Mass. 1958, § 228.

¹⁰ In Ferdinand de Saussure's (1857-1913) semiology, the object is named the *signified*.

¹¹ Nöth, W., *Handbook of Semiotics*, Bloomington, Indiana 1990, 42.

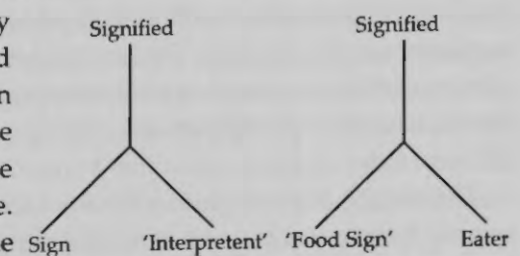


Fig. 1: The general triadic model (left) and the same model applied to the eating of food (right).

same kind of food thus carries different meanings and values for different interpretants.

Furthermore, the interpretation of food signs depends on the situation or context in which food appears. Foodstuffs are interpreted and understood differently depending on whether the food is, for example, part of a meal, or constitutes a dish, or is presented in a food market or supermarket. A steak may be a sign of care when served for dinner, whereas the very same person may see the steak as a sign of animal cruelty when confronted with it in a supermarket.

The above model is a simple way of describing the relationship between food and a person in a triadic model. However, in everyday life, food and foodstuffs are constantly exchanged between people, and food is, as mentioned, an essential part of human relationships. Middelthon describes the relationship between feeder and eater when she states that the interaction between feeder and eater is not to be understood as a traditional dyadic model (feeder and eater) only but that it should also include the food itself in an triadic model, which would then look as follows¹²:

Supplier of food — Food itself — Receiver of food

In this triadic model, the supplier(s) of food might be producers, retailers, catering outlets, parents, families, friends, or those in social roles, such as a host. The receiver(s) of food might be friends, families, colleagues, customers or patients of the supplier. This model can also be thought of as depicting a way of relating to oneself, as an *I* incorporating food into a *me*, as Middelthon puts it, in which the supplier and receiver are the same person, but stand for different sides or identities of that person.¹³

The middle of the equation, the food itself, is indeed, and as Middelthon argues, 'not a passive party to the meaning-making processes of eating and feeding, but a dynamic partner in this complex exchange'.¹⁴ Foodstuffs are carriers of meaning and of value. However, whatever the meaning or value we ascribe to a specific food, it is still something constructed by us, human beings. We give the food its meaning, and the meaning given can vary from person to person. For some people, food is only a form of nourishment, for others it represents the highest form of pleasure. It can be both political and

¹² Middelthon uses the terms 'feeder', the 'food', and 'the one being fed'. For the purposes of this article, I have chosen to use the more neutral words 'supplier of food' and 'receiver of food', but the meaning is the same.

¹³ Middelthon, *op. cit.*, 2009, 218.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 219.

ethical in nature, and it can be associated with remembrance, and it can also provoke personal stories.

There is a long historical tradition, in both the Eastern countries of the world and in the so-called West, of thinking about food in terms of medicine and health. In the Western world, this tradition, in existence since at least the medieval period, especially in monastic settings,¹⁵ has been largely overshadowed by the scientific concept of food in agricultural science and in food science, in which the focus is on food security, food safety, and nourishment. Today, we are witnessing a revival of an understanding of food in terms of health and, for some people food has acquired a functionality which is to be likened to that of medicine. This temporal shifting of focus concerning food's functionality shows that the current obsession with health is not to be likened to a natural law. Rather, it is a point of view concerning food that dominates current food-related discourses. Another example of such a temporal shift in perception of the value of food and its potential usefulness, is the ethical view of food: the ethical aspects that we ascribe to food today were much less important thirty years ago, which only underlines the fact that meaning and value are ascribed to food, by people, over time and in different contexts.

This modest constructionist and 'postmodern' point of view concerning food that I am adopting here is in tune with the semiotic perspective. Foodstuffs become signs of meaning and value only when human beings ascribe meaning and value to them. Moreover, if by 'postmodern' we mean the loss of a common belief in progress, and the loss of universal values or the relativisation of values, then this point of view corresponds well with the present situation where many diverging and contradictory ideas about food coexist.

For the purpose of analysing food ethics in everyday life, I have already made the distinction between the supplier and the receiver of food. It may well be that a supplier of a food does not ascribe the same value to it as the receiver does (see Fig. 2 for a model of this difference).

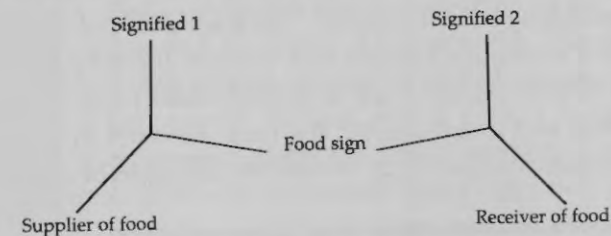


Fig. 2: Double triadic model of a food.

¹⁵ Woolgar, C., 'Group Diets in Late Medieval England', in Woolgar, C.M., Serjeantson, D., Waldron, T., (eds.), *Food in Medieval England: Diet and Nutrition*, Oxford 2006, 191.

the supplier's interpretation of the receiver's preferences for food, which is *Signified 4*.

The triadic semiotic model can thus be used as a conceptual model for gaining an understanding of how meaning and value are ascribed to food, and also for how these understandings come into play as a part of everyday interpersonal relations. The process of understanding food as signs of meanings and values in interpersonal relations is a complex matter, due to the variety of interpretations, the different reflexive layers, and the many areas of life, in which food is involved.

In everyday life, people's relationship to food and the expression of their relationships to others, through food, oscillate between ignorance of the social meanings of food (the 'food as fuel' approach) and deliberate use of food to express meanings, values and care. In everyday life food is closely embedded in traditions, routines, habits, and social norms, which are largely taken for granted and which are, therefore, less obvious for the purposes of analysis. As a conceptual framework, the triadic model owes its analytical power to its ability to disclose some of the 'hidden' meanings and values ascribed to food by actors interacting with each other – for example, as suppliers and receivers of food.

When Producers became Consumers: Cultural Processes in Daily Life

Yrsa Lindqvist

In 2009 I published a book about the changes that had occurred in Finnish food culture during the twentieth century.¹ In less than one hundred years society, technology and materiality had developed faster than ever before, with resultant changes in daily life in Finland, including in the areas of food production and eating habits. As a specialist in the areas of food, work practices and methods, at an archive of Folk Culture, with collections dating from the late nineteenth century to the present, it is obvious that the older material, including photographs, interviews, recipes and all kind of notes related to these subject areas, have become essentially documents concerning a way of life that has definitely passed when compared to the present situation.²

Two aspects, which a study of the archival material concerning food brings into focus, deserve attention. Such a study shows, first of all, how ethnological research has changed over time. The early ethnologists were focusing on rural life and were documenting buildings, the sowing and harvesting of crops, animal slaughtering, fishing methods, and so on. It would seem, from this material, that daily life was mainly about the production and preservation of food. In Finland, where the vast majority of the population lived in rural areas, the production of food was, for most people, what life was actually about. In the early twentieth century, ethnologists tended not to document people's attitudes to the food which they ate, or why it was customary to serve certain dishes on festive occasions, or how a cook worked on a wedding feast in which the whole village would participate. The discipline, at that time, required facts, documenting, for example, recipes, menus, and the order in which people sat at table. The recording work that was carried out was regarded as a rescue mission with the aim of saving evidence of an existing lifestyle in a changing world. An ethnologist of today, in seeking to effectively use this older material, must endeavour to read between the lines, so to speak, in order to connect diverse sources to a context. Atmosphere, for example, is seldom described in the older ethnological notes, but photographs in archival

¹ Lindqvist, Y., *Mat, måltid, minne. Hundra år av finlandssvensk matkultur* ('Food, Meals, Memory. A Hundred Years of Finland Swedish Food Culture'), Helsingfors 2009.

² The Archives of Folk Culture at the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland, (Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland), Helsinki.



Fig. 1: The meal consists of much more than just eating food. It is often a social event, which involves taste, aromas, conversation, togetherness, and material symbols, Pernå 1900 (*Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland*).

collections can be good sources of information in this regard, as arranged pictures can show status through symbols, and snapshots can capture a moment of happiness or sadness in a face.

The second aspect, which a study of the archival material highlights, concerns cultural processes. In contrast to how food was viewed at a time when it was necessary to be self-sufficient in the area of nutrition, food today has many associated implications concerning, for example, the areas of ecology, ethics, health, lifestyle, weekend hobbies, and socialising with friends. These are all aspects of ethnological food research nowadays. In this paper, I will present three aspects of change with regard to food, ranging from the time when matters of production were paramount, to nowadays, when food is concerned more and more with consumption and the choosing of a lifestyle.

Welfare by Gardening

In the late nineteenth century, Finland was still part of the Russian empire, but the search for a national identity was intense at that time, and there was

also grave concern about the general level of education of the people, and thus about the nation's welfare. Many families lived in very simple conditions and their food consisted mainly of potatoes, salted fish or meat, porridge, milk and bread. It is a well-known fact today that one of the best ways of achieving improvement in living conditions in developing countries, is to educate the women folk of these regions. That is also what happened in Finland within the last one hundred years, when, in 1899, a women's organisation, called the Martha Association, was founded. This organisation aimed to make women the fosterers of coming generations in Finland; it also sought to increase their awareness of the political situation in the country, to increase their self-confidence, and to improve their knowledge and skill in housekeeping and family matters.³ Just a few years later, the first housekeeping schools, with the aim of improving women's cooking skills and of establishing new eating habits, in order to achieve a healthier life for their families, were established.

It was decided that one way of achieving the above aim was by teaching women how to grow vegetables, berries and fruit, and how to use them as part of a balanced diet. It was also considered to be economically beneficial to grow vegetables, both from a national and a family perspective. Nowadays, gardening is regarded as being a relaxing hobby with an associated therapeutic dimension, but this same idea was evident in the Martha project, as gardening was meant to provide women with a private space outside the inner household. For the children, vegetable gardening, working with plants and the soil, was seen as a way in which to learn responsibility and, in a moral sense, as a means by which to feel connected to home, to one's native district and, by extension, to the nation.⁴ In the cities, allotment gardens were established for industrial workers and others who did not have the opportunity of visiting the countryside during the summer months. The economic aspect, arising from the possibility of being able to grow some of the household's food requirements, was, perhaps, an even bigger incentive for citizens who tilled allotments. And, as regards the moral issue, allotments were to provide city workers with a healthier way of life.

The Martha organisation also considered it important to teach housewives how to preserve berries and vegetables for home use. The Association arranged exhibitions of, and competition for, preserved fruit, and for the

³ Liljeberg-Elgert, S., (ed.), *Martha-kvinna i tiden 1899-1999* ('Martha-woman in the Period 1899-1999'), Helsingfors 1999, 30.

⁴ Lundén, O., *Hemmets köksträdgård. Praktisk handledning vad odling av köksväxter i täpporna på landet* ('The Kitchen Garden. A Practical Guide for Growing Vegetables in the Countryside'), Helsingfors 1916, 9.



Fig. 2: The kitchen garden was mostly an area for women and children. Helsinki 1920 (Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland).

finest products from the vegetable garden. The prizes to be won were usually seeds or fruit trees as an encouragement to keep up the good work.⁵

Very little information about this early kitchen-gardening activity among the peasantry is to be found in the archival material because, until that time, gardening had been essentially an upper-class activity. The collectors in the field did not pay much attention to the gardening activity of the peasant as it was a new idea and activity which was being disseminated through organisations, schools, and experts, and was thus seen as an agent of change affecting old lifestyles and eating habits. Since the ethnologists' mission was to collect and preserve a disappearing rural culture, contemporary change was seldom documented. Some evidences of kitchen gardens can, however, be found in site plans of farmyards, and in family photos.⁶

Nevertheless, kitchen gardening was a common activity in the Finnish countryside in the twentieth century. During the war years – 1939-1942 – it was necessary to grow potatoes, vegetables, apples, and so on, even in cities, if access could be had even to the smallest piece of ground, even in public

⁵ *Husmodern, organ för föreningen Martha* ('The Housewife, Organ of the Martha Association'), 1909, 170.

⁶ Lindqvist, *op. cit.*, 2009, 92-3.

parks. In the course of the 1960s and 1970s, however, the economic aspects of kitchen gardens diminished and they came to be seen, more and more, as something which older people did, or as something which some people just continued to do as part of an 'old tradition'. I believe that, by the 1970s, many adults who had the experiences of being, more or less, compelled to participate in kitchen gardening as a child, or in collecting wild berries, wanted to spare their own children this kind of work, since it was no longer necessary from an economic point of view. This, combined with a strong movement from rural areas to cities, and to a more urban style of life, meant that the natural know-how concerning the organisation and tilling of a kitchen garden was no longer being transmitted between generations.

Today, kitchen gardening is back, and, as was the case in the beginning, it is once more connected to an ideology, to some extent, at least. The younger generations have discovered that it is possible to grow one's own food, and older people have also taken up gardening as a hobby. There is, indeed, an economic aspect to this new phenomenon, but of primary importance is an ethical dimension. There is a constant flow of information about the extent to which pesticides are used in farming, and how vegetables and fruit are transported all over the world by airplanes, and how workers from the third world, employed just for the harvest period, are badly paid and live in poor conditions. The ecological issues are, perhaps, of most concern to people today – we no longer only count calories out of concern for our own bodies; we also count how much pollution the production and availability of our food produces, thus contributing to global warming. Our consciousness has extended from a sense of responsibility for our own health to the welfare of the earth.

Several movements have taken up gardening as a protest against, or as alternative to, the on-going consumer society. The Slow Food movement started in 1989 as a protest against fast-food eating habits, and its remit has been extended to include not only time to cook and eat, but also time to grow one's own food.⁷ In many cities, people have organised themselves into 'growing-communities' and have started to cultivate gardens in urban milieus. The Guerrilla gardening movement started in London in 2004, and in several cities in Finland, city-growers have organised themselves under the name Dodo.⁸ Even Michelle Obama has given a good example by starting a fruit and vegetable garden at the White house.⁹

⁷ <http://www.slowfood.com/>; accessed 28.2. 2011.

⁸ I am referring to the year 2011; see <http://www.guerrillagardening.org> and <http://dodo.org/tagit/kaupunkiviljely>; accessed 28.2. 2011.

⁹ Silverstein, C. A., *White House Garden Cookbook: Healthy Ideas from the First Family to Your Family*, Washington D.C., 2010.

However, the environmental awareness shown here is still the concern of only a very small group of people. Its primary aim is to show that, although being brought up as a consumer in the western world, the production of food can be very exciting, ideologically challenging, and have a revolutionary tinge to it – even if it was a normal procedure for the majority of the population only two or three generations ago. In that sense, these new organisations resemble, to some extent, the aim of the Martha Association which started one hundred and twenty years ago – that is, to again enlighten people about healthier food. But, instead of a salty and an unbalanced diet, as was often the case in the past, the enemy today is too much of everything, as well as food containing additives, azo dyes, flavourings, and so on.

The Food Industry Needs Authenticity

My second example of household change concerns cooking. Women are supposed to know how to cook, and one's mother is supposed to serve the tastiest of dishes. In former times, cooking skills were usually learnt by a daughter from her mother, or by a daughter-in-law from her mother-in-law. In middle- and upper-class families, servants took care of the household and many newly-married young women did not have much knowledge of kitchen management. Cookbooks were not very common then, and in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they still mainly contained recipes for so-called finer dishes. Young women usually collected recipes from family members, relatives and acquaintances, before marriage. By writing down the recipes in booklets, they made their own cookbooks. These usually consisted not only of food recipes but also of recipes for dyeing textiles and for fruit and vegetable preservation, as well as for household remedies for all kinds of illnesses and complaints of the period. The recipes often have remarks or titles concerning those who provided or created them, and it is possible thereby to follow the kinds of networks which women had at that time.¹⁰

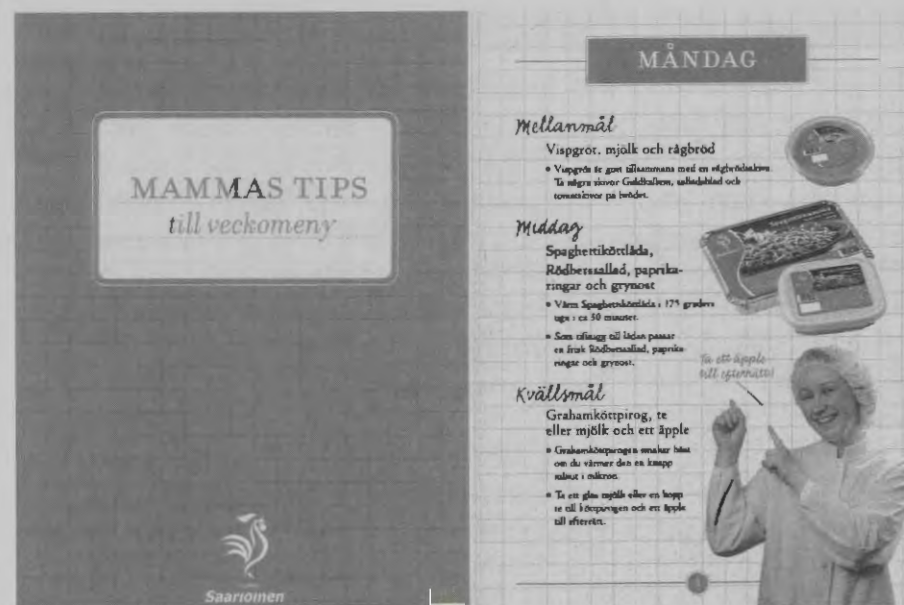
The idea of being educated in gardening and cooking activities went hand-in-hand with the social project of introducing healthier food habits to the Finnish people through household schools. For example, menus were introduced in which every dish had a side dish of some sort of vegetables, and a dessert – usually some kind of fruit-syrup cream – was also recommended.¹¹

As society modernised in the 1950s and 1960s, the Finnish food industry also expanded. As a result of industrial expansion and urbanisation, women

¹⁰ Lindqvist, *op. cit.*, 2009, 133-8.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 142.

were needed in the work force, and young girls, who had formerly worked as domestic servants, got better-paid jobs in the cities and industries. Society had changed. From then on it was necessary for most women to be able to quickly feed the family at the end of a working day. Convenience, or ready-to-eat, food was the answer. What followed over time is well known. Some got stuck in the ready-to-eat pattern and after a couple of generations it was said that people no longer knew how to use primary products or how to cook. In the 1990s, during a serious economic depression in Finland, the Martha Association – which was still in existence – started up cooking courses once more. On this occasion, however, the purpose of the courses was mainly to teach people how to save money by cooking at home rather than by using ready-to-eat food. This was followed by reports on how much salt, fat, preservatives and other additives which oven-ready food contained, and the dangers which these posed to one's health. Thus, the only way to avoid the health risks involved was by using primary products and by cooking at home, like people used to do in the past.¹²



Figs. 3 a, b. The food industry needs to emphasise traditional values in order to create a sense among consumers that food is authentic (Saarioinen advertisements 2005).

¹² See, for example, in this context, books by Mats-Eric Nilsson (Sweden) and Michael Pollan (USA).

This growing sense of awareness about food content, created by books, articles and other forms of documentation, caused the food industry to realise that, by now, a lot of people feel uncomfortable about eating mass-produced foodstuffs. To counteract this, food companies started to use the terms 'old-time' and 'home-made' in advertising, but since home-made cannot actually be used for industrially-produced food, a Finnish food company is, quite ingeniously, marketing their products as being made by mothers. The idea here is to imply that the dish is like what one's own mother would make.

A brochure, for ready-to-eat foodstuffs which I have seen, is clearly influenced in terms of appearance, layout, and content, by a traditional kind of handwritten recipe-booklet that women traditionally used to keep. It lists what to eat for lunch, what to eat between meals, and what to eat for supper, day-by-day, and is nicely illustrated by photos of the products. By appealing to mothers, and having the appearance of an old-time recipe booklet, the food acquires a more genuine touch. Even if the food is new, the values presented in this instance are traditional.¹³

The Kitchen, a Place of Lifestyle Symbols

My third example deals with living conditions and lifestyle issues. It was mainly the very poor living conditions in Finland which the Martha Association, among others, sought to improve for the betterment of households. There was actually nothing called a kitchen in Finnish houses, just a stove that gave both light and warmth in a room in which a variety of activities took place. Food supplies were kept in different buildings, the water which was needed for the household was kept in a tub inside the door, and a chair was the only surface on which utensils and foodstuffs needed during cooking could be placed. Daily cooking was just about the feeding of the family.

Again I choose to point out three factors that led to change in household management in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The iron-stove was an innovation that required change with regard to the kitchen utensils, recipes and eating habits of the family. The cooking of food in a pot over an open fire did not allow much scope for creativity, and the household oven itself was large, and was mainly used for the baking of bread, which took place twice a year. With the introduction of the efficient iron stove it was possible to fry food and to bake more easily, and also to save firewood.¹⁴

¹³ The advertising campaign referring to mothers is run by a food company in Finland called Saarioinen – see Fig. 3a,b above.

¹⁴ Langlet, M., *Husmodern i staden och på landet. En fullständig handbok i hushållningens alla grenar* ('The Housewife in the City and in the Countryside. A Complete Guide to all Aspects of the Household'), Stockholm 1892, 885-6.



Fig. 4: The iron stove was an important innovation in the kitchen; nevertheless, many women in Finland were still cooking in poor ergonomic and hygienic conditions until the 1950s. Nystad 1917 (*Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland*).

Secondly ergonomics became an important issue. No one had previously counted all the steps a housewife took in a totally unplanned cooking environment, until the 1920s and 1930s when women's housework was viewed in terms of convenience, saving time, and hygiene.¹⁵ In the 1960s, although the standard of living was rising, improvements carried out in many households were more pragmatic than aesthetical, and while the iron stove was still common in country houses, a gas or electric cooker was often placed beside it and used in addition to it when cooking. Later on, in the 1970s, as modernity and practical solutions dominated, everything reminiscent of the old times tended to be also associated with poverty. Every housewife's dream, when living in an old country house, was to rebuild at least the kitchen, without nostalgia.

The third revolution happened when men started to participate in cooking. Now the kitchen became a more interesting place for the whole family, and it was no longer built as a small separate room with doors which locked in

¹⁵ Liljeberg-Elgert, *op. cit.*, 1999, 11-24.

the smell of cooking. Today, houses are built in open-plan style; the kitchen is often a part of the living room with matching interior fixtures. And even when it is a separate room, it is spacious and representative. The kitchen can actually be the most expensive part of the house, and it is probable that it is men's interest in cooking that has led to the improved technical level of kitchen fittings. It is not that women would not also have planned the kitchen solutions and wanted the new technology, but men nowadays use kitchen materials and machines as evidence of family's lifestyle and standard of living, and are ready to invest in an elaborate and technologically advanced kitchen, just as they would in a fine car. In purchasing a kitchen today, one is also buying into a dream of togetherness and of happy family life, since food and eating are nowadays first and foremost regarded as acts of socialisation. This is so, at least in the dream, since, in reality, many fine kitchens are not used that much on an ongoing basis. There is also an advertising slogan which says something like 'Show me your kitchen and I can tell you who you are'. Today, country-style stands for romantic values, for something cosy, for harmony and nostalgia – perhaps, also for family values. On the other hand, there are also kitchens that are rigidly structured



Fig. 5: Today we are expected to live out our dreams in the kitchen milieu. The kitchen interior tells us who we are in a social context (Ikea 2005).

and sterile-looking, but they, too, can be regarded as being exclusive and can also signify success.¹⁶

Food Patterns Change

My three examples – the kitchen-garden project providing an incentive for people to grow and consume vegetables and fruit, the food industry requiring a connection to something real, such as mother, and the kitchen as a 'showroom' for ideals – are taking place in food studies. They are examples of how traditional subjects can be reshaped in a new context in modern times. For me, as someone who works at an archive, it is interesting and natural to compare the way of life portrayed in historical documents with modern life. Things change, but few things are completely new; they acquire new meanings in a different context. The discipline of ethnology, with its historical and contemporary dimensions, enables us analyse contemporary society while keeping the historical perspective in mind.

Today, the media are an important channel for both the provision and the acquisition of information. The flow of information, concerning all aspects of life, is also very fast. It is easy to get information on the Internet and especially in the social media, like Facebook, and friends are influenced by each other. I have read many comments in the social media provided by people making jam and syrup and this serves to inspire others to do the same. There are plenty of blogs where people publish recipes, home-style hints, and so on. We are subject to many influences and we are increasingly expected to take a stand, choose how to live, and how to consume. The consuming patterns of today are also questions of conscience. In the Western world, food is no longer just a question of nutrition; it is about choosing a lifestyle, and, in recent times, it is also concerned with discovering old traditions in order to provide useful skills in a new context. Even if consumers of conscience still only represent a marginal group of people, they are part of a growing trend. A new change is taking place – this time in the consumer society. And I think that we, as researchers, should be aware of the saying 'food patterns are hard to change, yet they change often and rapidly'.¹⁷

¹⁶ Lindqvist, *op. cit.*, 2009, 180-3.

¹⁷ Belasco, W., 'Food Matters. Perspective on an Emerging Field', in Belasco, W., Scranton, P., (eds.), *Food Nations. Selling Taste in Consumer Societies*, New York/London 2002, 11.

'Food Identity' as a Guide in Facing Contemporary Challenges in Food Markets and Rural Districts on the Example of Norway

Torger Gillebo

In Western and other regions of Europe contemporary developmental trends in the food sector influence the market for ecological food. In this paper I aim to discuss how different eco-food stakeholders encounter standardisation in the food sector – especially with reference to non-place-based tendencies within the food market at large. The analysis is based on case studies carried out within a Norwegian context.

In order to elucidate the theme 'food identity' the following questions are posed:

1. What are the driving forces which are active in forming appropriate market strategies among contemporary eco-food stakeholders?
2. What kind of institutional framework influences everyday network building within the eco-food sector?
3. How do eco-food networks promote the identity connected to the regions of which they are part?

Preliminary Understanding of 'Food Identity'

Changes in demand for food can be understood in the context of central driving forces within Western societies. These forces are connected both to continuing standardisation of food and to the individualisation of food choice processes, which although being simultaneous, have different outcomes. Since the Second World War, the food sector has been undergoing an increasing degree of mechanisation and structural rationalisation. This is especially the case within the processing and sales sector of the food industry in which the mass production of predominantly standard and low-priced products has occurred. On the other hand, this process has gradually alienated Western societies from traditional values and norms, as locality is not as important as formerly in the socialisation process. In addition, most of the population has little or no experience of the production and processing of food.¹ What is happening nowadays is that the members of these societies

¹ Morgan, K., Murdoch, J., 'Organic vs. Conventional Agriculture: Knowledge, Power and Innovation in the Food Chain', *Geoforum* (2000): 31, 159-73.

are concerned with the construction or reconstruction of food identity. As an example of this R. Jensen explains how hen eggs became an entry point for the concept of a 'Dream Society' in public relations.² Some futurist researchers wondered why eco-eggs dominated the Danish egg market in spite of their high prices. The answer was that consumers were prepared to pay more for free range eggs rather than consume processed industrialised eggs and thereby run the risk of Salmonella infection. I consider this example to be a symptom of the search for what I will call 'food identity'.

In this context I find the concept of 'embeddedness' to be a useful tool for the purposes of deepening an investigation of the relationship between identity and food. I apply the notion of embeddedness in a holistic way which, according to M. Hess,³ implies interconnections between three forms of embeddedness, that is, societal, network and territorial embeddedness. These three forms are now dealt with in more detail.

- *Societal embeddedness*: This concept emphasises the more deep-rooted social/cultural character of economic action. Contemporary postmodernism is connected to the more recent risk society and, particularly, to the environmental problems on which modern people are reflecting. Therefore, an examination of organic food production and consumption as a discursive field, reveals certain contested terrains which incorporate different values and meanings in regard to nature, social movements, consumers, food scares, and so on. This phenomenon of societal embeddedness causes different market approaches – as outlined among others by J. Murdoch and M. Miele (1999)⁴: Firstly, there is the 'dedicated' market approach which is characterised by interpersonal negotiations and a focus on products which have qualities adjusted to the needs of a particular set of clients. Secondly, and by contrast, there are 'generic' products which can be sold directly on the market. This market is very predictable and follows well-known supply and demand curves. In this respect, embeddedness has a 'horizontal' facet which involves the interpretation of social/cultural domains – as I have illustrated with the market axis in Fig. 1 (next page):

² Jensen, R., *The Dream Society*, Viby 1999, 12-13.

³ Hess, M., 'Spatial Relationships? Towards a Reconceptualization of Embeddedness', *Progress in Human Geography* 28, no. 2 (2004): 165-86.

⁴ Murdoch, J., Miele, M., 'Back to Nature: Changing Worlds of Production in the Food Sector', *Sociologia Ruralis* 39, no. 4 (1999): 465-83.

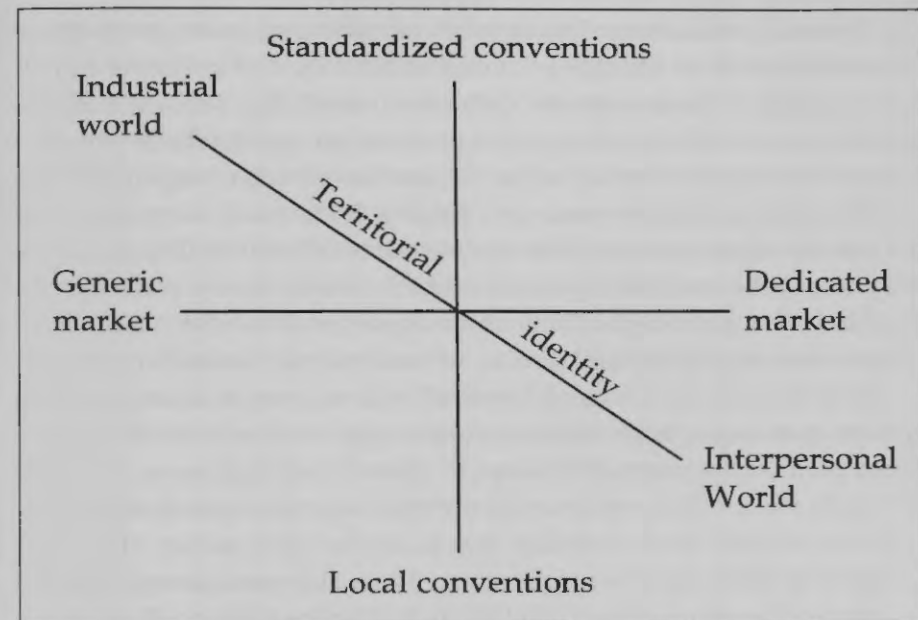


Fig.1: Dimensions embedded in economic activity.

- *Network embeddedness*: On account of my holistic approach it is also necessary to assess the implications of the embeddedness concept outside of the value-based and interpersonal realm. In the context of food, embeddedness also embraces the economic, institutional and political dimensions of food networks. Productive activity can be seen as a form of collective action. At the heart of this collective action are 'conventions' which, in the literature on the subject, are defined as the practices, routines, agreements, and so on, which bind acts together through mutual expectations. Conventions may take two forms: on the one hand, sets of standardised, codified rules and norms may reign while on the other, conventions may emerge from local idiosyncratic sets of relations. In practise, involved stakeholders often place themselves somewhere between these opposite positions. This 'vertical' facet of embeddedness, illustrated by the convention axis in Fig. 1, relates individual and corporate actors⁵ at local level to the larger society, economy and politics, of which they are part.

⁵ According to Håkansson and Johanson, an 'actor' in a network can be an individual, a business in a company, or even a group of companies. However, each actor is characterised by controlling certain resources/activities and by being linked to some specific other actors through exchange relationship. See Håkansson, H., Johanson, J., 'The Network as a Governance Structure', in Brunsson, N., Olsen, J.P., (eds.), *Organizing Organizations*, Bergen 1998, 47-62.

- *Territorial embeddedness*: This form of embedding addresses geographical spaces in a more direct way and is inspired by C. Ray (1998)⁶ and his discussion of the concept of a 'cultural economy'. Ray's idea of a cultural economy arose because of recent post-modern trends, the trajectory of rural development policy in the EU, and the growth of regionalism as a EU and a global phenomenon. Arising from these phenomena Ray outlines three operational modes of territorial identity. The first mode refers to the creation of resources which already have a place identity, that is, that place-dependent culture already exists *within* the products, and thus they can be sold directly to consumers in the local community. In the second case, the actors involved wish to *construct* identity through incorporating cultural resources pertaining to territorial identity in order to promote the geographical area in question to a larger area. The third mode also involves constructing territorial identity, but its purpose now is to promote itself internally, that is, to the communities, businesses, municipalities and so on, of the region. These different modes of territorial strategies in terms of food identity can be displayed along a diagonal line in Fig. 1 and appear somewhere between what is called the 'Industrial World' and the 'Interpersonal World'. This figure shows how the three above-mentioned dimensions of territorial embeddedness form an overall conceptual tool which can throw light on the term 'food identity'.

Experiences from Three Case Regions

In order to answer the questions posed at the outset of this paper it is necessary to view contemporary processes in the eco-food sector in the context of the everyday life in which they operate. I will, therefore, draw on case studies presented as part of my doctoral dissertation completed in 2007. As part of my research for the dissertation I carried out semi-structured interviews among stakeholders involved in the eco-food sector in three regions in the eastern part of Norway. What the selected people had in common was a visible entrepreneur role which was independent of their status as farmers, retailers, public servants and advisors to farmers and supermarkets. It was also important that these people knew each other and comprised cooperative groups within their respective regions. The three regions and the interviewees selected, were:

- The County of Buskerud: Here the production of organic grain and pork is the predominant agricultural activity. The key people interviewed were

⁶ Ray, C., 'Culture, Intellectual Property and Territorial Rural Development', *Sociologia Ruralis* 38, no. 1 (1998): 3-20.

mid-level managers from the Meat Co-operative, the Consumer Co-operative, the Agriculture Office, and the Agriculture Advisory Service.

- The Municipality of Sande: Here actors had established development and sales collaborations connected to the organic vegetable sector. People from a local wholesale business, the organic farming sector, the organic Advisory Service, and the municipality, were selected as interviewees.
- The Valley of Numedal: In this valley entrepreneurs were involved in the conversion of grasslands to organic farming and/or were engaged in the processing of local livestock products. Interviewees were recruited from the Agricultural Advisory Service, a local food project (Numedalsmat), local food processors, and the Regional Council.

In the next section data from this interview-investigation is presented case-by-case using the theory of societal, network and territorial embeddedness as a main analytical tool.

The Buskerud Case

Generic vs. Dedicated Market

'I'm not an ideologist; it's nice when the eco-approach doesn't become estranged (from all traditional ways of thinking)'.

This anti-ideological approach, expressed by one interviewee, was strengthened by the emphasis which she also placed on practical matters, such as environmental friendliness in food production. This was indicated by using phrases such as 'health and healthy food', and 'maintaining the health of the soil'. Based on my interviews, I experienced a kind of governing optimism in this case study, that is, that the view expressed generally was, that by providing 'correct information to the whole population' and by 'selling the surplus to Europe', the actors thought that it would be possible to 'convert the entire agriculture to organic' in Norway.

Author's Reflection: The Buskerud case represents, in some ways, an adaptation to classical modernity as outlined in the literature on the topic. Efforts are made so that organic production becomes a part of the widespread food processing and sales systems operating in the market place. High volumes, rational processing, and predictable incomes, are part of this perspective. Together with the emphasis placed on human health, one might claim, in line with P. Kaltoft (2001),⁷ that this approach expresses a 'modern' and, to some degree, an anthropocentric view (with regard to factors such as

⁷ Kaltoft, P., 'Organic Farming in Late Modernity: At the Frontier of Modernity or Opposing Modernity?', *Sociologia Ruralis* 41, no. 1 (2001): 146-58.

developing optimism and rational thinking) in relation to organic farming. However, the strong emphasis placed by the interviewees on soil preservation, and their appeal to societal responsibility, also reflects a moral dimension to their considerations. In this regard, this case study bears resemblance to the perceptions of the British Soil Association in these matters and, according to M. Reed (2001),⁸ to the phenomenon of 'slippage from the discourse of the physical Soil and that of social Soil'. All in all, and related to the generic-dedicated axis in Fig. 1, I could state that the way of thinking of the interviewees in the Buskerud case study goes in the direction of the dedicated market. Nevertheless, because the stakeholders, to a large degree, were integrated into the already established food system, I prefer to put this example into the left part of the market axis.

Standardised vs. Local Conventions

'Eco-farmers should fill the boardrooms of the food-processing co-operatives'.

Co-operation between the state and the sales sector of the eco-food producers was a mainstay in the above actor's way of thinking. The idea expressed in the quotation was strengthened by the actor's following statement: 'What we are in need of is full legitimacy and support from the system on which we depend'. Thanks to formal and somewhat informal contacts to central authorities, it did not take long before this group received investment support for a meatpacking machine for handling considerable quantities of eco-food at the meat-processing plant in this area. 'From now on we are able to pack all sorts of organic meat in plastic, use the eco-label, and distribute it nation-wide', the manager told us.

Author's Reflection: In Buskerud I noted that the activities of the people who co-operated across organisational boundaries in the eco-food sector were, simultaneously, both local and national in orientation. This led to the combining of conventions resulting in a changed relationship between producers and consumers by virtue of eco-certification labels, production codes, and reputational effects. The stakeholders were oriented toward a vertical direction to such a degree that their activities were close to what J. Murdoch (2000)⁹ describes as 'vertical networks'. In sum, therefore, one may claim, that in this case organic food is linked to the economy of

⁸ Reed, M., 'Fight the Future! How the Contemporary Campaigns of the UK Organic Movement have Arisen from their Composting of the Past', *Sociologia Ruralis* 41, no. 1 (2001): 131-45.

⁹ Murdoch, J., 'Networks - A New Paradigm of Rural Development?' *Journal of Rural Studies* (2000): 16, 407-19.

standardisation and industrial efficiency, that is, that it is oriented towards the upper part of the convention axis in Fig. 1.

Territorial Identity

'We strive for a smooth flow in the whole county'.

Although the actors gave considerable attention to external organisations such as the Meat Co-operative and the national agriculture authorities, much of their everyday actions affected different parts of their own regional community. Common activities involved, for example, the establishment of contacts to schools and cooks, the organisation of eco-farm visits, the arrangement of the annual organic Christmas dinners during which people from different levels of society participated in the carrying out of eco-food demonstrations in a variety of food stores. One manager claimed that 'we don't wish to limit ecology to some idealist groups; we strive for a smooth flow in the whole county'. Another manager felt that it was necessary to 'include innovators who were brave enough to voice their opinion - otherwise it all boils down to a top-down management process. This practice corresponds to our tradition in this county'.

Author's Reflection: In spite of a strategy of reliance on the state, public support and 'ecological conventionalisation',¹⁰ a sophisticated mix between endogenous and exogenous features were evident in the Buskerud case study. As a result of having established broad contacts with the local people, together with the involvement of innovators in special entrepreneurial course gatherings, and the creation of communication channels across administrative boundaries, a strengthened regional agency for the eco-food sector emerged as an important result. On the other hand, place, or rural, development did not appear as part of the eco-food strategy as the stakeholders are engaged in promoting a unified county as a leading eco-food region in a national context. An important goal was to point the food system as a whole in a more ecological direction. With this externally directed form of territorial identity, what emerges from this case study is what I term 'institutional entrepreneurship'.¹¹ Transformed to the diagonal line in Fig. 1, it is placed closer to the Industrial World than the Interpersonal World.

¹⁰ Guthman, J., 'Back to the Land: The Paradox of Organic Food Standards', *Environment and Planning* 36, no. 3 (2004): 511-54.

¹¹ Gillebo and Hugio, *op. cit.*, 2006.

The Sande Case Study

Generic vs. dedicated market

'Consumers are irrational, individual and complex'.

The manager of O-Company, who made the above remark, meant that Norwegian agricultural policies should become 'much more market-oriented and consumer-focused'. Thus consumers should be approached on the basis of 'promoting an understanding for prices' and 'not by providing competitive prices'. He also added that the farmer-consumer relationship is a 'matter of trust - I'm careful about claiming that organic food is healthy, because that is much harder to document'. The manager also emphasised that 'co-operation between autonomous companies' allows space for 'mixed farming, more economic and energy efficient production and new impulses'. A close partner of his added that it is acceptable that growth in organic food production 'doesn't go too fast - so that we will have gained the necessary know-how and will be ready when the market has matured'.

Author's Reflection: One thing that characterises the Sande milieu is the vital role played by one innovator and manager with regard to the eco-food sector. His experience and inspiration, drawn from an integrated environment-economy approach in other European countries, sets much of the standard in this area. In turn, this 'post-modern' entrepreneurial behaviour is explained by a large degree of autonomy and individualisation, in the eco-food sector, which implies that there might be a loss of stability, but which, in fact, leads to new forms of self-control. From this (and similar environments) arises a new 'advanced form of societalisation' which I find P. Allen and M. Kovac (2000)¹² express in an appropriate mode by referring to the phenomenon of 'Green Consumerism'. One may understand this term as an expression of a reflective and interactive communication between consumers and producers. This is in line with a transparency strategy in respect of the eco-food sector.

Standardised vs. Local Conventions

'The established system has smashed regional quality products to pieces'.

The above-mentioned manager stated that he was a sworn supporter of a rigid national control scheme regarding the production and sale of organic food, as 'this creates trust', he claimed. On the other hand, he told me that

¹² Allen, P., Kovac, M., 'The Capitalist Composition of Organic: The Potential of Markets in Fulfilling the Promise of Organic Agriculture', *Agriculture and Human Values* (2000): 17, 221-32.

'we really have tried out co-operation, but the established wholesalers didn't have the necessary will and focus' for this to succeed. He recognised as being accurate what is stated in the opening quotation, and he decided to 'build up a local network' and to establish a new separate wholesale business based on organic food, that is, the O-company. Since then, numerous other companies have been established to deal with vegetable growing, greenhouse crops, transportation, marketing, and food retail consulting. In turn, this professional business cluster gave strength to formalised agreements with some region-wide retail chains. As a result, the main strategy was to produce food with regional characteristics and thereby to profile 'quality and niche products' through and through. Gradually, the intention was to introduce electronic systems that 'allow products to be traced to specific producers, including the use of farmers' photos, addresses and so on'.

Author's Reflection: The stakeholders in Sande have successively built up a local and regional business cluster, based on organic food, in which the development of local competence was a key strategy. This practice resembles Murdoch's horizontal (and diversified) networks, in which development is linked to the new learning economy. The milieu deviates from the classical ecological movement by its combination of ecological and commercial conventions which, according to J. Murdoch, T. Marsden, and J. Banks (2000)¹³ 'allow them to circumvent the pressure on prices that is so evident in (industrial) markets'. This actualises the regional product trajectory and, thereby, the convention of transparency. For these reasons a tendency towards specialised production can be observed in this case - on the middle of the Industrial and Interpersonal World axis in Fig. 1.

Territorial Identity

'We are planning a regional ecological power-house in our municipality'.

The goal of the centre mentioned in the above quote, is to serve a wide catchment area with know-how connected to organic food production, marketing, consulting, and research, according to the centre's manager. The mayor of the local municipality actively contributed to the realisation of this plan. As a result, ecological agriculture was included in the municipality's Strategy Plan and organic food was considered as being a 'flagship' enterprise for the local community. The municipality also arranged 'business-days' when ecology was included as a business topic, and school children used

¹³ Murdoch, J., Marsden, T., Banks, J., 'Quality, Nature, and Embeddedness: Some Theoretical Considerations in the Context of the Food Sector', *Economic Geography* 76, no. 2 (2000): 114.

eco-food as an entrepreneurial idea. Then the mayor hoped that it would be possible to introduce ecological meals in care homes as well as in schools. In addition, a group was developing a concept for wilderness-tourism in which an ecological dimension would also be included.

Author's Reflection: Due to a specialised/generic market strategy, new value was added to business as well as at local level and this emerged as the outstanding achievement in the Sande area. This kind of experience in combination with the emphasis on professional knowledge prepared the way for a learning economy in this area. It would appear that this kind business culture enables dialogue-based partnerships, in the stakeholder's relevant surroundings, to emerge. In this case study, the promotion of territorial identity was seen to direct it internally, that is, towards both local and regional levels, and appeared as a strategy of 'market entrepreneurship'.¹⁴

The Numedal Case Study

Generic vs. dedicated market

'The basic attitude here is to operate our farms in harmony with nature'.

Numedal had been more successful in converting farmland to organic food production than most of the other regions in Norway. However, different problems and obstacles had begun to emerge. One on-farm processor of lamb products who was 'building on things which I've learned from the school of life', stated that she was a producer of 'clean mountain lamb'. However, her production could not be certified as being organic because, as she said: 'up in the mountains we need a bit of fertiliser on the pastures. And she added: 'consumers who ask for local food products do not ask about the use of mineral fertilisers – it seems to be more important to them that the lambs had grazed on Hardangervidda'. Several producers had expected to benefit from the recently established project, 'Food from Numedal' as the project leader had stated that the progress in ecological agriculture could act as an entrance to the new project. But he pointed out that 'those who are producing local food seem to have more to tell about their products than the eco-farmers', as, unlike the eco-farmers, the local food processors have narratives about products and enterprises having brands such as 'Fjellsmak' ('Mountain taste'), 'Numedalsurt' ('Numedal herbs'), and 'Eventyrhotell' ('Adventure hotel'), respectively.

¹⁴ Gillebo and Hugo, *op. cit.*, 2006, 244-56.

Author's Reflection: It would appear that the approach to eco-food production in Numedal is 'pre-modern' in form. The abovementioned actor's ambitious attitude regarding the public scheme for organic food ('Food from Numedal') may be understood in the light of the following statement by Kaltoft (2001): 'The demands associated with the organic vision of another society go far beyond asking consumers to buy organic products'.¹⁵ The actor's business activities appeared to be tightly coupled to lifestyle, including the fact that experience appeared to be more important than abstract principles. The predominant 'aesthetical reflection' in this case would appear to be an outcome of the phenomenon 'heritage', of which J. Bessière (1998)¹⁶ states: 'Social memory as a common legacy preserves the cultural and social identity of a given community'. Regarding the generic vs. dedicated dimensions, therefore, it would appear appropriate to place this case somewhere at the dedicated part of the topical axis in Fig. 1.

Standardised vs. Local Conventions

'We are becoming alienated from the centralised co-operative approach'.

The mode of contact between emerging food-processing activities in Numedal appeared to be an informal one. The local farmer advisory service, which was the central meeting place for those involved, served not only as an area for the diffusion of knowledge, but also as an arena for the discussion of different future strategies. The co-operative movement is a longstanding tradition in the valley, but, as a local mayor pointed out: 'due to the increase in business mentality and more centralisation, we are becoming alienated from the co-operative approach'. On the other hand, and related to the eco-food activity, in spite of recent success regarding the conversion of farmland for eco-food production purposes, there appeared to be a growing skepticism regarding the organic label-system – Debio – which was described as 'a monopolised control and fee scheme which was not appropriate for small scale producers'.

Author's Reflection: The community in Numedal was marked by a drive to revitalise the use of the region's own resources, even though co-ordination and joint measures were lacking to a large degree. In line with J. Murdock's ideas about the role of networks in rural development¹⁷ the Numedal region

¹⁵ Kaltoft, *op. cit.*, 2001, 150.

¹⁶ Bessière, J., 'Local Development and Heritage, Traditional Food and Cuisine as Tourist Attractions in Rural Areas', *European Society for Rural Sociology* 38, no. 1 (1998): 26.

¹⁷ Murdock, J., 'Networks – A New Paradigm of Rural Development?', *Journal of Rural Studies* (200): 107-25.

could be categorised as a remote rural environment lacking firm network relationships. However, 'the strength of weak ties',¹⁸ that is, that significant development and new ideas frequently arise when contacts to central institutions exist only indirectly and distantly, was also evident. Such embodied qualitative approaches might be regarded as virtuous combinations of civic and domestic conventions. In this case, this means that the emphasis is placed on rural development and steady customers. For obvious reasons, this case places itself near to the Interpersonal Production World in Fig. 1.

Territorial Identity

'The point of the matter is a sustainable local community that supports itself'.

This statement with regard to the economic viability of the local economy was coloured by hindrances such as, for example, the fact that milk organically produced in the area was not sold as such, but transported to a dairy outside the region where it was mixed with conventionally produced milk. This was regarded as a 'meaningless' scenario, one which meant that people had 'become powerless' in relation to product and territorial identity in the face of central food institutions and businesses. One interviewee emphasised that 'the link to familiar localities, in combination with the experience of local culture and history, is an important aspect for many. ... The region and our identity are closely linked'. With regard to the ecological approach, the local mayor emphasised that 'we are receptive to the extent that this will be a strategy to increase the share of locally added value'. The synergy between agriculture and other rural activities lay at the heart of the actors' thinking; several had gained marketing experience from selling to tourists, farm shops and farmers markets. One herb seller combined her business with a 'Christmas sale' in which Christmas trees, flower decorations, and art exhibits were included in addition to the selling of herbs. Another person expanded his eco-farm activity to include 'green care' (farming for health) and a farm hotel. A third farmer was planning a micro power plant as a way of supplementing his income. Now the local advisor dreams about reviving a former dairy and a slaughterhouse in the valley.

Author's Reflection: The predominant and most visible development feature in the Numedal area was the active interface between a slow food strategy and new activities such as mountain-tourism, the delivery of different services, energy production, and so on. In accordance with Ray

¹⁸ Granovetter, M. S., 'The Strength of the Ties', *American Journal of Sociology* (1973): 78, 1360-80.

(1998)¹⁹ the linking of products/services to territory a) 'enables the locality to retain more of the economic benefit' arising as a result of such linkage, and b) 'gives ability to local, fragile culture to control the type of economic activity that occurs' in the region. My conversation partners in the Numedal area were deliberately aligning new entrepreneurial activities with each other and, at the same time, strengthening their self-reliance with regard to reshaping a vital local countryside. In that respect, territorial identity functions as an implicit force for economic entrepreneurship and appears as what I prefer to call a mode of 'cultural entrepreneurship'²⁰ – see Fig. 2.

Generalisation of Findings

In this paper, I have focused on how the phenomenon of embeddedness can inspire certain groups within the food sector to engage in regionalising processes, in order to move the production and sales dimensions of the local food system in a more sustainable direction. This appears as a common driving force for the stakeholders in the case study regions dealt with in this paper. On the other hand, each case study area has emerged as being unique

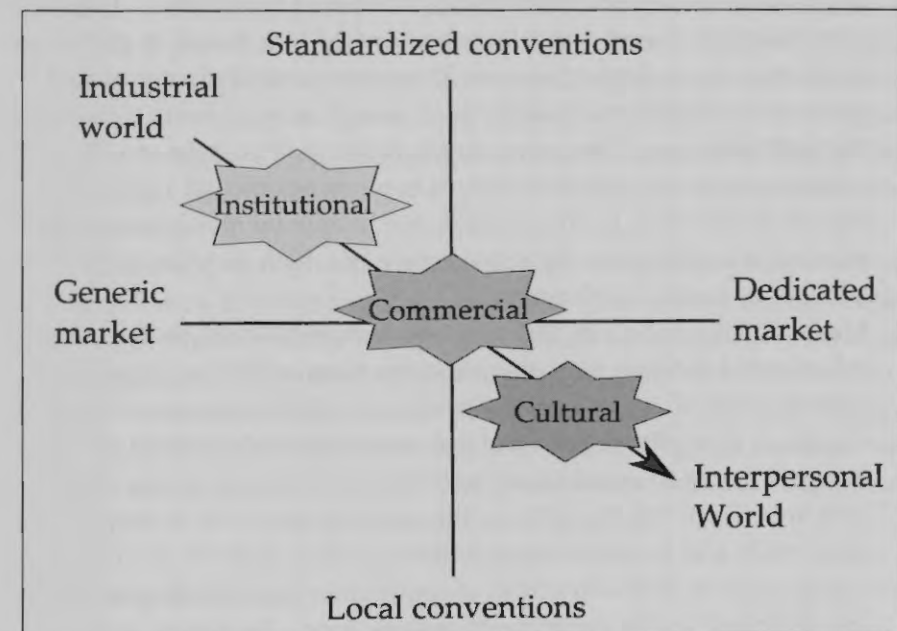


Fig. 2: Food identity re-embedded in different regional settings.

¹⁹ Ray, *op. cit.*, 1998, 6.

²⁰ Gillebo and Hugo, *op. cit.*, 2006, 244-56.

in itself, by virtue of its economic activities being rooted in personal incentives, and also in personal relationships that have developed over time.

This form of a two-sided picture is illustrated in Fig. 2. Here the different forms of entrepreneurship discussed above are included. In terms of the three dimensions displayed, the entrepreneurial efforts in all three case regions appear to pull away from the Industrial World in favour of the Interpersonal World.

But the regions show uniqueness in terms of the three concepts – institutional entrepreneurship, commercial entrepreneurship, and cultural entrepreneurship. As this becomes evident, an inner consistency pertaining to each profile – where market, network, and territorial strategies become integrated elements of a food identity – also reveals itself. In the context of the questions which I posed at the outset of this paper in relation to the theme ‘food identity’ and of the discussion so far, I will now outline three models of ecological entrepreneurs probably applicable in the Norwegian situation:

1. **Model A:** In this proposed model it is the societal/cultural background which connects current actors to the established food system. The threat from chemistry-based agriculture has caused key people to participate in debates on ecological issues. They are particularly motivated by concerns for health and healthy food as well as by a desire to maintain the health of the soil. They now want to utilise their position and authority to motivate central policymakers to convert agriculture nationwide to organic production. In this context, the people involved would like to promote a unified and vigorous county of which they are part, as the leitmotif of such a development.
2. **Model B:** This milieu is, first and foremost, influenced by the complex behaviour of modern consumers and their demand for environmentally friendly food of high quality. On account of the slowness of and the resistance from the established conventional food system, the actors involved prefer to establish an autonomous wholesale business in their own area. From this foundation, the stakeholders build networks to the retail trade and to public organisations in their relevant surroundings, and practice an interactive form of communication with consumers who are dedicated to the principle of organic food. Promoting place as an organic power centre is part of the strategy.
3. **Model C:** A heart-felt wish of stakeholders belonging to peripheral rural districts is to apply a commoditisation strategy in terms of food

production and supply that is closely connected to the natural features and cultural history of the districts in question. A perceived powerlessness in the face of central food institutions is a predominant perception and gives rise to efforts to establish local production and sale of different forms of slow food. It is thought that the products themselves will strengthen people's love for the countryside in question – both in terms of the inhabitants themselves and regular visitor groups.

This form of distinctiveness between different production environments also provides a flexible conceptual tool with which to judge strengths, weaknesses, options, and threats, in a given set of cases. With regard to the models proposed in this paper the strengths of the A-model clearly involve the commitment towards eco-food production of active institutional key-persons who are rooted in the mainstream culture of agricultural institutions. At the same time, the model is vulnerable because it strongly depends for success on a mere handful of mid-level managers, as the focus on organic food is not firmly rooted either at grassroots level, or higher up in the respective organisations. Thus, the B-model has a clear strength in its focus on strongly-motivated, professional groups of people with a long-term commitment to organic food systems, and its focus on building up collaboration and horizontal exchange between actors in the market. This may result, however, in the exclusion of certain farmer and consumer groups from the organic arena. The strength of the C-Model is clearly its connectedness to place and local culture. Its weakness is the lack of interplay with market and institutional forces.

Therefore, food identity, which consists, in my view, of the elements which I have elucidated in this paper, can be a useful and active guide for further eco-food activity in Norway to such a degree that the innovators involved may recognise not only their strengths, but also their weaknesses. Thus, eco-food innovators may contribute to developing learning regions characterised by their distinctness, but also by a willingness to learn from each other and to gain from being invited into a broader regional co-operation framework.

Concluding Remarks

Development must build on qualities that exist. In order to support and develop regional food identities, it is necessary to understand the uniqueness of each entrepreneurial process – as has been illustrated in the three case studies above. Any culture of innovation is, however, a forceful dynamic

process. An understanding of innovation processes, therefore, also implies an understanding of the dynamics of the processes involved. Bearing this in mind, regional conversion strategies within the eco-food sector should:

- Build on the activity of pioneering local/regional cultures of practice
- Understand and support their entrepreneurial uniqueness and social ecology
- Facilitate broader intertwining of institutional, commercial, and cultural forces of change
- Develop competency and a culture of inquiry linked to intertwined entrepreneurship.

A corresponding research strategy should acknowledge, build on, and strengthen the culture of inquiry embedded in the regional cultures of practice. In order to understand the interplay of ongoing processes connected to the emerging eco-food activity, a methodological challenge which is emerging is to develop a dynamic phenomenology capable of grasping both the uniqueness of identities and the general dynamics of the movements the resultant interaction precipitates.

Part I: Food in Multicultural and Transnational Contexts

Un-defining Authenticity in Chinese Restaurants and Cuisine

Nancy Yan

Scholars have long recognised that authenticity is a construct. They have investigated and observed how cultural practices that were once deemed traditional have in fact been altered, or have foreign or capricious origins, or have undergone a variety of modifying influences, and have therefore concluded that the notion that authenticity exists is a fallacy. In her foundational work, *In Search of Authenticity*, Regina Bendix explores the historical role of authenticity in folklore scholarship and discusses the constructed nature of the concept. Bendix '... advocates laying to rest the uses of authenticity within scholarship ... [in order] to undermine the social and political power of discourses on authenticity'.¹ Scholars thus might have us dismantle the idea of authenticity, claiming that its use has been more harmful than helpful. Authenticity has certainly been used to dominate and to disempower, but people also find value in claiming authenticity as a tool of empowerment and resistance. While authenticity can be used to oppress, as Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger have shown in *The Invention of Tradition* (1983),² it can also be used to legitimate and empower groups that have been, historically, disempowered. Therefore, rather than expunging authenticity as a superfluous aspect of cultural expression, I suggest that a more valuable way to understand authenticity is to acknowledge and embrace its existence and use, and to examine how it is being used. I suggest that we do not try to dismantle authenticity, but rather to reframe it. I use the Chinese restaurant phenomenon as a means of exploring and identifying a framework for understanding cultural authenticity in context. What factors influence the claims of authenticity? As Chinese restaurants and Chinese cuisine are often subject to discussions concerning cultural authenticity versus unauthentic bastardisations, they provide an ideal site in which to examine and propose criteria for looking at claims to authenticity in cultural expressions. In this presentation, I explore the parameters of authenticity claims.

¹ Bendix, Regina, *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies*, Madison 1997, 226-7.

² Hobsbawm, Eric, Ranger, Terrence, *The Invention of Tradition*, New York 1983.

Dictionary.com defines authentic as: 'not false or copied; genuine; real'.³ This admittedly lay source, perhaps reflecting common usage, operates on the premise that authenticity is based on fixed criteria for judgment. The idea that authenticity is 'not false or copied, genuine, real' implies singularity. 'Falseness' indicates the presence of a truth. 'Copying' indicates that, perhaps, plurality is disingenuous. 'Genuine' assumes that there is a consensus on what is genuine. Such definition is simplistic, yet it also speaks to common understandings of what 'authentic' means. Scholars seem to understand that authenticity is a construct but also appear to see it as something static – that is, that there is only one idea or expression of authenticity. While many may disagree about what this 'stable' idea or expression of authenticity might be, they accept the framework that authenticity lies in singularity. But questions of authenticity are not just about origins; they are also about how people experience their social world. People make claims about the authenticity of their encounters with food, identity, traditions, or other cultural expressions, in order to make a statement about value and ownership. The question of what constitutes authenticity is pervasive, but it is also a limiting question, especially when applied to expressions of culture. Authenticity is expected to have concrete defined boundaries that will determine what can belong and what should not belong to a particular cultural category. However, how can a concept as complex as 'culture' be reduced to simplistic categories of belonging or not-belonging? The idea of authenticity does seem to lend itself to stable boundaries. As a bounded notion, however, can it thus be used to describe a concept that is understood to be dynamic? Nevertheless, this desire to find or define authenticity in cultural categories persists. In examining Chinese restaurants, it is evident that there are various interpretations of what constitutes an 'authentic Chinese restaurant'. Not only are there multiple definitions of authenticity, but for different people, the burden of authenticity is also located in different aspects of the Chinese restaurant experience – ranging from the type of food served, to the ethnicity of the employees, and the type of clientele dining there. In this presentation, I will focus on one restaurant in particular in order to explore the various gauges used in attempting to measure authenticity.

Ding Ho is a family-owned Chinese restaurant located in Columbus, Ohio. It has been in business since 1956, and is now operated by the third generation of the original Chinese family owners. The restaurant, before it was relocated last year to a free-standing building, was attached to an old-style motel. The restaurant itself also seemed old-fashioned, with its large sign that displayed

³ 'Authenticity', definition available at: *Dictionary.com*; see: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/authentic>; accessed 28.1. 2011.

its full name, 'Ding Ho Far West Restaurant', and a menu that had strayed little from the one that was created in the 1950s. Indeed, little has changed since the restaurant's heyday during the 1950s and 1960s – from the small green cocktail lounge, dragon carvings over the bar, waitresses who have worked there continuously for thirty years, to the basket of sliced Italian bread and butter brought to you as soon as you sit down. One Internet review of the restaurant exclaims, 'Ding Ho is the gold standard by which all other Chinese cuisine is based',⁴ while another raves 'We've traveled the world but by far this is the best Chinese food anywhere!'⁵ However, one patron sniffs, 'Do you want rolls with that, sug[ar]?: Never trust an Asian restaurant that serves rolls with your entre [sic]. It can't be authentic'.⁶

The last Internet reviewer raises a question that often accompanies the assessments of Chinese restaurants: Is this restaurant authentically Chinese? But to answer this question, we must already have some idea of what authentic Chinese cuisine is. But, by what capricious standard should one make such an evaluation? What informs the assessment, and how does a patron know or define what constitutes an authentic Chinese restaurant? The particular reviewer mentioned above seems to base his or her judgment on a peripheral element – not on the food itself, but on the fact that the restaurant serves bread with the entrées. Bread is often served at the beginning of meals in the United States, but not usually at Chinese restaurants. In *Purity and Danger*, Mary Douglas explores concepts of pollution and taboo. 'An anomaly', she writes, 'is an element which does not fit a given set or series'.⁷ In the context of Ding Ho restaurant, bread is an anomaly, signalling 'American' rather than 'Chinese'. Thus, its unexpected presence at Ding Ho somehow taints or pollutes the entirety of the Chinese restaurant enterprise and calls into question the cultural flavour of the food the restaurant purportedly labels as Chinese, regardless of the actual food it serves. But in fact, Ding Ho also has what it calls a Chinese menu, produced on request,

⁴ PamelR, Internet reviewer. Yahoo restaurant reviews, 30 May 2006; available at: http://local.yahoo.com/info-15452937-ding-ho-restaurant-columbus;_ylt=AoXguv2NU2HRf5cLARX3NZeKNcIF;_ylv=3?tab=reviews&allreviews=1#reviews; accessed 28.1.2011.

⁵ DebSimon, Internet reviewer. Yahoo restaurant reviews, 4 October 2008; available at: http://local.yahoo.com/info-15452937-ding-ho-restaurant-columbus;_ylt=AoXguv2NU2HRf5cLARX3NZeKNcIF;_ylv=3?tab=reviews&allreviews=1#reviews; accessed 28.1.2011.

⁶ Anonymous, Internet reviewer. Yahoo restaurant reviews, 19 July 2006; available at: http://local.yahoo.com/info-15452937-ding-ho-restaurant-columbus;_ylt=AoXguv2NU2HRf5cLARX3NZeKNcIF;_ylv=3?tab=reviews&allreviews=1#reviews; accessed 28.1.2011.

⁷ Douglas, Mary, *Purity and Danger*, New York 2004, 47.

that offers what some might consider to be authentic Chinese food: bok choy, steamed fish, and other Cantonese favourites. However, irrespective of whether the restaurant serves General Tso's chicken, chop-suey, or Peking duck prepared by a Chinese master chef trained in Hong Kong, its authenticity, according to the last-mentioned reviewer, is suspect because of the bread served with the meal. For this disdainful reviewer, the authenticity of a Chinese restaurant lies not in the food itself, but in other details or markers that make up the experience of dining at a Chinese restaurant.

Despite the bread, the first two reviewers seem to believe that Ding Ho is the 'standard' for Chinese food everywhere. Who are these reviewers and what informs their opinions? They hint at their knowledge – they have travelled the world and sampled Chinese cuisine everywhere. They judge the food of other Chinese restaurants in comparison to Ding Ho's food. In their opinion, their world experience provides them with the authority to make their claim concerning the authenticity of Ding Ho's food. But another person, perhaps one with even more intimate knowledge of, or experience with, Chinese cuisine, may disagree. Would someone who has had Chinese culinary training have the same assessment? Might another person who grew up in the Chinese Diaspora have a differing opinion? The polar opposite estimations of the authenticity of the same restaurant tells us that perceptions of authenticity are often influenced by expectations of what Chinese restaurants ought to be. Such estimations are an indication of the complicated nature of defining authenticity in cultural expressions such as food.

Steve Yee, the third generation and current owner-operator of Ding Ho, admits that their food is geared towards 'American' style. On the menu, not only is there a section for Chinese dishes, there is also a listing of American fare such as salads, steaks, sandwiches and spaghetti. 'I see American food as more or less salt, pepper, just very bland-tasting', Yee said. 'American food, if you think about it, is more or less hot dog and hamburger and fried chicken'. Chinese food, on the other hand, has 'lots of different flavours: curry-based, ginger-based, garlic-based [flavours], you know'.⁸ But such ingredients and spicings are not inherently culture-specific nor do they necessarily dominate the food of any one specific culture. If ingredients decide the threshold for culturally authentic cuisine, then designations of authenticity become muddled, limiting, and nebulous. How do we categorise food that crosses such boundaries? Under the rubric of ingredients, red tomato sauce made with cloves of garlic to be ladled over penne pasta may also be Chinese. But salt-and-pepper shrimp, a popular Cantonese dish that

⁸ Personal interview with Steven Yee, 10 September 2007.

is breaded and fried, might not. Several ingredients that are not culture specific, and may thus be unfamiliar to the general public, might be used in newer creations, or they might be used in novel combinations, but these would be prevented from being authentic under the criteria of ingredients.

The Chinese food that Ding Ho serves, and which, according to Yee, is geared for American taste, includes the familiar standards of chop-suey and chow mein. He states, 'Like with chop-suey and chow mein, it's basically invented here. A lot of your dishes like chicken with broccoli, even wor sue gai, were basically invented in this country'.⁹ Thus, according to Yee, authentic Chinese cuisine also seems to be about locale. If a dish is invented in the United States, it loses its authenticity. Despite the fact that its inventors were of Chinese origin or that the dish maintained 'Chinese' ingredients, it ceases to be authentically 'Chinese' because of its geographic location. But chop-suey and chow mein are not American either. Their origins signal 'not-Chinese' but their ingredients indicate 'not-American'. Thus they occupy a liminal state where they are not claimed by any culture. They may be described as Americanised Chinese food, or Chinese American food, but this food somehow cannot be authentically Chinese, or authentically American, or authentically both. If location is the crux of authenticity, then how do we classify traditions that have travelled from other countries? Can anything be authentic then in the United States, in the sense of being 'original' and 'unchanging', as the *Dictionary.com* definition implies? In this country, made up of people from several other countries, many may protest that there can, indeed, be authenticity in whatever traditions or creations that have travelled with the various groups. Shun Lu and Gary Alan Fine state that 'By combining tradition, adaptation, and innovation, continuity of an ethnic food tradition is possible, maintaining for the ethnic group a distinctive place in the public arena'.¹⁰ In other words, chop-suey and chow mein as served in the United States may very well be authentic Chinese food because of their ties with Chinese culture.

In the 1950s, it was likely that Ding Ho was considered to be an authentic Chinese restaurant. After all, the restaurant was owned by Chinese people and offered chop-suey and chow mein. For many people who were not very familiar with Chinese cuisine, these might have been the only dishes that signalled Chinese culture. Professor Haiming Liu has noted that, 'For a long time, chop-suey was a synonym for Chinese cuisine in the United State'.¹¹

⁹ *Idem.*

¹⁰ Lu, Shun, Fine, Gary Alan, 'The Presentation of Ethnic Authenticity: Chinese Food as a Social Accomplishment', *Sociological Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (1995): 541.

¹¹ Liu, Haiming, 'Chop Suey as Imagined Authentic Chinese Food: The Culinary Identity of Chinese Restaurants in the United States', *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, no. 1 (2009): 12; available at: <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2bc4k55r>; accessed 28.1. 2010.

Indeed, there were few Chinese restaurants outside areas with large Chinese populations that did not offer chop-suey.

Today, chop-suey is dismissed as 'inauthentic', an Americanised version of Chinese food, only to be replaced by General Tso's Chicken – breaded deep fried chicken morsels – another dish whose authenticity is contested – as the new face of Chinese food. There is hardly a Chinese restaurant in the United States that does not serve the General's chicken. Ding Ho's early menu offered, of course, chop-suey, but not General Tso's chicken. While it continues to serve chop-suey, it has included General's Tso's chicken as well – testimony to its ubiquity as the American face of Chinese cuisine. As Liu states, 'what is authentically Chinese in one place or time is often not so in another'.¹²

What Ding Ho shows us is that authenticity cannot be a stable category. I would argue that we cannot define, for everyone, what constitutes an authentic Chinese restaurant. Instead, we must accept that there are multiple versions of authenticity that have the potential to be equally valid. However, the context of and the elements that constitute authenticity in any given cultural category must be examined. In order to better understand how authenticity is perceived and used in food categories, I suggest that we explore:

- who is consuming the food (Chinese *vs* non-Chinese)
- the time period represented (old-fashioned *vs* contemporary)
- who is preparing and serving the food (Chinese *vs* non-Chinese)
- the ingredients of the dishes (following strict recipes *vs* creative improvisations)
- how the food is prepared (does it have to be prepared in a wok?),
- where the food is eaten (at home, in a restaurant, region of the country)
- the class of patron, chef/cook, and restaurant (are tables bare or covered with a tablecloth? How well dressed are the staff and diners?)

While defined boundaries may work for objects that have an absolute origin, they may not function so successfully for abstractions such as culture. In the case of Ding Ho, the definition of authenticity is used as if defining a stable, concrete object. However, Ding Ho is but one expression of an idea (the Chinese restaurant) that constantly changes, evolves, and reconfigures itself. Cultural cuisine is fluid and subject to a host of influences. It follows that ideas about cultural authenticity are likewise fluid and subject to a multitude of influences.

¹² *Ibid.*, 3.

Lu and Fine write that 'Authentic food implies that products are prepared using the same ingredients and processes as found in the homeland of the ethnic, national, or regional group. Americanised ethnic food suggests that the local and traditional characteristics of the dish as indigenously prepared have been modified or transformed'.¹³ In this way, mainstream perceptions continue to categorise Chinese restaurants in terms of being, or of not being, authentic ('Americanised' or 'fusion'), but have only vague abstract understandings of cultural fluidity. Authenticity in the expression of culture is often highly desired. It is laden with an implicit significance that provides the cultural expression with its worth. It can confer legitimacy, authority, inclusion, and exclusion. Thus, chop-suey is not considered to be 'real' Chinese food today and a place that serves chop-suey is not a 'good' Chinese restaurant, though at an earlier period, it was considered to be quintessentially Chinese. I thus raise the question: Why should these dishes not be regarded as representing Chinese food? These were the products of the culinary creativity of people who grew up and lived in China. People cook food based on knowledge and memories of familiar tastes and ingredients. Chop-suey and chow mein represent culinary memories of China in both flavour and style (noodles, vegetables and meat chopped into small morsels, salt, pepper, and oyster sauce). These are the culinary stories of Chinese immigration to the United States. To dismiss their validity and importance as part of the canon of Chinese cuisine would be akin to leaving out the Chinese role in building the railroads or to silencing the voices of Chinese stories in the broader history of the United States. They are dishes that tell the story of Chinese immigration to the United States, the creativity of the human spirit, and the ever-evolving and cross-cultural influences of culture and cuisine. Chop-suey is but one incarnation of a long culinary cultural history.

I use cultural cuisine, specifically Chinese cuisine, to illustrate that authenticity in all cultural categories is flexible and multiple. Authenticity can be a way to exoticise, legitimise, or criticise others. It is thus an important consideration for our understanding of diversity, in part because it can serve to suggest that other groups have remained static, that is, that they have not changed over time in response to environment and other factors. It is also a paradox in which claiming or granting authenticity is both a sign of status and a means of controlling expressions of authenticity, so that some count and others do not. More specifically, change is regarded as a contamination of the category. But to impose overarching concrete boundaries on the

¹³ Lu and Fine, *op. cit.*, 1995, 538.

definition and content of the category would be to deny the agency of people to define who they are and what they choose to be. It would also deny cultural heritage and belonging to some groups by defining what should or should not belong to the category of authenticity and, in effect, erase multiple lines of history and culture. In the American context, authenticity can also be about claiming a sense of belonging, especially for groups who do not belong to the dominant mainstream culture. Shun Lu and Gary Alan Fine emphasise that 'All cultural traditions are responsive to their environments. This practice should not be depreciated as a manipulation of ethnic boundaries¹⁴ but as a maintenance of them in the face of a changing context. Neither can the food be condemned for being inauthentic; *authenticity* has been changed'.¹⁵

I have examined and analysed a wide range of Chinese restaurants and Ding Ho is only one piece of the entire restaurant jigsaw. Other restaurants may work differently. My research seeks to provide a greater understanding of the ubiquitous role of Chinese restaurants in American society. Using the theoretical lens of authenticity helps us to understand cultural categories and ethnicity in broader terms. Instead of dismissing authenticity claims as spurious, my research attempts to widen their inclusive possibilities by rethinking the concept of authenticity. Though I have outlined criteria specifically for analysing Chinese restaurants, a similar framework could probably also be applied to other cultural expressions that may have much at stake. There are questions of authenticity attached to many other cultural categories such as what constitutes a 'real' Amish quilt, an 'authentic' Native American piece of jewellery, a 'true' African-American, and so on. There are economic repercussions involved because designations of authenticity may decide who gains economically and who gets written into the annals of history. Calling for authenticity to be more inclusive, however, is not without its problems of contradictions, but it is a move towards ameliorating the detrimental effects of imposing boundaries due to the requirement of singularity in the definition and application of authenticity.

¹⁴ Van den Berge, Pierre L., *The Ethnic Phenomenon*, New York 1981.

¹⁵ Lu and Fine, *op. cit.*, 1995, 548. Emphasis in the original text.

Italian Food as an Everyday Choice in the Irish Kitchen

Déirdre D'Auria

Italian Food in Ireland: Introduction

The selection of ethnic foods now available in Ireland is much broader than it was twenty years ago. These foods can be sampled in restaurants, purchased ready-cooked from take-away establishments, or acquired in their unprepared forms from specialist shops, supermarkets and even corner stores. The availability of these foods, along with cookery books from all over the world, and the provision of cookery programmes on many different television channels, have enabled and encouraged many Irish people to enjoy a range of ethnic cuisines in their own homes, among which the most popular appears to be Italian cuisine.

In the past, enjoyment of Italian cuisine was not confined to the capital city of Dublin, or just to the urban areas of the country, especially in the context of home cooking. In rural areas, where local restaurants or take-away establishments were few in number, many shops stocked the basic ingredients required for the preparation of an Italian dish, i.e. dried pasta, tinned tomatoes, vegetables, cheese, meat, and so on. Advertisements in newspapers alerting people to the availability of Italian ingredients are thus a useful tool in attempting to examine the availability of Italian produce in Ireland in the first half of the twentieth century, in both urban and rural areas, for those wishing to cook Italian dishes in their own homes.

Italian Produce in Ireland: A History

Certain Italian foodstuffs have been available to Irish people in Ireland since the nineteenth century. As imported, and often luxury foodstuffs, these items were frequently purchased by the middle and upper classes of society from exclusive high street provisioning establishments.

There is evidence that many different 'Italian Warehouses' existed in Dublin and further afield, at the end of the nineteenth century—see the advertisements on page 96. At that period, the term 'Italian Warehouseman' or 'Italian Grocer' seems to have indicated a high-class business, stocking luxury Italian produce and goods.

According to *The Steward's Handbook and Guide to Party Catering* by Jessup Whitehead, compiled in 1903:

The Italian ware house, first established in London in the reign of Charles II, is an institution peculiar to the British Metropolis. In the last century, when a gentleman went to Italy, he generally resided there for at least six months. When he returned and settled down in his grand town mansion, he was not satisfied with having a French cook; he sighed for the macaroni and vermicelli, the Parmesan cheese, the polenta, the morta-della di Bologna, the Lacrima Christi, and the chianti, and especially the pure olive-oil of Florence and Lucca. It was to supply his lordship or his honor with such articles that the Italian warehouses were founded and grew apace. The Italian warehousemen of the past, however, dealt in other commodities besides wine and oil, macaroni and cheese. They were as useful to my lady as to my lord; they imported from Italy lute-strings – a corruption of lustrini – and paduasos; the rich cut velvets of Genoa; the stiff black silks and splendid lace – a legacy from the Spanish domination – from Milan, with beads from Venice, and gloves and coral from Naples.¹

Wholesale operations dealing with Italian produce in Dublin show that there was a market for Italian produce in the capital city in the middle of the nineteenth century. Two advertisements which appeared in *The Irish Times* in 1862 (transcribed below) demonstrate the link between Italian produce and the titled classes in Ireland at that period. The Earl of Carlisle mentioned in William McDermott's advertisement was George William Frederick Howard, the 7th Earl of Carlisle, and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

BY SPECIAL APPOINTMENT

WILLIAM McDERMOTT

Poulterer, Purveyor, and Italian Warehouseman to his
Excellency the Earl of Carlisle,
64 & 65 GREAT BRITAIN STREET
(Nearly opposite Granby row).²

PROVISIONS

WILLIAM VALENTINE

ITALIAN GROCER TO HIS EXCELLENCY,
163 GREAT BRUNSWICK STREET
(First House from Westland row),
Patronized by many of the Nobility, Gentry, and Clergy,
For the last 80 years.³

¹ Whitehead, J., 'The Steward's Handbook and Guide to Party Catering', 1903, available at Chestofbooks.com/food/recipes/Party-Catering/Italian-Warehouse.html; accessed 4.8. 2010.

² See William McDermott's advertisement in *The Irish Times* (a daily newspaper in Ireland whose readership formerly consisted mostly of the middle and upper classes) on 11 January 1862.

³ See William Valentine's advertisement in *The Irish Times* on 9 September 1862.

It is evident from advertisements in regional newspapers that merchants describing themselves as Italian Warehousemen were also to be found outside Dublin in the early twentieth century. By then, the designation 'Italian Warehouse' seems to have been linked to the provision of luxury foodstuffs and beverages not only from Italy but also from a variety of other countries and regions. This is evident from the following advertisement by a provisions merchant in Mullingar, Co. Westmeath in 1902,⁴ in which luxury Irish whiskies were offered alongside teas from Assam, kippered herrings from Aberdeen, and French champagne, without any mention being made of Italian produce:

M. O'CONNELL,

FAMILY GROCER,

Wine and Spirit Merchant and Italian Warehouseman,

18 GREVILLE-ST., MULLINGAR.

Eclipse Tea 2s per lb.

OTHER TEAS, 1s 6d, 1s 9d, 2s 4d, and 2s 8d.
PURE ASSAM, 2s 10d.

WINES IN GREAT VARIETY.

Port, Sherries, Claret, Hock and Moselle (Still and Sparkling.)
Champagnes, all leading Brands.)

WHISKIES John Jameson's 7 year old
John Power & Sons 10 year old

John Dewar's Scotch.
John Hopkins' Glengary.

Guinness's Extra Stout
Guinness's Invalid Stout
Bass's Pale Ale
Alsopp's Pale Ale
Alsopp's Light Dinner
Masterson's Limerick Bacon and Hams

Matterson's Limerick Joles
Matterson's Limerick Fresh Sausages
Matterson's Limerick Pickled Heads
Matterson's Limerick Lard
American Lard
Atora Beef Suet

Findon Haddies and Kipperd Herrings direct from Aberdeen three times weekly.
NEW SEASON'S FRUIT Currants, Raisins, Sultana Raisins, Figs, Figs for Stewing, Sauces of all kinds. Jacob's and Huntley and Palmer's Biscuits and Cakes. Batholiver & Paremena Biscuits and Cakes.

Orders will receive prompt attention.

Another advertisement – that for Christopher Corcoran's Italian Warehouse⁵ – also lacks explicit mention of Italian goods. As both of these businesses were trading in Mullingar, approximately eighty kilometres west of Dublin

⁴ See M. O'Connell's advertisement in *The Westmeath Examiner* on 22 November 1902.

⁵ See Christopher Corcoran's advertisement in *The Westmeath Examiner* on 12 October 1907.

city, in the opening years of the twentieth century, there was obviously sufficient demand for the luxury foodstuffs they offered in the local community, to enable the enterprises to operate.

ITALIAN WAREHOUSE.

FINEST TEAS

LOWEST PRICES.

BEST BRANDS OF SUGAR.

IRISH HAMS AND BACON.

Cleeve's Butter.

SUNDRIES
OF THE
BEST
QUALITY.

LIQUOR DEPARTMENT.

CHRISTOPHER CORCORAN,
AUSTIN FRIARS ST., MULLINGAR.

J J & Son's
& ***
WHISKEY.
SANDEMAN'S
PORT, *, **, & ***
A SPECIALITY.
GUINNESS'S PORTER
AND STOUT
IN WOOD AND BOTTLE.
Bass's Ale always in
Sparkling Condition.
HENNESSY'S * AND *** BRANDY.
CHAMPAGNES, RUM, GIN,
CORDIALS, ETC., ETC.

The town of Navan, Co. Meath, situated approximately fifty kilometres north-west of Dublin city, was also home to an Italian and provisions warehouse. On the advertisement shown on page 99, dating to 1922, it would appear, once again, that the term 'Italian' is used to mean 'special', or 'luxurious':⁶

⁶ See Turner's advertisement in *The Meath Chronicle* on 4 February 1922.

TURNER'S,
THE PREMIER
TEA, COFFEE ITALIAN &
PROVISION WAREHOUSE

— OUR —
Continental Wines
Maintain their position for sterling
value.
Having Sold our Business in
Market Square all communi-
cations should be sent to

TURNER'S,
TRIMGATE STREET, NAVAN.

Italian Warehousemen were also found in some western counties of Ireland. In the following advertisement, dated 1912, Michael Kelly, Shop Street, Galway city, described himself as a grocer, wine and spirit merchant, and also as an Italian Warehouseman:⁷

That is very nice Tea!
Where do you get it?
AT KELLY'S
IN SHOP STREET.
Special attention paid to the Purchase
of Tea.
Prices: 1s. 6d., 1s. 8d., 1s. 10d., & 2s.
All Groceries Goods. Special Old Blends
and High-class Wines of the Best Quality
only always in Stock.

MICHAEL KELLY,
Grocer, Wine and Spirit Merchant,
ITALIAN WAREHOUSEMAN.
88 SHOP STREET, GALWAY.

⁷ See Michael Kelly's advertisement in *The Connacht Tribune* on 6 April 1912.

From an advertisement which appeared in *The Irish Times* in 1882 (transcribed below), it is evident that Bewley's,⁸ the well-known family-run business established in Dublin in 1835, who described themselves, *inter alia*, as 'Italian ... merchants', had what they called an 'Italian and Fancy Department' which, in addition to a number of Italian products, also stocked a variety of luxury ingredients and foodstuffs from other countries:

ITALIAN AND FANCY
DEPARTMENT

Sauces, Pickles, Jams, Preserves, Tinned Meats,
Fruits and Vegetables, Spices, Whole or Ground
Dried Fruits, including Raisins, Currants, French
Plums, Figs, &c, Oranges, Apples, Lemons, Can-
died Peel, Truffles, Pates de Fois Gras, Sardines,
French and Italian Oils, Macaroni, Vermicelli,
Tapioca, Sago, Potted Meats, Biscuits of every
Kind, C...ques (?), the newest designs, &c, &c.

...
BEWLEY, SONS & CO
(Late FAWCETT & CO.)
WINE MERCHANTS,
WHOLESALE TEA AND COFFEE
DEALERS,
ITALIAN, PROVISIONS, AND GENERAL
MERCHANTS,
18, 19 & 20, HENRY STREET
DUBLIN.⁹

Italian Recipes in Irish Newspapers

Recipes including forms of pasta, usually macaroni, spaghetti or vermicelli, appeared regularly in *The Irish Times* from about 1880 onwards. Placed on pages entitled 'Women's Corner', 'A Page for Women', or 'Housewives' Hints', these recipes were clearly directed at the female section of the newspaper's readership. Even though forms of pasta were advertised as 'fine' and 'fancy' foods in the mid to late nineteenth century, the general tone of the recipes changed between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,

⁸ See <http://bewleys.com/about-us/heritage>; accessed 1.3. 2011.

⁹ See advertisement for Bewley's in *The Irish Times* on 15 February 1882.

suggesting that pasta was gradually being regarded as an economical and nutritious menu option. As the recipes appeared under headings such as 'Practical Dinners' and 'Economy in Food', it would appear that pasta was thus no longer regarded as a luxury food item, and that it was becoming a more accessible and economical option for the average Irish household.

The author of a letter to the Editor of *The Irish Independent* (another daily newspaper in Ireland) written and published in March of 1908, was concerned about the diet of Ireland's labouring classes, and suggested that they should follow the dietary example of the French and Italian labourers. The letter-writer claimed that the Italian labourer,

...lives on pasta (various forms of macaroni, that is to say flour and water), a food that, with regard to its proportions of nourishing matter, is cheaper, and about four or five times better than potatoes, and one whose manufacture gives employment to thousands and thousands all over Italy.¹⁰

This awareness of pasta as an economical alternative to traditional Irish menu options became apparent in recipes, such as the recipe transcribed below, which were occasionally published in local and national newspapers, and which praised the nutritional and economical value of spaghetti, a popular Italian dish:

Spaghetti, the popular Italian dish, is
Becoming naturalised in England. Its high
Food value and economy is being justly
Appreciated by shrewd British housewives.

Half pint spaghetti stock,	6 oz. Spaghetti,
2 level tablespoons B.& P.,	Half pint milk,
Corn Flour,	2 tablespoons grated
Half lb. tomatoes, if tinned half pint.	cheese. Seasoning.

SPAGHETTI AND TOMATOES

Break spaghetti in short lengths into a quart of boiling water; add a little salt. Boil till tender (about half hour). Stirring now and then. Drain off, leaving only half pint of water with spaghetti

¹⁰ See 'Cheap Diet for Workers - Duty of the Department', Letters to the Editor, in *The Irish Independent*, 13 March 1908.

(the rest can be kept for stock). Add Corn Flour mixed smooth with the milk, and stir till boiling. Add sliced tomatoes and half the cheese. Cook 5 minutes stirring. Season and pour into greased pre-dish, shaking remaining cheese over top. Bake till nicely browned and serve at once.¹¹

Recipes for savoury dishes of this kind which appeared in national newspapers indicate that Italian ingredients were being used in some Irish homes by the end of the nineteenth century. The instructions provided for the preparation of the dish suggests, firstly, that many Irish people were unfamiliar with the preparation of this unusually-shaped foodstuff and, secondly, that an attempt was being made to adapt it to Irish cooking practices and tastes.

The following recipe, transcribed from a newspaper published in the 1880s, and involving the use of macaroni, gives essentially the same preparation and cooking instructions:

SAVOURY PUDDING

Half a pound of grated Parmesan cheese, quarter of a pound of mutton suet, chopped fine, two ounces of macaroni (boiled till quite soft and cut into half-inch lengths), and pepper and salt. Beat two eggs well and add them to the above; pour the mixture into a buttered mould or basin, and steam for an hour and ten minutes, turn out, and serve with tomato sauce, or any rich good gravy.¹²

As well as being used in savoury dishes, pasta also featured in sweet dishes. The following recipe, which appeared in *The Irish Times* in 1887, is for a sweet pudding made with macaroni. This kind of pudding became popular in Ireland in the first half of the twentieth century. The making of a sweet puddings using pasta was not usual in Italian cuisine.

Macaroni Pudding

½ lb of Genoa Macaroni;
1 quart milk;
2 ozs. sweet Almonds;

¹¹ See 'Viva Italia!' in *The Irish Independent*, 16 October 1919.

¹² This recipe appeared in *The Irish Times* on 26 February 1887.

A few drops Almond Flavouring;
½ lb Sugar;
3 Eggs;
2 ozs. Butter;
1 ½ ozs. Flour;
1 heaped tablespoonful Orange Marmalade.

Throw the macaroni into fast-boiling salt and water and allow to boil fast for a quarter of an hour, then strain, and stir in the milk with the almonds blanched and chopped until tender. Strain through a colander. Make a sauce of the butter, flour, and milk, cook well, remove from the heat. Allow to cool a little and beat in the eggs one at a time, add the sugar and flavouring and stir in the macaroni. Butter a mould thickly; half fill with the pudding mixture, add a layer of marmalade; cover with a layer of macaroni; repeat with a layer of marmalade, and cover with the macaroni mixture. Bake in a slow oven for one hour, turn out, and sift castor sugar over.¹³

1950 and its Significance in Ireland

Previously published research has pointed out the significance of the year 1950 in the relationship between Irish people and Italian food. The then Pope, Pius XII, declared 1950 a Holy Year, and 'anyone who could afford it felt it was incumbent on them to go to Rome. Shop assistants devoted their annual holidays to the pilgrimage. Factory workers went there although it would have strained their resources.'¹⁴ This feeling of obligation brought many Irish people to Italy who may not have otherwise made the journey.

Some of the reactions of these Irish pilgrims to the food that was available to them on their arrival in Rome have been recorded. Some of them were positive, those of Donchadh Ó Céilleachair (author of a pilgrimage diary entitled '*Dialann Oilithrigh*'¹⁵), for example, who 'discovered that Italian coffee

¹³ This recipe appeared in *The Irish Times* on 4 September 1897.

¹⁴ Conway Piskorski, M., 'The Holy Year and the Irish Palate: The Influence of the Holy Year on the Spread of Pasta in Ireland', in Lysaght, P., (ed.), *Food and the Traveller. Migration, Immigration, Tourism and Ethnic Food*, Nicosia 2002, 115.

¹⁵ Ó Céilleachair, D., *Dialann Oilithrigh* ('A Pilgrim's Diary'), Baile Átha Cliath, 1953.

is better than the Bewley's variety served in Dublin's most famous coffee house of the same name, and even better than French coffee which he has discovered on the journey'.¹⁶ Some other Irish tourists, however, were 'stunned at the sight of spaghetti', and frequented establishments in Rome known for serving more familiar food, such as steak, and eggs and bacon.¹⁷

It was after the Holy Year of 1950 that travel to mainland Europe began to become easier and less costly for Irish people. By 1955, Irish people were using affordable charter flights from London to travel to Italy. By 1975, Aer Lingus, the Irish national airline, was flying to Rome via Zurich, and, beginning in 1961, Joe Walsh Tours, a well-known travel company still trading in Ireland today, organised tours to Rome. There were also holidays to other areas of Italy, even on credit, advertised by Irish travel companies, as we can see from the following advertisement by the Dublin-based tour company, Embassy Tours, which appeared in 1960 in a local newspaper published in the south-west of Ireland¹⁸:

15 DAYS HOLIDAY BARGAINS

Italian Riviera		Adriatic Coast	
Rail	Air	Rail	Air
San Remo ... 40½ gns.	51 gns.	Riccione ... 41 gns.	52 gns.
Loano ... 31 gns.	40½ gns.	Rimini ... 39 gns.	50 gns.
Allassio ... 43 gns.	54 gns.	Cattolica ... 41 gns.	52 gns.
Austria		Switzerland	
Rail	Air	Rail	Air
Velden ... 38 gns.	54 gns.	Spiez ...	42½ gns.

Spain: Lloret de Mar, Air and Coach 49 gns.

ALL HOLIDAYS ABOVE: DUBLIN BACK TO DUBLIN.

Absolutely no deposit required until Booking confirmed.

Also available: 10 day and 8 day holidays and holidays on credit.

Agents for Flair, Inter-Tours, Austria, Swiss & Paris Travel, etc.

Write for free Brochure to:



22, NORTH FREDERICK STREET, DUBLIN

¹⁶ Conway Piskorski, *op. cit.*, 2002, 116.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ See the advertisement for Embassy Tours in *The Kerryman* on 16 April 1960. The tours are priced in guineas (gns.), a former British gold coin. Although no longer circulated, the term guinea survived to mean twenty-one shillings (one pound and five pence in decimalised currency).

The following advertisement for Shannon Travel, a travel company based in Galway, in the west of the country, which appeared in a regional newspaper in 1966, shows that Irish people were travelling to the Italian Riviera (as well as to a variety of other holiday or pilgrimage destinations in Europe) at that time. It is thus reasonable to assume that knowledge and a taste for Italian food (as well as other cuisines) were increasing, among sections of the Irish population, at least¹⁹.



SHANNON TRAVEL LTD.

5, William St., Galway

PHONE 491/238



Offices also at Baggot St. (Head Office) and Westmoreland St., Dublin, and Cecil St., Limerick

AGENTS FOR SUNBRIND HOLIDAYS, SUNLIGHT HOLIDAYS, JOE WALSH TOURS, COOKS, SWANS, WINGS AND MANY OTHERS. SHIPPING CO'S. CLYDE, HOLLAND AMERICA LINE, U.S. LINES, GREEN LINE, P. & O. LINE, ROYAL MAIL, Etc. GALWAY'S LEADING BELLEVILLE AGENT.

OFFICIAL AGENTS FOR C.I.E., BRITISH RAIL, R. & I. LINE. ALL TICKETS ISSUED AT STATION PRICES. SPECIAL STUDENT AIR FARES TO PARIS, BRUSSELS AND LOURDES DIRECT FROM DUBLIN BY AER LINGUS JET. PARIS FROM £17 10/- RETURN.

SOME OF OUR ALL INCLUSIVE HOLIDAYS FROM DUBLIN

COSTA BRAVA SITGES
 @ From Dublin to Sitges May 11 and Oct 11. All inclusive price £12 10/- per person. Return to Dublin. 50 gns.

MAJORCA
 @ From Dublin to Majorca May 11 and Oct 11. All inclusive price £12 10/- per person. Return to Dublin. 52 gns.

ITALIAN RIVIERA
 @ From Dublin to Italian Riviera May 11 and Oct 11. All inclusive price £12 10/- per person. Return to Dublin. 52 gns.

COSTA DEL SOL
 @ From Dublin to Costa del Sol May 11 and Oct 11. All inclusive price £12 10/- per person. Return to Dublin. 63 gns.

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The Availability of Italian Produce in Ireland

Italian restaurants began to appear in Ireland in the nineteen fifties and sixties, but people in Ireland still experienced some difficulty in importing Italian produce to use in the home. Irish people were used to dried macaroni, tinned tomatoes, and tinned spaghetti, by the nineteen fifties, but these foodstuffs were not what the pilgrims and holiday-makers had experienced during their time in Italy – and they, as well as the Italian people living in Ireland, were looking for more authentic Italian produce. Records show a rapid increase in the importation of Italian wine and foodstuffs into Ireland during the nineteen fifties.²⁰

The increase in newspaper advertisements for Italian food in the nineteen fifties and sixties indicates a growing demand for Italian foodstuffs among

¹⁹ See the advertisement for Shannon Travel Ltd in *The Connacht Sentinel* on 15 March 1966.

²⁰ See trade statistics in Conway Piskorski, *op. cit.*, 2002, 118.

Irish people. The rise in demand, however, was not just for Italian food, but for the produce of other countries also, suggesting a growing exposure of Irish people to the cuisines of European countries on a wider scale. For example, in 1952, Nilands shop in Galway city was advertising Dutch Pearl Barley alongside Italian Rice, as is evident from the following advertisement²¹:



In 1956, another shop in the same city, Lydon's 'New Delicatessen Shop', was advertising a range of cheeses from different countries, including Italy²²:



The Italian Macaroni Company was founded in the early nineteen sixties by two Irishmen (Felim Meade and Paddy Meade) and an Italian (Antonio Nico). By 1970, their company was producing eighteen different kinds of pasta and supplying the Tesco supermarket chain in the United Kingdom with the

²¹ See the advertisement for Nilands Ltd. in *The Connacht Sentinel* on 9 December 1952.

²² See advertisement for Lydon's of Shop St., Galway, in *The Connacht Sentinel* on 6 March 1956.

product. The company also produced tinned tomatoes and tomato purée under their own label. A previous study referring to the use of pasta in Ireland suggests that The Italian Macaroni Company, or Roma, as it became known later on, and by which it is still known today, may have been responsible for the introduction of pasta dishes to rural areas of Ireland.²³

Since the nineteen fifties, it has become much easier to obtain Italian ingredients for use in the Irish kitchen. There are many different kinds of food products available in specialist Italian shops and in higher-end delicatessens, but a variety of Italian foodstuffs can also be purchased in convenience stores and in the average supermarket in Ireland, places where the majority of Irish families would tend to shop on a regular basis.

Cooking Italian Food in the Home in Ireland Today

Bord Bia, Ireland's food board which acts as a link between Irish food, drink and horticulture suppliers and customers, and potential customers throughout the world, has claimed in some recent research that there has been a sharp rise in cooking at home in Ireland. Bord Bia states that in 2009, sixty-three per cent of those surveyed claimed to cook a meal at home 'a few times a week', a figure that has risen from fifty-four per cent in 2005.²⁴

A spokesperson for Bord Bia has also suggested that the current economic climate in Europe, and the associated slowdown in eating in restaurants and other food outlets outside the home, are providing sales opportunities, especially for the pasta market. Despite rising prices, Bord Bia claims that pasta can still form the basis of a good-value meal.²⁵ The Bord also recognises that the emerging trend of 'hometainment', where consumers choose to cook at home rather than dine out in a restaurant, is benefitting the pasta market. It further suggests that brands which can offer restaurant-quality choices that are easy to cook at home, appear likely to benefit from this trend, despite rising wheat prices in some countries.²⁶

According to the Bord Bia spokesperson:

With a relatively low price point and a focus on innovation, the market for pasta looks set for further growth. However, a recent

²³ Conway Piskorski, *op. cit.*, 2002, 118.

²⁴ Mac Connell, S., Agriculture Correspondent, *The Irish Times*, at: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2009/1106/1224258193425.html>; accessed 13.7. 2010.

²⁵ Cullen, L., at: <http://www.bordbia.ie/industry/services/alerts/pages/Valueformoneyandhealthbasedinnovationdrivingpastamarket.aspx?year=2009&wk=1>; accessed 13.7. 2010.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

article in the UK Grocer magazine suggests that rising wheat prices and poor harvests have put some pressure on demand for pasta. The value of the UK pasta market increased by 46 per cent last year to £192.5 million. In Ireland, the total pasta market was worth €51 million in 2006 with sales forecast to reach €62 million by 2010 according to Leatherhead Food International (an independent food research organisation founded in 1919). However higher prices have not affected sales, as consumers consider pasta and rice as much an everyday essential as a loaf of bread. People are starting to cook from scratch more frequently.²⁷

The spokesperson also mentioned that the quest for health and wellness has impacted on product innovation within the pasta market. There has been a twenty per cent global rise in demand for wholegrain pasta according to Euromonitor, International market analysts. Other trends include the introduction of white pasta 'containing the goodness of whole wheat in addition to the development of convenient microwavable packs, organic, and low-carbohydrate varieties and ranges designed for the children's market.'²⁸

On the examination of one average sized supermarket in a suburb south of the city of Dublin, forty-two different pasta products were found on the shelves, under eleven different brand labels. There were also one hundred and thirty-eight different sauces for pasta available, under twelve different brand names. There were twelve different kinds of olive oil, and fifteen different cheeses, produced in Italy, on sale in the same store. There were also several kinds of Italian cured meats and forty-five different Italian wines available, along with many ready-prepared Italian meal options. By comparison, there were very few products available which had been produced in France. For example, there were nine French cheeses, to Italy's fifteen. There were, however, far more wines from France (eighty-five) than from Italy on offer. It seems reasonable to conclude on the basis of this survey that Italian food, or at least Italian-style food, is a popular choice among Irish people when cooking in the home.

Cookery Books in Ireland Today

Cookery books are very popular in Ireland, especially those dealing with Italian cuisine. This interest in Italian cookery books is clearly visible on the shelves of many large book-stores in Ireland. In a recent survey, over six thousand titles were available in the 'National and Regional Cuisine' section

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

of the 'Food and Drink' department of one such store. The breakdown of those titles was as follows:

Africa.....	126
Asia.....	1528
Australasia.....	41
Caribbean.....	96
Latin America.....	162
North America.....	69
The Americas.....	3
Other geographical groupings.....	116
Europe.....	1534

Of the 1534 books included under the heading 'Europe', 1268 titles refer to the cuisine of a number of individual countries, or a region of that country. The breakdown was as follows:

Italy (or a region of).....	495
England (or a region of)...	157
Spain (or a region of).....	108
Ireland (or a region of).....	107
France (or a region of).....	96
Scotland (or a region of)....	78
Greece (or a region of).....	76
Wales (or a region of).....	32
Germany (or a region of)...	25
Portugal (or a region of)....	15
Poland (or a region of).....	14
Other.....	65

It is evident from this survey that there are many more books on Italian cuisine available on the high street to the Irish consumer than for any other regional cuisine. Some of these books were originally published in the nineteen sixties, (those by Elizabeth David, for example²⁹). These are still available alongside recent publications which suggests that the market for books on Italian cuisine remains as strong as ever.

²⁹ David, E., *Italian Food*, London 1954.

Cookery Schools in Ireland

A survey carried out in 2009 by PERIScope, a market research company, claims that Cookery Schools are becoming more popular internationally. According to their research, nine per cent of those surveyed in Britain and Ireland had attended a cookery class in the previous three years.³⁰

Almost every cookery course and cookery school in Ireland includes a section on Italian cookery which constitutes a whole course, or one class as part of course, or a class as a stand-alone event, again reflecting demand among Irish people for instruction in Italian cookery. These schools include the famous Ballymaloe Cookery School in Cork,³¹ and award-winning schools such the Dunbrody Cookery School in Wexford,³² and The Tannery Cookery School in Waterford.³³

Conclusion

Italian produce has been available in Ireland since the nineteenth century, at first as a luxury item, and later as an economical and nutritional option for Irish consumers, and it has remained popular among Irish people. Journalist Marie-Claire Digby described pasta as 'already a staple food in Ireland' when she interviewed Ursula Ferrigno, a teacher at the Cooks' Academy in Dublin for *The Irish Times Magazine* in October 2007.³⁴ Although Italian cuisine may not be an everyday option for all Irish people, it is reasonable to state that the array of suitable ingredients for Italian dishes found in shops of all kinds in Ireland today, the focus on Italian cuisine in the Irish media, and the number of cookery books and classes available to Irish people which provide instruction on how to cook Italian cuisine, serve to indicate that Italian produce is considered accessible by Irish people, and that Italian dishes are often cooked in the Irish home.

³⁰ Mac Connell, S., Agriculture Correspondent, 'Sharp Rise in Cooking at Home – Bord Bia', in *The Irish Times*, 11 November 2009.

³¹ For information on Ballymaloe Cookery School, see www.cookingisfun.ie; accessed 1.3. 2011.

³² For information on Dunbrody Cookery School, see www.dunbrodyhouse.com/html-files/school.htm; accessed 1.3. 2011.

³³ For information on The Tannery Cookery School, see www.tannery.ie; accessed 1.3. 2011.

³⁴ Digby, M., 'Passionate about Pasta', in *The Irish Times Magazine*, Saturday, 20 October 2007.

The Scottish Curry – the UK's Favourite

Una A. Robertson

The Scots are an ingenious people and, over the centuries, have given many inventions to the world but one of the least likely must be Chicken Tikka Masala, a curry invented in Glasgow during the 1970s. It was recently voted the UK's favourite curry, if not the UK's favourite meal.¹

What exactly is this dish? The chicken is obvious; 'tikka' means small cubes of meat; and 'masala' refers to 'spice mixture'.² Chicken Tikka Masala consists of cubes of chicken, marinated for several hours, cooked on skewers in the tandoor [oven] and served in a rich, creamy orange-coloured sauce often, though not always, containing tomato.

It is generally agreed that this dish originated in a Glasgow restaurant in the 1970s,³ a claim backed by two distinguished authorities.⁴ A customer seemingly demanded some 'gravy' for his chicken and the Bangladeshi chef spiced up some tinned tomato soup. Hence the campaign, led by the local Member of Parliament, for government support for an appeal to the European Union to obtain Protected Designation of Origin, designed for food prepared in a specific geographical area.⁵ A similar campaign is being talked of, asking that the term 'Balti restaurants' be restricted to the Birmingham area.⁶

However, for some a Glaswegian origin provokes howls of derision. There are claims the dish was served to the Mughal Emperors centuries before; others say it came from early-twentieth-century Punjab.⁷ It is surely

¹ See http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/glasgow_and_west/8161812.stm. See also Bell, David John, 'Diaspora', in *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, (ed.), Katz, Solomon, vol. 1, New York 2003, 514, 515. Surveys have found Chicken Tikka Masala to be the most popular dish in British restaurants and it has been called 'Britain's true national dish'. However, the nation's favourite pudding/dessert is still Apple Crumble and Custard. *The Scotsman*, 23 July 2009, 3.

² North India tends to use freshly ground dried spices. Southern regions tend to use fresh spices, pounded to a paste.

³ The chef was Ali Ahmed Aslam, owner of the Shish Mahal in Glasgow's West End. *The Scotsman*, 6 July 2009, 3.

⁴ Chapman, Pat, *Tandoori Curry Cookbook*, London 1995, 81; Jaffrey, Madhur, *Madhur Jaffrey's Ultimate Curry Bible*, London 2003, 101.

⁵ Scottish products awarded PDO include Arbroath Smokies, Scotch beef, Scotch lamb, etc.

⁶ See <http://www.balti-birmingham.co.uk/home>; accessed 28.2. 2011.

⁷ Mughal Emperors in India, 1526-1858; see also 'Chicken tikka masala row grows as Indian chefs reprimand Scottish M.P.s over culinary origins', by Dean Nelson and Jalees Andrabi in New Delhi, *The Telegraph online*, 4th August 2009; see www.telegraph.co.uk/lifestyle/; accessed 28.2. 2011.

significant that the dish only appears in British cookery books late in the twentieth century. There are innumerable recipes for curried dishes and some for cubes of meat, cooked on skewers and served in a curry sauce, but recipes for Chicken Tikka Masala are absent.

During the 1960s and '70s, such 'skewer cooking' became fashionable 'party food': small cubes of beef or lamb threaded onto skewers, inter-leaved with slices of onion, sweet pepper or tomato, were grilled and served with boiled rice. They were called 'shashlik', 'kebab' or 'shish-kebab' depending on their perceived country of origin or else just termed 'Skewered lamb' or 'Skewered meat balls'.⁸

Interestingly, such 'Skewer cooking' had featured in Scottish cookery books a century and a half earlier. In 1829 Mrs. Dalgairns printed two recipes: 'Kebobbed Currie' where small bits of veal, pickled pork and poultry⁹ alternating with slices of onion were threaded onto wooden skewers some 3 or 4 inches long (8-10 cm). A sauce was made of onions, apple, garlic, curry powder and gravy. The skewered meat was dusted with turmeric, fried briefly, covered with the sieved sauce and stewed until tender. The second recipe was similar although it omitted both the chicken and the curry sauce.¹⁰

Fellow Scotswoman Meg Dods advocates such a method as providing 'a good dinner for an invalid'. Her recipes specify veal, beef or mutton, cooked on wire skewers on a small whirling wire jack. Basted while cooking and 'dusted with salt when ready and pepper or curry-powder at discretion' they were served either with grilled toasts or boiled dry rice.¹¹

Cookery books were printed in Scotland from 1736 onwards. Most carry dishes designated as 'curry', following the lead of Hannah Glasse whose recipe in 1747 'To make Currey (sic) the India way' is claimed to be the first printed in England.¹² It was based on fowl or rabbit and flavoured only with salt, pepper, powdered coriander seed and onion; a spoonful of rice was cooked in the sauce along with the meat. Within a few years, the fifth edition of 1755 augmented the recipe with powdered turmeric and ginger, cream and lemon juice.

⁸ Patten, M., (ed.), *Cookery in Colour*, London 1972. Recipes no. 187, 1043, 1071; Boxer, A., *First Slice Your Cook-Book*, New York 1964, 105, 109.

⁹ 'Poultry', a generic term for domestic and farmyard fowls.

¹⁰ Dalgairns, Mrs., *The Practice of Cookery*, Edinburgh 1829, 128, 163.

¹¹ Dods, M. [pseud.], *The Cook & Housewife's Manual*, Edinburgh 1842, 396, 'Meat cubboded or kebboded'. Some recipes under the same name gave a very different end product.

¹² Burnett, D., and Saberi, H., *The Road to Vindaloo*, Totnes, England 2008, 23.

Over the years, an ever-increasing list of substances to be curried appear, even to curried rice.¹³ Curry Sauce also became the repository for many items left-over from previous meals.

It is difficult to determine what makes a 'curry' as opposed to any other dish flavoured with a combination of spices. Recipes for home-made curry powders varied considerably; while commercially-made powders were available from the late eighteenth century

A hundred years later, one manual detailed twelve different curry powders. All twelve had cayenne, coriander seed and turmeric while eleven had black pepper. In descending order of popularity nine held ginger; eight used cumin and fenugreek, six mustard, four cardamom, cinnamon, cloves and salt; with cassia, mace, pimento, rice flour and long pepper (equally pungent though less aromatic than black pepper) in the remainder.¹⁴

In 1980, thirteen curry powders were described, utilising a similar list of ingredients – the most frequent being chilli, coriander seed, cumin and black pepper; with turmeric and cardamom in eight, fenugreek, cloves and cinnamon in six, ginger in four, mustard seed in three, mace, nutmeg, allspice and curry leaves in two, and single mentions of poppy seeds or lentils.¹⁵

For both lists the essential components are cayenne or chilli, coriander seed and black pepper. Turmeric, essential in 1894 is less so in 1980, replaced by cumin seed. Interestingly, chilli peppers (*Capsicum frutescens* or *annuum*) were never indigenous to Indian cuisine, as they are native to Mexico and were introduced by the Portuguese early in the sixteenth century.¹⁶

Spices, and the dishes they went into, were not our only inheritance from India: other foodstuffs were adopted and adapted.

Rice had been imported for many years and savoury dishes were often described under phonetic variations of the name 'pilau', where the meat and the rice are cooked together until the rice is dry and fluffy. Hannah Glasse gives three recipes, her chosen spices being whole pepper, mace, nutmeg and cloves – though not all used simultaneously.¹⁷ In 1751 her book was purchased by Hopetoun House, outside Edinburgh, and the Hopetoun Dinner Book for 1755-56 records occasional 'Pillows' of mutton, veal, venison or 'a hare wth the skin' being served at the First Table to the family and guests.¹⁸

¹³ Somerville, Mrs., *Cookery & Domestic Economy*, Glasgow, n.d. (4th edition), 154.

¹⁴ *Law's Grocer's Manual*, Liverpool, c.1894, 248.

¹⁵ Stobart, T., *The Cook's Encyclopaedia*, London 1980, 136-7.

¹⁶ For example, Davidson, A., *The Oxford Companion to Food*, Oxford 2006. See 'Chilli' p. 171.

¹⁷ Glasse, *op. cit.*, 1747, 28, 52, 123.

¹⁸ Hopetoun Papers Trust, 'Dinner Book', 1755-56.

The spices used in Hannah Glasse's pilaus were those frequently used in the kitchen but over the years spices suggestive of a full-blown curry were sometimes recommended.¹⁹

The famous British breakfast dish of kedgeriee is a type of pilau, adapted from the original 'Khitchri' or similar spellings: a dish of rice cooked with butter and dhal, (similar to split peas) and flavoured with spice, onion etc.²⁰ In Britain the dhal and spices were omitted, pre-cooked or smoked fish was added and the dish garnished with hard-boiled eggs.

The soup called Mulligatawny was seemingly popular as variations of it appear in most cookery books; basically, it consisted of fried onion and curry powder, stock or water with a little chicken or mutton added.²¹

Above all, pickles, ketchups and chutneys were adopted in endless variety and adapted to local provisions. Nowadays, chutney is akin to a sweet-sour spiced fruit jam, whereas originally it was a mixture of fresh raw ingredients ground to a paste, created to be a 'relish' to the meal.

The Indian ketchup was a salty and strongly tasting sauce made from a variety of ingredients, especially fish. British cookery books began suggesting ingredients such as walnuts or mushrooms but the modern ketchup is almost invariably based on tomatoes.

A similar process of adaptation affected 'Pickles'. Pickling was an old method of preserving food in brine or in vinegar, with or without added flavourings from garlic, herbs or spices; it was imperative to keep the balance between the sour, salt and sweet flavours. In Britain, the type called 'Piccalilly' contains chunks of assorted vegetables in a thick yellow vinegary sauce spiced with turmeric and mustard.

Between the introduction of these 'relishes' from India and their modern day counterparts are innumerable versions as British cooks used their ingenuity to adapt these foreign commodities to local ingredients. For example, elder shoots were substituted for bamboo shoots; and fresh mangoes, being in short supply, were replaced by cucumbers, leading to a plethora of eighteenth century recipes under the curious title of 'To mango cucumbers'.²²

In the early days the British, in India as administrators, merchants or the military became accustomed to Indian food; they sent home items such as

¹⁹ For example, Mrs. Beeton's *Family Cookery*, London and Melbourne 1923.

²⁰ Yule, Henry, Burnell, A.C., *Hobson-Jobson: the Anglo-Indian Dictionary*, Ware, England 1996, 476, 312. New edition.

²¹ Davidson, A., *op. cit.*, 2006; see 'Anglo-Indian Cookery', p. 21.

²² For example, Evelyn, John, *Acetaria*, London 1699, 101; Mrs. McLintock's, *Receipts for Cookery & Pastry-Work*, Glasgow 1736, 44; Mrs. Maciver, *Cookery and Pastry*, Edinburgh 1777, 226-7.

chutneys and their own mix of curry powders. When they returned to Britain after many years' service abroad, they missed their accustomed foods. Coffee houses and taverns began serving 'curries' although it was 1926 before London's first Indian restaurant opened in Regent Street.²³

Britain has witnessed much immigration from India and neighbouring regions. Where ethnic communities developed, eating houses opened for their own use which were gradually discovered by others. They were seen as offering good value, were able to adapt to the tastes of their customers (for example serving curry with chips rather than rice), kept long hours and often provided a take-away service. Some opened during the 1930s and '40s but numbers multiplied rapidly from the 1960s onwards.

At this point, too, package holidays abroad were promoted and holiday makers experienced the pleasures of eating 'foreign' food. Since then, as travel became relatively cheaper so virtually every part of the globe has become accessible, along with their local cuisines. It is not only Indian restaurants that have proliferated throughout Britain but those of many other countries too.

All this has impacted on British eating habits. From the 1970s on, TV programmes, cookery books and magazine/newspaper articles have promoted the benefits of curry as an everyday meal: simplicity of preparation, the numerous vegetarian options and, nowadays, the health benefits, too.

Gerard's Herbal, originally published in 1597, not only detailed a huge range of herbs and spices but also described their medicinal attributes according to contemporary thinking. Modern day herbalists rely on an even wider range of plant material. Scientific research increasingly confirms its efficacy: for example, an ingredient found in turmeric (curcumin) is thought to slow the onset of Alzheimers and has useful anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidising properties among others²⁴; it can also encourage ovarian cancer to be more responsive to treatment.²⁵ Although the amount of each individual spice found in curries is relatively small, the cumulative effect of all such health-giving properties must be considerable where curries are eaten frequently.

It is not so long ago that books thought it necessary to include the names of shops which would supply spices by post.²⁶ What a different situation

²³ Veeraswamy's, 99 Regent Street, London. It is one of the oldest surviving restaurants in London and has remained on the same site. It was founded by the great-grandson of an English general and an Indian princess.

²⁴ *Daily Record*, 4 April 2009, Glasgow, Scotland.

²⁵ *The Scotsman*, 29 April 2010, 13.

²⁶ For example, Day, H., *Complete Book of Curries*, London 1970, 249-50.

nowadays! Supermarkets stock a plethora of dried spices from assorted manufacturers; equally available is an ever-expanding array of curry sauces, chutneys and relishes, alongside naan bread, chappaties and poppadums, together with numerous types of rice. Completing the picture are the ready-made meals, both fresh and frozen, of good quality and value.

In twenty-first century Britain, there can be no difficulty in seeing curry as an everyday food. There is the proliferation of curry houses, either to eat in or to supply a take-away but, equally, over the last twenty-five years or so curry has moved into the home. Generally speaking food habits are slow to change: in Britain, however, there has been a rapid acceptance of ethnic foods in general and of curries in particular. One only has to look at the immense popularity of Chicken Tikka Masala, the curry invented in Scotland, to understand its claim to be 'Britain's National Dish'.²⁷

²⁷ Davidson, *op. cit.*, 2006, 798.

Health, Hogs, Hungaricums: Revitalisation of a Traditional Food in Hungary

Eszter Kisbán

In a period when food-related health perceptions are growing, the success of a long forgotten fatty breed of pig has brought excitement to Hungarian society. Farmers, scientists, businessmen, consumers, sympathisers, and industry, are all interested in the return of *mangalica*, an old breed of farm animal. The revitalisation of the *mangalica* breed began unexpectedly in 1991 and it was initiated from abroad. For a long period of time in Hungary, *mangalica* was the main domestic breed of pig, but the breed was very nearly extinct by the 1970s. In accordance with old versus new ideas concerning eating habits, the main virtue of the breed was considered to be its abundant thick fat content when it was in prime condition, while its meat aspect has come into the focus in recent years.

Today, it is at least twice as expensive to rear a *mangalica* hog as it is to rear the lean 'white' pig raised specifically for its meat. Only a small number of farms are involved in *mangalica* breeding. This explains why *mangalica* pork has returned as a prestige food, a special delicacy. A variety of disciplines are extensively involved in the revitalisation and development of the *mangalica* breed of swine.

Public interest in the new phenomenon is far greater than the supply of the hog available on the market. People are interested in the origin and history of the breed, in old and new ways of rearing and fattening the animals, in recent local and industrial *mangalica* products and their availability, in registered lines of poor-blood *mangalica* pigs and commercial *mangalica* hybrids, in the control of origin, in price and health concern, in eating habits and recipes, and even in the variants of meat-curing processes in other European regions. These points lead to a discussion of wider concerns, such as the protection and conservation of farm animals' genetic resources, the formation of *in situ* gene banks, and ideas about organic farming, rare old indigenous breeds, the development of rural areas, heritage consensus, the term 'Hungaricum', and so on. With a more or less objective knowledge of the issues involved, the topics are passionately discussed on all kinds of public forums, and it seems that young adult urbanites are strongly represented among both sympathisers and consumers.

Over the last five years, the return of the *mangalica* breed of hog has been such an exciting novelty that it has overshadowed – at least temporarily – even the national nostalgia towards the grey cattle, the animals, of all the old farm animals of Hungary, which remain closest to people's hearts. The development of the *mangalica* revitalisation project over the last twenty years can still be discussed with individual actors, and several aspects of the topic would be worthy of detailed ethnological/anthropological analyses. Here I will confine myself to the phenomenon of revitalisation with regard to old and new eating habits, especially concerning the prestige status of meat and fat.

The Rise and Decline of the *Mangalica* Breed of Hog in Hungary

Mangalica is not the oldest known Hungarian breed of swine – in the eighteenth century, there were two different old regional breeds of hog to be found in the territory of present-day Hungary. One of them got its name from the Bakony Mountains in the west of the country, while the other was named from an agrotown (Szalonta) in the Eastern Plain. Both were raised free-range, having been kept in oak woods for most of the year in the case of the Bakony Mountains, and on natural grassland, often with marshy patches, small streams and reed beds, in the case of the Eastern Plane. In the autumn, herds from lowland areas were also driven to distant woodlands to feed on acorn mast.

From the end of the eighteenth century, forerunners of a newcomer, the *mangalica* pig, began to appear here and there in the Hungarian countryside, in small but growing numbers, and they soon became attractive because of their fatty character. These animals were probably derived from the wider family of old Mediterranean breeds.¹ Swineherds and small farmers came across such pigs when herds were being driven to market from the Balkans to Vienna, and they took care of some animals, often pigs lost along the driving roads. They called the fatty breed by different names with reference to the Balkans, including a version of the word *mangalica*, which was just one of the Serbian names for the breed of pigs in question. In the early nineteenth century, manor farms in Hungary began to experiment with whole *mangalica* herds in different regions, and even peasant farmers took the trouble to get a few of these animals directly from Serbia for breeding. By 1820, the comparison 'As fatty as a *mangalica*' was a standard saying. The prestige of

¹ The old Mediterranean pig has become a focus of attention of new breeders and historians of the area in recent times. See *7th International Symposium on the Mediterranean Pig*. Universidad de Córdoba, 2010; available at:

<http://www.uco.es/congresos/cerdomediterraneo/presentacion/?id=en>; accessed 28. 2. 2011.

the fatty pig breed was fully established by 1833 when the highest celebrity, the king's representative in Hungary, revealed a personal interest in the animal. He was an acknowledged enthusiast for agricultural development, and got starting *mangalica* stock for his manor in the lowland area. His animals, nine sows and three boars, were sent to him by Milos Obrenović, the prince of Serbia, and they came from the region of Šumadia in Serbia, which was still part of the Ottoman Empire at that time. Šumadia was, and remained for more than another century, the main and best-known swine-rearing area of the Serbian province.² By the interbreeding of the old native Hungarian swine and the newcomers, the Hungarian *mangalica* emerged as a new genotype and appeared as such at the 1857 national agricultural show in Budapest, the capital city. With regard to colour, there were four variations of the new breed – the woolly coated, curly haired 'blond' type, the 'red' (rather ginger) type, the 'black' type, and the 'swallow-bellied' black-and-white type. They were called *mangalica* in the everyday language of the people, but well-informed experts also referred to them as *Milos-pigs* or *Šumadia-pigs* after their breeder and place of origin, for some time, at least.³ Today, discourse communities are keen to learn all about these names and places with reference to the *mangalica* pig.

After their introduction, *mangalica* pigs were initially reared in the traditional manner, but intensive fattening on maize in pigsties during the weeks prior to slaughtering gradually took over from the 1870s onwards. The increase in the area devoted to the cultivation of maize is clearly indicative of that situation, despite several reports of herds being driven to woods for acorn mast, even in the twentieth century.

However, the leaner old breeds of hog could not withstand the competition from the fatty pig for very long. By 1885, 90% of the total swine stock consisted of *mangalica* and the remaining 10% was mostly made up of the new kind of more economical meat-type hybrids. Like the old breeds, their earlier counterparts, the *mangalica* became and remained a good export

² Halpern, Joel Martin, 'The Ecological Transformation of a Resettled Area, Pig Herders to Settled Farmers in Central Serbia (Šumadija, Yugoslavia) during the 19th and 20th Centuries', in Bartosiewicz, László, Greenfield, Haskel Joseph, (eds.), *Transhumant Pastoralism in Southern Europe. Recent Perspectives from Archaeology, History and Ethnology* (=ARCHAEOLINGUA, Series Minor 11), Budapest 1999, 79-95.

³ Dorner, Béla, *A sertés Magyarországon* ('The Domestic Pig in Hungary'), Budapest 1901 (the basic historical work from animal science); historical ethnography: Szabadfalvi, József, 'A sertés Magyarországon' ('Pig Farming in Hungary'), Debrecen 1991; Paládi-Kovács, Attila, *A magyar állattartó kultúra korszakai. Kapcsolatok, változások és történeti rétegek a 19. század elejéig* ('Hungarian Animal Husbandry. History, Connections and Periods of Change up to the Beginning of the 19th Century'), Budapest 1993.

product right up to the mid-twentieth century. When the demand of western markets was changing from fat to lean meat, the change of stock away from the *mangalica*, and the transition to intensive pig breeding, gradually developed. English and other 'white pig' breeds were imported initially, and intensive farming developed with new 'Hungarian white' hybrids. When large estates turned to industrial pig-farming, most of the common farmers



Fig. 1: *Mangalica* pig for sale, Lowland Hungary, about 1910 (Múlt-kor 2009).

still held fast to the fatty breed (Fig. 1).

Domestic taste did not favour the lean pig either. During the 1950s, there was a radical restructuring of the whole agricultural system, and *mangalica*-farming soon came to an abrupt end. The breed was comprehensively displaced by the meat-type hybrids. With this decline, the *mangalica* hog disappeared from the statistics as well and only the national supervisory authority of genetic resources registered the remaining pedigree *mangalica* sow population. The number of sows for particular years were as follows: 1955 (17,691); 1958 (7,842); 1960 (2,000); 1970 (243) and 1975 (34).⁴

⁴ Tóth, Péter, Szabó, Péter, *Mangalica: Old Pig in New Ways...* Debrecen [2008]. See <http://www.atk.hu/szaktanacsadas/mangalicaws/Toth-Mangalica.pdf>; accessed 28. 2. 2011.

Proportion of Mangalica in the total pig stock, Hungary (%)

year	%
1885	90
1895	85
1910	80
1938	81
1944	75
1975	0.0 (...)
2010	1.5

Source: Source: Szabadfalvi, *op. cit.*, 1991, 46-7; KSH (The Hungarian Central Statistical Office); MOE (National Association of Mangalica Farmers) *passim*.

Meat and Fat: The Long-term Evolution of Traditional Eating Habits

From the sixteenth century to the mid nineteenth century cattle were the main export products of Hungary, and beef was the ordinary meat eaten in the home. The large, long-horned breed of cattle, called 'grey cattle', was reared free-range, and their special market virtue abroad was that they were raised for meat. Beef was used fresh only, in the kitchen; it was not conserved for longer use for the household. No rendered beef suet was used for cooking either. Pork and poultry were more highly regarded than beef. These meats consequently appeared on formal middle-class banquet menus in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but not too often otherwise. In the early modern period, contemporaries chose a dish as a symbol of Hungarian national eating habits. A phrase was coined and was often used until the late eighteenth century. While referring to the same dish, it runs in two versions: 'Sauerkraut, with meat, is the arms of Hungary' or 'Sauerkraut, with pig-fat, is the arms of Hungary'. Surviving menus, recipe collections, cookery books and autobiographies, all confirm that this dish was indeed the most common feature of the menu of all social classes. Meat and pig fat with sauerkraut appeared among the best dishes for one end of the social spectrum, and, apart from fasting-days, as an everyday dish on the table of the elite. In the latter case, lean beef, pork-fat, and sauerkraut, were cooked together in the same pot. Other versions of the dish included the cooking together of pork, fat poultry and sauerkraut. In the countryside, where beef was not available due

to the absence of butchers, the dish was cooked with pork and usually appeared on festival days.⁵

In the kitchens of the higher echelons of society, piglets were roasted, and fresh young pork was available every so often, while smaller households and the people of the countryside usually had just a taste of fresh pork immediately after the yearly slaughtering of a pig, which was undertaken in the winter season only. Instead, they went in for conserving the meat by means of smoking, in order to have a supply of meat and fat for the hard-working period of the year. Very little meat was sacrificed for the production of sausages, which were smoked for long life. There were regions, where such a delicacy was not made until the 1920s. Blood and pluck, such as lung and liver, were used in the making of black and white puddings, which were cooked by frying.

The most important part of a pig, and the main virtue of the fatty *mangalica* breed, was the hard solid fat it contained. Pork was always more expensive than beef, and pork fat was more expensive than the pork itself, in both cities and agrotowns alike, until about 1900. The skill of the farmer in raising the pig was judged by its weight, and the heaviest won the prizes



Fig. 2: Winners at the Show, Hungary, 1924 (Dorner, Béla, *A sertés tenyésztése és hizlalása*, Budapest 1925, Fig. 94).

⁵ Kisbán, Eszter, 'From Peasant Dish to National Symbol. An Early Deliberate Example', in Löfgren, Orvar, (ed.), *National Culture as Process (Ethnologia Europaea XIX)*, Copenhagen 1989, 95-102; Kisbán, Eszter, 'Food and Hierarchy in Early Modern Hungary', in Cheape, Hugh, (ed.): *Tools and Traditions. Studies in European Ethnology*, Edinburgh 1993, 132-7.

at shows. An example is the group of winners at a show in 1924. The eighteen-month-old pigs were ready for slaughtering; their average live weight was 231.5 kg, and they would produce 73-79% fat after slaughtering⁶ (Fig. 2).

Since the late Middle Ages, pig's fat was the main cooking agent at all social levels, and it was also the most desired cold food of the working people. A higher consumption of fat was a marker of a higher standard of living. Butter and oils were regarded as cooking agents suitable for fasting-days and they were also used in certain dishes of the upper classes only.

Pig fat was conserved by salting and drying, or by salting and smoking, according to the practice favoured in different regions. For ease of processing and storing, the fat was left in big, wide pieces, just as it had been when it was taken from the animal, and the skin was left in place. The general perception in relation to the fat was 'The thicker the better' – and a thick fat content served to confer prestige on the farmer who had raised the hog. Early modern inventories registered fat by the number of pieces produced, counting by a whole or a half. To speak of one piece of fat, one meant the fat taken from all around the animal's body – that is, from the back, sides and the belly – all in one piece, or halved lengthways. One could occasionally see such 'whole fats' until about the mid-twentieth century (Fig. 3). With regard to the *mangalica*, these pieces of fat were larger and thicker and should not include any layers of meat. When cooking, a small piece of fat was cut off and went into the pot directly or was rendered for immediate use. The rendering of a part of the fat for storage straight after slaughtering is first reported from 1770. This was 'lard', and was never mixed with the second-class product rendered from the abdomen. Rendered lard is more neutral in taste than fat which has been salted and smoked. During the period of innovation, one would cook certain dishes only with such lard, but the change in taste had already begun before the advent of the fatty *mangalica* breed of hog.⁷

Most of the butchers usually worked with cattle and beef only. A specialised butchers' trade to handle pigs and pork for households appeared only in the second half of the nineteenth century, and soon after the two groups combined to form the modern-day butchers' trade. Many of the urban

⁶ Dorner, Béla, *A sertés tenyésztése és hizlalása* ('Pig Farming: Breeding and Fattening'), Budapest 1925.

⁷ Kisbán Eszter, 'Vom Speck zum Schmalz in der ländlichen ungarischen Speisekultur', in *In Memoriam António Jorge Dias*, Vol. II, Lisboa 1974, 283-96 (3 vols.); Kisbán, Eszter, "'May His Pig Fat be Thick": Domestic Conservation of Fat in Hungary', in Ridervold, Astri, Ropeid, Andreas, (eds.), *Food Conservation. Ethnological Studies*, London 1988, 26-32.



Fig. 3: A 'whole' fat (fat in one piece), Vargyas, Transylvania – Romania 1963 (Photo Jenő Barabás).

households, however, continued to slaughter and process fattened pigs for themselves; this they did at least once a year just as country people did. The households which did not slaughter, and which bought fresh pork regularly, did not buy rendered lard but solid fat, and rendered it at home for future use. This practice continued in many urban households until about the mid twentieth century. Vessels for lard were often 50 litres in capacity.

The national average consumption of beef and pork was almost the same in the 1880s. On the other hand, the consumption of poultry was still very low and this meat was considered a delicacy in many households.⁸ The regions included in the 1884, but not in later, statistics, were not the most prominent areas of pig raising, as mutton consumption was characteristic there. The national average consumption of meat was 33 kg *per capita* a year, while meat consumption in urban areas was almost double that amount being 62.2 kg *per capita*, at that time.

⁸ Keleti, Károly, *Die Ernährungs-Statistik der Bevölkerung Ungarns auf physiologischer Grundlage*, Budapest 1887. In relation to the data of these first food statistics from 1884, it should be remarked that, generally speaking, they covered a territory different from that which pertained after 1920.

Annual per capita meat consumption (kg) in Hungary 1884

	whole population	
	kg	%
beef	11.9	36
pork	10.2	31
sausages	2.5	7.5
mutton	5.3	16
poultry	3.0	9
game	0.1	0.3
	33.0	99.8

Source: Keleti, *op. cit.*, 1887, 68.

The relative consumption of beef to pork indicates a downward trend for beef, a trend which developed early and has continued to recent times.

Annual per capita consumption (kg) of animal fat in Hungary 1884

	in the whole population		in the urban population	
	kg	%	kg	%
hard pig-fat	18.6	66.7	25.6	64.5
rendered lard	8.1	29.0	11.1	27.9
butter	1.2	4.3	3.0	7.6
	27.9	100	39.7	100

Source: Keleti, *op. cit.*, 1887, 68.

The high figures for the consumption of pig fats in both their hard and rendered forms are certainly due to the prosperous *mangalica* stock of the country. There are two factors which serve to explain the high ratio of the hard pig fat consumed especially by the urban population. This was the period of belated industrial expansion when many rural people suddenly became industrial workers, and came to live alone or with their families, in urban industrial centres. Cold pig-fat remained a very important part of their eating habits. In addition, those who were agricultural workers and who had previously been paid in kind, could now afford to buy food as they were wage earners. Life for the new industrial workers was not easy but it was far from being as hard as it used to be in pioneering regions abroad such as in

industrialising England or the German Ruhrland, around 1800. Housewives at all social levels still preferred to render their stock of lard at home. If fat for rendering was bought at the butcher, it could, now and again, have been easily included as hard fat in the statistics.

Both meat and fat consumption indicate that the preferences in the choice of foodstuff were still rather traditional in the late nineteenth century. The structure recalls early modern eating habits on the one hand, and explains why the fatty pig *mangalica* was made so welcome, on the other.

Changing Trends

After the 1920s, meat and fat consumption changed rapidly. In this paper it is not possible to deal with issues such as short-term differences with regard to availability, fluctuation in prices, or the situation and attitudes of different social groups towards meat and fat consumption.

The trend in terms of meat and fat consumption was that a rise in consumption was followed by a decline. The timing, however, as the statistics below show, was not the same in the two cases. As our aim in this paper is to deal with the revitalisation of the *mangalica* pig, the emphasis here will be on pork and pig-fat consumption.

A half a century after the compilation of the first food statistics, total meat consumption had remained the same, that is, *per capita* consumption was still 33 kg in 1934, just as it had been in 1884, but the kind of meat consumed had significantly changed. Pork was by far the most popular meat used; poultry consumption rose spectacularly and was well ahead of beef consumption in the 1930s.

The total amount of meat consumed doubled between the mid 1930s and the 1970s, reaching a peak of 73 kg *per capita* in 1990, and it has been declining ever since. The proportion of pork that was eaten followed the rising trend in meat consumption until the rate reached a 40 kg *per capita* peak in 1980; it then began to fall off and has been on the decline ever since. Its new rival is poultry, with consumption rising from 3 kg *per capita* a year in 1884, to 15 kg *per capita* by the mid 1930s, and to nearly 34 kg *per capita* in 2000. Industrial chicken farming began during the 1970s. The changing proportion of pork and chicken within total meat consumption is also significant in itself.

The availability of the large deep-freezer significantly changed the method of preservation of pork in homes, especially during the 1980s. From then on, all the pork except that necessary to make smoked sausages and a smoked ham, has been kept in the freezer, and country folk are happy to have unprocessed meat of their own available. Sausages are stuffed with meat

mixed with additional, visible pig-fat. No health warning could change the affection of people in both urban and rural areas for these smoked sausages. They are cooked in vegetable dishes with or without other meat, and are preferably eaten cold and sliced. These home-made smoked sausages are more highly regarded than the light industrial variety. The processing of the home-made smoked pork sausages continues, although the food industry had already been making good quality pork sausages, which include similar components, and which look and taste the same, since the mid nineteenth century.

Since 1884, there has been a constant, if a somewhat fluctuating, declining trend in the consumption of beef. However, it is unlikely that it will remain as low as it was in 2008.

Annual per capita meat consumption (kg) in Hungary 1934-2008

	1934-1938		1980		1990		2000		2008	
	kg	%	kg	%	kg	%	kg	%	kg	%
Beef	7.3	22.0	9.6	13.4	6.5	8.9	4.3	6.1	2.8	4.5
Pork	15.0	45.0	40.2	56.0	38.8	53.1	28.0	39.9	25.8	42.0
Poultry	8.3	25.0	18.1	25.2	22.8	31.2	33.7	48.0	28.7	48.7
Other	1.2	3.6	0.9	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.1	1.6	1.4	2.3
Pluck	1.4	4.2	3.0	4.2	4.0	5.5	3.1	4.4	2.8	4.5
	33.2	100	71.8	100	73.1	100	70.2	100	61.5	100

Source: KSH (The Hungarian Central Statistical Office) (1965, 2010).

Annual per capita consumption of animal- and vegetable-fat (kg) in Hungary 1980-2008

	1980	1990	2000	2008
pig-fats	21.0	25.4	16.8	13.0
other animal fats	2.9	1.4	4.2	1.9
vegetable fats	6.6	11.8	18.0	21.9
Edible fats	30.5	38.6	39.0	36.8

Source: *Statisztikai Tükör* (2010/71), KSH (The Hungarian Central Statistical Office): Balogh 2008, 501.⁹

⁹ Balogh, Viktória, 'Az élelmiszerfogyasztás tendenciáinak vizsgálata Magyarországon' ('Some Trends in Food Consumption in Hungary'), *AWETH* ('Animal Welfare, Ethology and Housing Systems'), e-journal, Univ. Gödöllő, Hungary, no. 4 (2008), 494-506. Graph 4. Lard and sugar consumption (kg/capita) in Hungary (1980-2005); available at: <http://www.animalwelfare.szie.hu/cikkek/200802/Marketing-okonomia/AWETH2008494506.pdf>; accessed 28.2. 2011.

The complete change from the fatty *mangalica* pig to the leaner white breeds did not, in itself, change people's preference for pig-fats, the consumption of which dropped only slightly – from a 27 kg *per capita* yearly average in 1884 to a 25.4 kg *per capita* yearly average in 1990.¹⁰ However, the relative consumption of hard fat and lard has changed significantly in favour of lard parallels, due to a declining agricultural population. It was only between 1990 and 2000 that the consumption of vegetable fats outstripped that of lard and, by 2008, it was greater than the combined total consumption of animal fats, including both rendered poultry and butter. Cooking oil constituted the bulk of vegetable fats, and margarine was used only for making some fine bakery items. People of the older generations have been complaining for decades because the lard available for purchase in the market, which is made using modern industrial technology, is pressed, and becomes too solid. It does not taste like that which is rendered at home or that which was made using older industrial technology.

The use of cooking oil – sunflower and rape-seed oils – developed slowly from the 1970s onwards. Initially, such oil was cheaper to use than lard or hard fat. Status-wise, the use of lard was seen as a mark of plenty, while the use of cooking oil was seen as a mark of want, especially in rural areas. Only those households who, for some reason, could not afford to fatten, slaughter and process their own pigs, or were unable to do so, would cook with oil. Although medical opinion had, from 1970s, favoured the use of oil instead of pig-fats, the health risks involved in the use of the latter were essentially ignored until the mass media gave extensive coverage to the situation, beginning about two decades ago. During this period, Hungary's position on the European scale of health risks, especially with regard to coronary diseases and excessive-weight problems, deteriorated dramatically. The recent decrease in the use of lard is a sign that people are getting more and more conscious of health and well-being issues. The use of cooking oil was pioneered in institutional kitchens, such as those serving hospitals, schools or the workplace. But this has had little influence on food preparation methods at large since hospital cuisine is not usually emulated in a wider context, and family meals rank higher than those served in schools or in workplace canteens. As the use of oil spread, over time, its price gradually approached that applicable to lard, until recently when oil actually became more expensive than lard. However, the cost factor in respect of cooking oils no longer undermines consumption rates. But one point of reservation remained for some time – one that is as much a mental one as a question of

¹⁰ *Idem*

taste. Some people were of the opinion that some fried meats tasted differently and better when cooked with lard instead of oil. While they complain and refer in nostalgic terms to the use of lard, they are, nevertheless, prepared to use cooking oil also. The youngest generations do not remember the old taste and consequently do not miss lard in the cooking process.

After a break of some sixty years, Mediterranean olive oil has reappeared on the domestic market in Hungary. The price of this product is at least twice as high as that paid for the more usual cooking oils; consequently, it is regarded as a prestige product. The oldest generations who tasted olive oil many decades ago, would use it as they had done in childhood, that is, on some salads only. Many of the young, especially urban people – men rather than housewives, it seems – have again started to use it in cooking.

This was the situation with regard to pig-fat and cooking oils when the revitalisation process of the old *mangalica* breed of pig commenced in Hungary.

Revitalisation of the *Mangalica* Breed of Pig

The old animal-type came under legal protection when the *mangalica* sow population dropped to between 34 and 39 animals during the years 1973 to 1975. At this point, the government provided moderate help in order to rescue the breed as a historic genotype. Arising from the hard work of expert agronomists, the number of females reached a total of 133 sows raised on four farms, in 1979, and there were 338 sows on 12 farms in 1989. Three of the four traditional *mangalica* colours survived; the black could not be rescued any more. The pedigree *mangalica* sow population rose to over 9,000 in 2007 and managed to remain above 6,000 during recent difficult years. More than two-thirds of the sow population are of the curly-haired blond variety. The number of farms involved in raising these animals varies but is around the 200 mark. These farms are to be found all over the country and on both flat and hilly land.¹¹ The 'National Association of Mangalica Breeders' was set up in Debrecen in 1994, and soon got the task of establishing and keeping both the official register of the breed and of the farms which raised the pigs. Information for the wider public about the breed was released¹² and has

¹¹ Tóth, Péter, Szabó, Péter, *Mangalica: Old Pig in New Ways...* Debrecen, [2008]; available at: <http://www.atk.hu/szaktanacsadas/mangalicaws/Toth-Mangalica.pdf>; accessed 28.2. 2011. Containing several graphs and photos, this is the most recent presentation in English concerning the *mangalica* breed. The authors are the two graduate agrarian engineers who initiated and led the revitalisation project, and they have also essentially run the *mangalica* Breeders' Association to date. The publication is on the home page of ATK (Research Institute for Animal Breeding and Nutrition, Herceghalom, Hungary).

continued to be provided since then.¹³ The new *mangalica* herd-book was published in 2003¹⁴ and multidisciplinary conferences have discussed the results of wide-ranging research on the breed.¹⁵ The Association held the first 'Mangalica Festival' in the grounds of the National Museum of Agriculture in Budapest in 2008, at which some of the animals and products were presented. The show returns every February with great success to the capital city. These festivals have made the *mangalica* breed widely known and popular again, and have prompted sympathisers and the media to inquire about many aspects of the breed. Two hundred and forty kilometres away in the country, the first regional 'Mangalica Festival' was organised in 2010, with an intended yearly return. The Festival took place in Debrecen, a university city with a recognised old Agricultural College. It was in a seminar-room in that College that young experts first discussed the task and possibility of the revitalisation of the *mangalica* breed, two decades ago.

The former trend of declining numbers of the *mangalica* breed of pig reached a significant turning point with the change in the political regime in Hungary in 1989-1990. With the re-establishment of private ownership in Hungary after a break of thirty to forty years, the structure of the agricultural sector, including the size of farm units, changed comprehensively. The new farms, small and large alike, had to find resources, knowledge, and markets, but the individual actors were free to take their own initiatives. Many young people educated in agricultural colleges with recognised high educational standards tried to find new work, new perspectives, and new co-operation partners at home and abroad.

It was at this time that a student of Debrecen Agricultural College happened to visit Spain for a period of vocational training. Here he met a young member of an established *serrano*-manufacturer family. He came home with the suggestion that it might be worthwhile to investigate whether *mangalica* legs could be tested for dry curing in Spain. The technology necessary to do this was not available in Hungary and no domestic

¹² Tóth, Péter, 'Mangalica: a fajta reneszánsza várható' ('Mangalica: Expected Renaissance of the Breed'), *Biokultúra* 6, no. 1 (1995): 10-11.

¹³ Mostly in Hungarian, exceptionally in English, e.g. Radnóczy, László, 'The Hungarian Mangalica', In Bodó, Imre, (ed.), *Living Heritage: Old Historical Hungarian Livestock*, Agroinfo Publ., Budapest [2004].

¹⁴ *Mangalica törzskönyv, MOE-OMMI* ('Mangalica Herd-book'), ed. Péter Szabó. Debrecen-Budapest 2003. By then, genetic research had declared that the pigs, which had the three different hair colours, were three different breeds.

¹⁵ 'A mangalica. Régi fajta – új lehetőségek' ('The Mangalica: Old Breed – New Perspectives'). (Papers of the Conference in the Research Institute for Animal Breeding and Nutrition, Herceghalom, 15 November 2005.) *Állattenyésztés és Takarmányozás* 55 (2006): 193-311.

manufacturer had any experience of using it. A Spanish-Hungarian joint venture company, with its head-office in Debrecen, was set up soon afterwards to test the scheme. *Mangalica* pigs were raised and slaughtered in Hungary and the ham was processed in Spain by an exclusive partner company. When the first dry-cured ham, *jamon mangalica*, matured with success, the fate of the breed was sealed for the better. A niche opened for a quality product. Farmers were invited to join in the breeding of the animals, and the food industry worked out how to make the best of the special character of the pork.

The special virtue of *mangalica* pork is its marbled meat. This arises from the fact that *mangalica* hogs build a fine network of very thin fat, like capillary veins, which first of all infiltrate the muscle of the animal, after which process a thick coat of fat develops all around the animal's body. This kind of muscle, and meat, respectively, are afforded the attribute 'marble' in industrial meat-production terminology. This is why the meat market is keen on the *mangalica* pig. Its meat is juicy and it does not get tough, whereas lean pork easily does. This feature is manifest both when cooking fresh pork and in cured products. The more the hogs move freely, the more the marble texture develops. The meat is at its best before the coat of fat under the skin grows thick and before further fatty tissues develop inside it. For premium meat, a slaughtering weight 130-150 kg is best. These aspects were not formerly considered when *mangalica* was appreciated and favoured for its thick coat of fat.

What is the size of the farms on which the *mangalica* breed is reared? According to statistics provided by the Breeders' Association, the total number of sows by farms varied between 20 and 30 during the first fifteen years of the period of revitalisation. On the 200 farms later on, the highest number was near to an average of 70 *per* farm in the best year. In order to approach free-range farming standards, the farmer needs large pasture areas for grazing the pigs; he also needs to grow additional natural fodder for the pigs on his own land, and he must provide spacious sheds to maintain the standard of the breed. The Breeders' Association have suggested that the minimum requirements necessary in order to start breeding *mangalica* pigs economically are, 20-30 hectares of pasture, 30-50 hectares of arable land, and 300-500 square metres of stall room. This would serve 20 sows and 200-500 offspring. It is thus quite an expensive venture to start at family farm level, bearing in mind the present economic conditions in Hungary.¹⁶ A large

¹⁶ *Tájékoztató a mangalicasertés tenyésztéséről* ('Introductory Information for Mangalica Breeders'), published by the University of Debrecen, Centre of Animal Sciences – National Association of Mangalica Breeders, Debrecen 2005. See www.mangold.hu/egyeselet.

venture can be mentioned for the purposes of comparison. The estate in question runs six farm-units in different places, four of them with poor-breed *mangalica* stock. There is an *in situ mangalica* gene bank with 300 sows. Close by is another farm with a stock of 2,000 *mangalica* animals. 5,000 *mangalica* pigs are fattened at a third farm, and another 1,000 are fattened for them on a farm elsewhere. That means that there is an average of 8,000 poor-breed *mangalica* animals for sale on an annual basis. The estate also co-operates with small farmers in terms of breeding and marketing, thus practically keeping most of the revitalised *mangalica*-pig husbandry going. In a separate unit, the company also runs two farms with special *mangalica* hybrids of their own, with 2,300 animals and 200 sows, respectively, on two different farms.¹⁷

Many of the *mangalica* farms are situated in areas appropriate for such farms in the countryside (Fig. 4). Some have pastures which include scattered trees or copses. Fields or orchards, which have not qualified as organic plots, but which are worked on ecological principles, surround some of the farms. Some *mangalica* herds live free-range on the edge of protected National Parks which formerly had included natural pasture for pigs and other herds.



Fig. 4: Winter snow. A *mangalica* farm in Kozárd, Hungary, 2010 (Photo Pál Hajas).

¹⁷ Olmos & Tóth Ltd; homepage <http://mangalica.com>

A *mangalica* sow has 6 to 8 very slow-growing piglets a year. The ratio of meat to carcass on maturity is only 50%, while in the case of intensively-fattened white pigs it is 70%. Consequently, it is very expensive to breed *mangalica* pigs in a proper fashion today.

Farmers who raise *mangalica* pigs have different goals. Some work to make a living out of animal husbandry, others do it as a subsidiary activity, and some just like to have a few animals of the old breed out of dedication and fondness for the animals, and also as a matter of prestige. Those who accept the standard low slaughtering weight of the animal can sell the product to leading processing companies directly or rather as members of a co-operation network. There is a market for both female livestock and boars. Others send the animals to small local slaughterhouses and organise the sale of the meat themselves. Some run small-scale slaughterhouses, a butcher's shop, or sell the meat at farmer's markets and supply a few local food shops as well. In the latter case, many of the farmers like to fatten their hogs up to around 200 kg, and local consumers are not opposed to this in most cases.

There are *mangalica* farmers, with good stock, who do not register their animals with the Breeders' Association. The number of such farmers varies from time to time and the final number remains unknown. They do not have, of course, the *Mangalica* Breeders' official trademark, but their *mangalica*-breeding activities still add special colour to the countryside, and they can offer a sample of the food and small-scale products to their supporters. As the *mangalica* hog becomes prestigious and popular, the number of such farms is increasing.

More and more registered and unregistered *mangalica* farmers run their farms in order to benefit from rural tourism. They advertise their venture, invite people just to look at the breed, to have a meal, buy home-made products in the farm shop, or to stay for a couple of nights in their farmhouse accommodation. An appointment to be present on slaughtering day can also be made. It probably should be remarked here that the slaughtering of a pig at home is not seen as a barbaric act.

The *mangalica* products on the farms, whether made for sale or for the farmers' own use, and those processed in small-scale industries, follow very old traditional processing methods which are indicative of the country and the region. The smoked meat sausages sell best, while fat, rendered lard, and smoked meat are also offered for sale. As most urban dwellers do not have large cool larders in their houses to store a whole ham, *mangalica* farmers would only exceptionally smoke whole legs of pork.

In response to a particular demand of the processing industry, a special hybrid *mangalica* hog was also developed. The few large farms raising the

hybrid breed make an independent branch of *mangalica* development at farm level. The hybrid hog is able to develop the juicy marbled meat, under similar but less expensive rearing conditions than the pedigree breeds. Only hybrids of the first generation, born to pedigree *mangalica* females, are accepted. All of the boars are of a certain other breed. The costs of raising and fattening the hybrid breed are still considerably higher than those pertaining to the raising of the white pig variety in an intensive way. So are the prices for the meat, which is still in the premium category. The farms stocking hybrids buy *mangalica* females from the 'real' *mangalica* breeder – this is how the two groups co-operate. The hybrids are slaughtered at the proper low weight and go to specialised processing plants at home and abroad. There is a stable annual demand, nationally and internationally, for thirty thousand hybrids of the controlled first generation stock.

Pig, Fresh Pork and Processed Products

Mangalica amounts to a tiny fragment of total pork consumption in Hungary at the present time. Because of the supply situation and price, it is, and remains, a delicacy. The actual number of *mangalica* hogs is unknown and does not yet appear in the national agricultural statistics. According to an expert estimate, *mangalica* meat might account for around a half a per cent (0.5%) of average pork consumption *per capita*. A FAO [Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN] workshop, held in Budapest in October 2010, discussed the popularity of *mangalica* pork. The suggestion, made during the workshop, that 42% of the Hungarian population had already tasted *mangalica* products, seems too optimistic.¹⁸ A random survey had apparently investigated why the interviewees do not buy *mangalica* products. This showed that around a third of those interviewed had not heard of the pig and another third or more did not know where to get *mangalica* products. Among the other reasons put forward for not buying *mangalica* pork products was the cost involved. As full information about the whole sample of the survey is not to hand it is not possible to comment further on the actual number of consumers of the product. However, if each person consumed a half a per cent, that is, 129 grams of *mangalica* pork, out of the total average *per capita* consumption of pork, this would allow each consumer one half of Pick's smoked 'paired *mangalica* sausage' a year (the pair weigh 250 grams).

¹⁸ Szentpáli, Gábor, *Opportunities of Niche Markets – Mangalica Production in Hungary*. See http://www.fao.org/regional/SEUR/events/bsg/docs/SZG_en.pdf – Budapest 2010; accessed 28.2. 2011.

The manufacturer, Pick, located in the city of Szeged, is the market leader and one of the oldest companies (1869) in the meat-processing branch of the food industry. The firm uses registered livestock for their *mangalica* products, both in respect of pork and lard. The characteristic spice used in *mangalica* products is paprika powder. This is not only because the company is situated in the prime paprika-growing area of the country, but also because such sausages have been made in this way since the arrival of the paprika plant in the country in the eighteenth century.

Many of the individual farmers like to fatten *mangalica* hogs up to around 200 kg. The farmers can sell the meat privately, or at farmers' markets, or in small shops. Producing a 200 kg *mangalica* pig is matter of prestige, even today. Two such cases were reported extensively in the media in 2010. Two high profile politicians – a male and a female – invited a number of guests on slaughtering day, to a farm and country house, respectively. The weight of the pigs – 200 kg – was especially referred to in the media reports of the events. People could take part in the work itself, if they wished, but there was a post-slaughtering party at which fresh roast pork and a taste of other products were provided for the guests. The event, and the media attention which it received, is indicative of the popularity of the *mangalica* hog in the Hungarian consciousness; it is even good for the public image of celebrities. The usual time for slaughtering at home is between December and February. Both parties held the event shortly before parliamentary elections were due to take place. One of the politicians involved in the event lost the election, while the other was elected at the highest level.

I have mentioned above that the slaughtering of a pig at home is not a stigmatised action. The practice has been going on since the Middle Ages. Formerly, slaughtering day was almost a festive occasion, like harvest home. Many urban families buy a pig on a farm even today and join in the work when the animal is slaughtered for them. They can leave meat and sausages with the farmer for smoking. On the day of an old style slaughtering, 3 men and 3 to 4 women, at least, are necessary to cope with the work. Women make the puddings and fry them in the course of the following days. Men make the meat sausages on the same day, and hang them up for smoking. Meat and fat are salted, and a quantity of lard is also rendered. They also make up parcels with the fresh pork and pudding for neighbours and relatives. The work starts at dawn and lasts until evening time. Then there is a party provided for all the helpers, members of the family, as well as friends and invited guests from the neighbourhood. They will soon return the invitation and also provide parcels of pork products on the day on which slaughtering

is carried out in their own yard. As many of the family members of farmers now live far away from home, such a day is often the best occasion of the year for a family reunion. Spouses and grandchildren also participate. It is a matter of the greatest pride to have had just spent a *mangalica* slaughtering-day on a farm.

With regard to the public, the following would appear to be the matters about which they are most concerned. They are interested in the supply of *mangalica* hogs and the availability of the fresh pork in particular. They are also interested in the whereabouts of the *mangalica* farms, information about the character of the cholesterol in the meat, the history of the breed, the young hero of the revitalisation, and the Spanish technology used in the curing of the ham. There is also a manifest pride in the rescued Hungarian pig breed.

Fresh *mangalica* meat, that is, meat from the carcass, is actually very hard to buy for domestic use. Most of the registered farmers with pedigree stock have contracts to deliver pigs to integrators only. Those who do their own business might offer you a fresh joint for roasting if you happen to be staying on the farm at the right time. Unregistered farms also do not like to sell fresh meat. Nevertheless, fresh *mangalica* pork is what people would like to cook themselves. Occasionally, *mangalica* roast pork can be found in luxury restaurants. Beef from the grey Hungarian cattle is a delicacy as well, but the meat can be bought on a regular basis at special butchers, and several downtown restaurants advertise grey-cattle roast on the menu. As the *mangalica* pork is so expensive, it is more economical for both farmers and meat companies to trade with processed products.

At *mangalica* festivals, both farmers and large-scale producers present their products to the public. Farmers would even take a sample of a whole smoked ham and offer thin slices to festival participants to taste. The meat sausages presented would be of the length people would expect, that is, at least twice as long as Pick's small pairs in a decorated wrapping (Fig. 5). Solid fat – in small pieces – cured only with salt, and smoked in a manner characteristic of traditional practices in different regions, is also usually on sale at the festivals. The soft fat of the double chin of the animal, cut into small slabs and sprinkled with paprika, is usually available at the festivals, as is rendered lard, also. These products are on sale for taking-home purposes, and fried pudding can be tried on the spot. There is no butcher's stall selling fresh pork at the festivals and there are no freshly-fried hot cutlets on sale either. The Spanish-Hungarian company would also usually present examples of the whole hams cured in Spain, just to show the kind of *jamon* which is responsible for the joyful return of the old home breed. This is not a pig



Fig. 5: Mangalica sausages, Pick, Szeged, Hungary, 2010.



Fig. 6: Autumn in the wood. A manglica-farm in Kővágóórs, Hungary, 2002.

market but animals representing the three *mangalica* colours are on show. With up to 60,000 visitors participating in the festival over two days, in Budapest, the crowd is as yet tolerable. About 30 of the 200 small *mangalica* farmers participate each year.

Many of the people, having discovered what constituted free-range farming in the past, were quick to discuss on public forums the questions as to why all *mangalica* pigs are not allowed access to acorn mast in real woodlands today. Some blamed the hunter, not knowing that legislation protects the woods, and that, nowadays, swine are not allowed to forage freely in them (Fig. 6):

In the early years of the revitalisation of the *mangalica* breed, when hardly any of the ordinary folk had actually seen a *mangalica*, rumour spread that *mangalica* meat and lard were much better for one's health than the kinds of lard and pork then available. Some sympathisers even stated: '*mangalica* is good for your health'. Experts then began to analyse in detail the fat content of *mangalica* meat and compared it with other pork products, including the proportion of saturated and unsaturated fat (trans fat) which it contained. The popular adage given above just refers the proportion of 'good' and 'bad' cholesterol in the meat. It is not only a question, of course, that the fat content itself is higher in the *mangalica* pork than in the leaner white pigs' meat, as other factors, such as an advantageous mineral content, have also recently come into focus. As *mangalica* represents only a tiny fraction of the whole consumption of pork, it is hardly especially dangerous. With regard to the high ratio of pork consumption compared to the status of beef in total meat consumption, *mangalica* itself is not really the main problem. People have now come to stress the benefits of free-range *mangalica* farming and of natural fodder, compared to factory farming and industrial feed.

Mountain Ham and the Mediterranean Pig

Dry-curing as a method of conservation is not unknown in Hungary. In a central area of the country, fat was never smoked. It was salted, hung up in the loft, and left alone to dry there. The slaughtering and salting was done between December and January. There was time for the fat to mature until it was needed in April or May or even still in early June, when it was eaten cold by those working hard in the fields. In other regions of the country, fat was, however, always cured by both salting and smoking. Smoking was done very slowly and the products were thus suitable for long storage. Ham and other meat were processed (= smoked) in the same way.

Spanish *serrano* ham is 'mountain ham'. In the old days, it was cured at home in areas of hilly land with a specific climate. Salted and hung up in sheds, it dried and matured for about a year. With modern technology and ventilation, this process is not limited to special regions. The name '*serrano*' is protected, and the method of curing is recognised as being traditional. The meat source is not specified, but it is mostly white pig meat that is used today. *Mangalica* ham, dry-cured and long-matured in Spain, is a variation of the product. It is a speciality of one manufacturer only and amounts to only a small fraction of the company's whole output. The attraction of the *mangalica* pig is its marbled meat. The *mangalica* ham cured in Spain now comes to the market marked as *Mangalica*, even though that was not the case from the beginning of the enterprise.

The old pig breed of the Spanish peninsula is *cerdo iberico*, 'the Iberian pig'. These animals are highly respected and protected, and the cured ham, also named '*iberico*', is a top delicacy. *Iberico* pork is also a marbled meat, and remains juicy even if it has been maturing for years. It thus has similar characteristic to *mangalica* meat, and this is why the Spanish company was interested in the *mangalica* breed.

With a separate special scale for both the *serrano* and the *iberico* hams, Spain has the most complicated classification and rating systems for ham in Europe.¹⁹ The Spanish are also working hard for recognition and protection in the European Union – with success. Hams won qualifications as '*traditional speciality guaranteed*' (TSG), '*protected geographical indication*' (PGI) and, the highest recognition of all, '*protected designation of origin*' (PDO) for *iberico* hams in four cases. All but one of the last group come from the west and the south of the country (the Dehesa de Extremadura area, two smaller regions in Salamanca, and Andalusia). The fourth one is the ham originating in one village only in Aragonia, which is referred to as the most elevated village in mainland Spain. Research on the Iberian pig, on the dry-curing process, and also on the region of the Dehesas itself, is ongoing, and is often carried out in an interdisciplinary fashion. The area of the Dehesas is characterised by a very old style of land ownership, long surviving manor estates, and Mediterranean forestland. This kind of land with trees, often cork oak forests, includes grass and pasture, coppices and scrublands. Sheep grazed here and the Mediterranean pig found acorn mast in the region. The area is seriously devastated in many respects, especially in modern times, as people have

¹⁹ Ventanas, Jesús (co-ord.), *Technologie del jamon iberico. De los sistemas tradicionales a la explotación racional del sabor y el aroma*, Madrid 2001; Resano, Helena-Sanjuan, Ana, I., Albisiu, Luis M., 'Consumers' Acceptability of Cured Ham in Spain and the Influence of Information', *Food Quality and Preference* 18 (2007): 1064-76. (Elsevier, Amsterdam.)

moved elsewhere to make a living. Work on the rehabilitation of the area is ongoing and there are multilateral projects for this purpose originating at home and abroad.²⁰

In Spanish cities, especially Madrid, when visitors first enter a shop, which looks like a large hall with dozens of whole hams hanging above their heads, on a hot summer's day, they are at first astonished at the sight, and then they wonder how it is that the hams do not drip when the temperature outside is 40° Celsius. They do not drip because they are perfectly cured. In the same way, and for the same reason, large whole pieces of whole lards do not drip in the lofts of Hungarian peasants.

This is just an outline of the image of Spain, fact and fiction, the place which opened the way for the return of a critically rare farm animal in a remote land.

Hungaricum

Hungaricum is a practical term of library science in Hungary. It includes all kinds of publications in the Hungarian language, old and recent, published in any country. Hungarian is a language of the Finno-Ugrian family, and few people abroad, including the Finns, understand it. Hungarians like to believe that Latin and Latinised words would be more easily understood by non-speakers of Hungarian. Hence, in the early modern period, many Hungarians introduced themselves as *Hungarus* outside the country. At present, the term *Hungaricum* has been applied more broadly to refer to the self-image of the Hungarians themselves, and to the image of the country abroad. The notion involves symbols such as environment, inventions, turning points of history, poetry, music, ancient monuments, modern architecture and design, heroes in any field and period, and many other characteristic marks. Plants and birds, rare breeds of old farm animals, as well as food and drink, all find their place in the concept.²¹ But there is also some reservation about the collective term as it is considered to be too broadly and too frequently used in the marketing of goods and commodities, and even of heritage itself. The old grey cattle have long been a symbol of the country, and *mangalica* has been earning that distinction in recent times. The

²⁰ Montserrat, Pedro, Pillat, Frederico, 'The Systems of Grassland Management in Spain', in Breymeyer, A., (ed.), *Managed Grasslands (= Ecosystems of the World, vol. 17A)*, Elsevier, Amsterdam 1990, 37-70; Plieninger, Tobias, Wilbrand, Claudia, 'Die Dehesas in Spanien', in Konold, W., Böcker, R., Hampicke, U., *Handbuch Naturschutz und Landschaftspflege*. Kap. XIV-3. (Erg.Lfg. 12/01), 14 pp. ECOMED Verlag, Landsberg 2001.

²¹ Legislation is in progress; the first reading of a bill is on the agenda for 2011.

way was opened for this by people's pride in both the rescue of an old breed and excitement about its distinctive food.*

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The Coney in Southeast Michigan: 'Something More Substantial for the Working Man'

William G. Lockwood

Across the United States there are innumerable versions of the sandwich made of a frankfurter, more commonly called (both the sausage and the sandwich made of it) a 'hot dog' in America.¹ Different variants call for the frankfurter to be steamed, boiled, deep-fried, and flat grilled, or grilled over open flame. The condiments considered obligatory for each version vary widely. Among the better known is the New York variant with sauerkraut and the Chicago, 'taken through the garden' with tomato, mustard, pickle spears, bright green relish, hot peppers and celery salt. Hot dog specialist Bruce Kraig has written that the hot dog 'is one of the symbols by which Americans have identified themselves'.² To an even greater extent these regional variants are important elements in the development of regional identities.

The following paper is about one of these localised fast foods – the coney – and particularly about its ethnic history. The coney consists of a frankfurter in a bun dressed with a special coney sauce, a sprinkling of chopped onions, and a stripe of yellow mustard. The frankfurter should be beef or beef and pork in a natural casing. Purists insist that the hot dog be flat grilled and the bun warmed by steaming. The onions should be chopped very fine and the mustard is a bright yellow variety commonly known as 'ball park mustard'. Some customers like to 'coney fluff', using a fork to mix the coney sauce, onions and mustard. While a customer might request omitting the onions or mustard, nothing (for example, catsup or cheese) can be added to a 'real' coney. They are usually ordered two at a time, often with French fries and a soft drink. The slogan of one establishment is 'Had a pair lately?' Every Michigander knows what that means. There is even a correct way of eating: elbows out, bent over the tiny plate they are served on in order to catch any coney sauce that overflows. One should never eat a coney standing up. Over time some proprietors have begun to put such large amounts of sauce on their coney that most now offer knife and fork for those who want them.

¹ For the best survey of hot dogs in America, and elsewhere, see Kraig, B., *Hot Dog: A Global History*, London 2009.

² Kraig, *op. cit.*, 2009, 15.



Fig. 1: A coney.

The coney is named after the Brooklyn seaside resort where early hot dog vendors, like Nathan's Famous, made hot dogs a household word in America. Early vendors perceived an image problem with the term 'hot dog'. Fearful that potential customers thought the name implied they were made of dog meat, the Coney Island Chamber of Commerce in 1913 banned any vendor in the vicinity from using the term. The officially approved name became 'Coney Island Hot'. I believe that immigrants passing through New York en route to Michigan brought the term with them.

Establishments that sell coney are known as coney islands. They, and the cultural complex associated with them, are most prevalent in the southeast corner of Michigan, but they can be found throughout southern Michigan and in closer parts of adjacent states like Ohio and Indiana, and even into Pennsylvania and beyond. Many such coney islands outside southeast Michigan are established by entrepreneurs who learn their business in Detroit, then go off in search of a place with less competition. In far off Lexington, Kentucky, for example, there is a coney island named Detroit's Famous Coney Island. The proprietor is a Greek secondary migrant from Detroit. In general, the farther one goes from the core area, the less frequent

coney islands are, the more the coney sauce varies from the norm, and the more likely that the sandwiches are called 'chili dogs'. A similar sandwich is found in Plattsburg, northern New York, but there it is called a 'Michigan'.³ The recipe is said to have been taken there by a woman migrating from Detroit who passed it on to friends with a restaurant. Montreal, Quebec, Canada, also has a hot dog called a 'Michigan', but the sauce is like an Italian tomato sauce. The referent is clearly the coney, but one suspects a case of stimulus diffusion where an idea is transmitted without the cultural content. In the Michigan core area, coney islands are very common, rivalling or even outnumbering the number of hamburger franchises.

There are three claims as to who originated the coney: Greeks in Detroit, Michigan's largest city (just less than one million); Macedonians in Flint, a smaller city (102,434 inhabitants in 2010) sixty-six miles north of Detroit; and, Macedonians in Jackson, a still smaller city (estimated at 34,554 inhabitants in 2006) seventy-seven miles to the west.

The earliest claim is in Jackson. In 1914 a Macedonian, George Todoroff, from the village of Ermensko in northern Greece, established Todoroff's Coney Island, later called Todoroff's Original Coney Island. His fourth generation descendent went out of business in 2010, though there are still coney islands in Jackson that trace their origins from Todoroff's. Coney islands are now relatively few in Jackson and coney culture is relatively undeveloped as compared with Detroit and Flint. Only one is now owned by a Macedonian.

The best-known coney island but having the most recent claim of primacy is the American Coney Island in downtown Detroit. It was founded in 1917 by Constantine 'Gust' Keros who emigrated from Greece in 1903 and who worked as a janitor, pushed a popcorn concession cart, and had a shoeshine and hat cleaning shop before opening a coney stand at the same location. The coney business was so successful that he brought over from Greece his brother William to help out. But once William learned the business, he set up his own coney shop, the Lafayette, next door. Both of these coney islands still compete with one another, now run by the fourth generation descendants of the respective founders. Each has its own fans, who would not deign to eat in the other establishment. The American is said to be the oldest family-owned and operated business in Detroit.

The first coney island in Flint, according to the most popular variant of the origin tale,⁴ was the Flint Coney Island, opened in 1919 by three ethnic

³ Ekfelt, L., *Good Food Served Right: Traditional Recipes and Food Customs from New York's North Country*, New York 2000, 280. There are also a number of comments on food related websites, mostly erroneous.

Macedonians from the Greek village of Bouf (in Greek, Akrita): George Brown, Simeon Brayan, and Steve George.⁵ Brayan, so the story goes, had ordered a 'coney island' at a lunch counter in Rochester, New York, and found it tasteless, 'unfit for a young man whose palate was accustomed to the hardy cuisine of southeast Europe'.⁶ Knowing he could do better, he went to Flint and invented coney sauce. He used as a starting point some food he remembered from his homeland—some suggest Balkan goulash—but the sauce for *pastitio* or *moussaka* would seem more likely. Another version has it that one of the partners, perhaps Brayan but maybe George Brown, had invented coney sauce after hearing complaints from workers on the nearby railroad line that they needed 'something more substantial for the working man'.

These stories are illustrative of the problems in the study of origins. Stories are frequently collapsed, people misremember or purposely distort, and facts are lost along the way. Closer examination⁷ reveals that George Brown and two different Macedonians opened the restaurant in 1919, called not the Flint Coney Island but the Home Restaurant. We cannot be sure what kind of restaurant this was, a lunch counter as the name might imply or a hot dog stand. If the latter, we do not know whether or not any sort of sauce was placed on hot dogs. Brown's partners returned to Macedonia less than a year later, and three new partners were brought in: his brother-in-law, Steve George (a one-third partner) in 1925, Simeon Brayan (a one-sixth partner) sometime later in the 1920s, and Brown's cousin, Paul Branoff (also a one-sixth partner) sometime in the 1930s. The restaurant was renamed the Flint Coney Island in 1926, and renamed again, Flint's Original Coney Island, in 1940. The restaurant closed in 1979. By that time, over thirty different coney islands had spun off. One descendant of a founder referred to it as 'the university of coney islands', so many proprietors having learned the business there.

⁴ Krueger, R., 'Saucy "Secret" — Flint Has a Delicacy You Can't Get Elsewhere', *The Flint Journal* (5 March 1978): F1; Florine, B., Davison, M., Jaeger, S., *Two to Go: A Short History of Flint's Coney Island Restaurants*, Flint 2007, 3.

⁵ Ethnic Macedonians in northern Greece were then and are still today subjected to discrimination and strong efforts to assimilate. It was, for example, illegal to speak Macedonian in public. While these were economic immigrants in search of work, part of the incentive for emigration was to escape ethnic persecution. Some of these refugees came illegally across the Canadian border. The coney island, among kinsmen and old neighbours in a relatively unregulated business, provided perfect cover. Some early coney islands even provided their workers with onsite living quarters as well as meals. In many cases, married men were not able to bring over wives and children until after World War II.

⁶ Krueger, *op. cit.*, 1978, F1; Florine, Davison, Jaeger, *op. cit.*, 2007, 3.

⁷ Interview with Philip Brown, son of George Brown, 29 April 2011.



Fig. 2: The Flint Original Coney Island, c. 1946. Courtesy of Philip Brown.

Thus, the restaurant opened in 1919 was not the Flint Coney Island and may not have even sold coneys. Paul Branoff and Simeon Brayan did not come on the scene until later, and at less than full partnerships. Brayan, usually given credit for the invention of coney sauce, lived to be one hundred

years old, long after other participants had died, and, thus, became the principal source of information. We do not know when they began to add coney sauce, or who might have invented it. Most likely it was collaborative effort by principal owner George Brown, whoever his partners might have been at the time, and their friends at Abbott's Meats (who supplied the base for coney sauce from the beginning) and Koegel Meats (who supplied their frankfurters) with whom they always worked closely.



Fig. 3: Interior with staff, *The Flint Original Coney Island*, 1946. Note pots of coney sauce, chopped onions, and bun steamer in left foreground. Courtesy of Philip Brown.

One must be equally skeptical regarding origin tales from Detroit and Jackson. I suspect such stories are really claims for authenticity for the oldest surviving coney island in town or the earliest remembered one. In fact, we do not know how many stands may have pre-existed but long ago went out of business and were forgotten. Just how long did a hot dog stand sell hot dogs before the proprietor started putting coney sauce on them? Nor do we know that the origin came in a moment of inspiration or as the result of evolution, perhaps involving the ideas of a number of originators. But it is clear that sometime during the first two decades of the twentieth century,

Greek and Macedonian immigrants in southeastern Michigan developed the coney and established the basis for coney culture.

The proliferation of coney islands by hiving off is very common. A proprietor will hire someone to work backstage – to wash dishes and prepare foods. Frequently, this will be some relative or neighbour from the village he himself came from, or at least someone who understands his language if his English is poor. This is one aspect of a more general process of chain migration. Eventually, this hired hand will have gained a better footing in America, learning something about American culture and enough language to function on his own. He will especially have learned something about the business and culture of coney islands and will go off to establish his own.

This leads to the aggregation of ethnic group members. Not only were Flint coney islands run by Macedonians but most Macedonians in Flint came from a single village, Bouf. Similarly, Macedonians in Jackson all came from another single village, Ermensko. In Detroit, and especially today in the Detroit suburbs, Greeks still dominate the coney business. The majority came from the same area of the Peloponnisos and in metropolitan Detroit they constitute an urban village, closely knit together by kinship, intermarriage, and frequent interaction. The modern version of hiving off is the establishment of franchises to accommodate family members who want their own businesses.

Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s a wave of Albanians from Yugoslavia arrived in metro Detroit. Many of them quickly moved into the coney business, learning in the kitchens of Greek coney islands. Today they probably outnumber Greeks, especially within the city of Detroit proper. Albanians have a tough reputation and some have opened coney islands where others feared. The population of Detroit is over eighty percent African American and over one-third live below the poverty level, the highest rate in the nation. The crime rate is high. Albanians have established coney islands with bulletproof glass partitioning off the work area from customers and, where Greeks and Macedonians tend to use family members, Albanians have instead hired African Americans to work out front. As Albanians have established themselves in the coney island business, they have expanded throughout the Detroit suburbs. Eventually, in search of markets with less competition, they have expanded into nearby cities, including Flint.⁸

⁸ For a description of supposedly the first Albanian coney island in the Flint area, see Krueger, R., 'Teaching the Dog New Tricks—Flint Coney Has Passed through Many Hands, but It's Still One with Everything', *The Flint Journal* (4 December 2007): D01. An earlier article, however, indicates at least one pre-existing Albanian coney island in Flint: Upton, J., 'Flint Sues Restaurant in Bid to End Problems', *The Flint Journal*, 12 September 1997.

With few exceptions, all coney islands are run by Greeks, Macedonians, or Albanians. Metro Detroit also contains the largest Arab American community in the United States. There are a few Arab coney islands, including a couple in the heart of the Arab community which serve halal coneys, but most Arab entrepreneurs are more likely to open 'Mediterranean' restaurants, serving Middle Eastern food but avoiding the term 'Arab' which might alienate potential customers. Despite the predominant African American population, I found only one African American coney island, Coneys in the Hood. The sign read, 'the only *Black* owned coney island in Detroit with *soul*'. Unfortunately, it had already gone out of business by the time I found it.

One can often tell the ethnicity of the owner of a coney island by the name given to it. Athens Coney Island, Greek Islands Coney Island, Alpha Coney Island, Apollo Coney Island, The Olympic Coney Island and Grill, and Omega Coney Island, are clearly Greek. The Double Eagle Coney Island is Albanian, referring to the two-headed eagle that is the Albanian national emblem. Another Albanian coney island has a large double-headed eagle worked out in tiles on its roof, in black and red, the Albanian national colours. One must be careful, however; Greko's Coney Island is owned by Palestinians, who apparently took the name in order to profit from the common association of coney islands with Greeks. Macedonians seem never to choose names that are identifiable as Macedonian, except occasionally using an identifiably Macedonian surname, for example, Todoroff's Original Coney Island.⁹

The sauce, of course, is what makes a coney a coney. Michiganders are emphatic that this is not chili, as is used in some other parts of the country to make chilidogs. Coney islands began also to offer bowls of chili very early in their history. This was probably the first addition to the menu but it is a separate preparation, another inexpensive but filling dish, easy to prepare even by someone fresh from a Greek or Macedonian village. Coney island proprietors are extremely secretive about their recipes for coney sauce. Much is made of this both by proprietors and customers. Most coney islands will refer to their 'secret' sauce. Proprietors are quick to tell you that their recipe is kept in a safe, the combination known only by the owners, or in a safe deposit box. The hired help will prepare the sauce base, then the owner will add the spicing. Each recipe is described as 'the original'.

There is also an abundance of recipes on the Internet, in popular publications and passed over the backyard fence constructed by coney lovers

⁹ Not all Macedonians in the Flint area have Macedonian surnames. Like members of other immigrant groups in America, many changed their names on arrival.

trying to approximate what they are served in coney islands. These recipes vary immensely and most appear to be very distant approximations. But given the way in which coney islands proliferate, it is questionable whether a new restaurant owner has not managed to take the essentials of the 'secret' recipe from the coney island where he learned the business, though he may make a few additions along the way. As one owner told me of his secret recipe, 'It's supposed to be secret, but now everyone knows it'.

There are significant differences between coney sauce in Detroit and the one developed by Macedonians in Flint. Coney sauce in Jackson, although the coney island business there was established by Macedonians, seems to be the same as Detroit, though the Macedonian sample there is so small that accurate determination is difficult. The difference between Detroit and Flint is usually characterised as a 'wet' or juicy version served in Detroit and a 'dry' or less juicy version sold in Flint. But the differences, both real and imagined, extend far beyond this. Fans of the Flint variety complain that the Detroit version tastes of tomato; fans of the Detroit version claim that Flint coney islands use ground frankfurters in their sauce. Coney enthusiasts, of which there are a great many, will acclaim how horrible the other style tastes, at the same time telling you it is so horrible that they would never taste it. The debate rages on perpetually on the many blogs and websites devoted to coneys. Over the last twenty years or so, Greek and Albanian coney islanders have gradually expanded into Flint where there is less competition than in Detroit and its nearer suburbs. Many of these establishments offer both the Detroit style sauce, which their proprietors learned originally, and the Flint style, which most Flint citizens demand.¹⁰ Menus will list both, identifying options by their city of origin.

To make the traditional Flint style sauce, beef suet is slowly rendered and onions are fried in the fat until brown. The meat and spices are then added and the mixture is cooked slowly for several hours, adding water as necessary. The meat consists of ground beef heart, or, according to some, originally heart and kidney. The use of heart and kidney is a touchy issue. Aficionados attest that it is this that gives coney sauce its particular flavour, but many Americans have an unnatural aversion to organ meats. The subject is not brought up by most proprietors unless asked. Outside of Flint, some coney islands will use instead ground beef skeletal meat. Many proclaim on menus and in advertising 'No organ meats'.

¹⁰ For an account of what is claimed to be the first coney island in Flint offering both styles of sauce, see Krueger, R., 'Detroit (Ulp!) Coney Finds Way to Fenton', *The Flint Journal* (18 June 1999): B2.

When proprietors speak of their 'secret' sauce, they are referring primarily to the spices added. These may vary from coney island to coney island and particularly between ethnic communities. Most observers agree on cumin, paprika, red pepper in limited amounts (coney sauce is not particularly spicy), usually some garlic. Most Detroit style coney sauce contains little else. The Flint style sauce, which tastes more complex, seems to include some sweet spices like cinnamon and allspice as frequently used in Near Eastern savoury dishes.¹¹ One proprietor claims to use twenty-five different spices, but this would be unusual.

These days, only a few still make coney sauce from scratch. The vast majority buys congealed blocks of base prepared by a wholesale meat supplier, to which coney islands may add their own spices. Almost all of the Flint Macedonians and many of the Greeks in metro Detroit obtain this base from the same supplier in Flint.¹² He, as well as his major competitors, uses only heart in their commercial coney base. Many Albanians and some Greeks purchase ready-made sauce from National, the Greek supplier in Detroit that also has a chain of its own coney islands. This sauce, too, used heart meat.

Some coney eaters claim that the quality of the frankfurter is even more important than the sauce. Especially in Flint, customers demand a particular brand of frankfurter made by Koegel Meats, a Flint business with long-standing ties to the coney island businesses. Proprietors of the Flint Original Coney Island went to Albert Koegel, a German immigrant butcher located near their coney stand. They arranged with him to supply them with frankfurters that he made in the back of his shop. Koegel Meats now sells some 250,000 pounds of lunch meats and frankfurters a week,¹³ including nearly all the frankfurters sold by coney islands in Flint as well as one-third of those sold in Detroit. They are a beef and pork sausage in a natural casing,

¹¹ Cf. the similar sauce used in Cincinnati chili, also invented by Macedonian immigrants: Lloyd, T., 'The Cincinnati Chili Culinary Complex', *Western Folklore* (1981): 28-40. Cincinnati chili may be used to make a coney or even to serve plain in a bowl (unlike Michigan coney sauce which is always distinguished from a bowl of chili). It is most often served, however, over well-cooked spaghetti usually with some combination of grated cheese, chopped onions or beans ladled on top.

¹² Since the beginning in Flint, the meat base for coney sauce has been supplied by the same source, Abbott's Meats. It is said that the proprietors of Flint's Original Coney Island went to Abbott's, then a small market conveniently located nearby, to help develop their sauce. Abbott's has expanded greatly over the years, but continues to supply the basic material for coney sauce to nearly all coney islands in Flint. Old time coney islands still buy the meat base to which they add their own seasonings before cooking but most now purchase frozen tubes of meat base premixed with the basic seasonings.

¹³ Eiden, B., 'Coney Fare, Picnic Staple Forever Linked to Flint', *Your Magazine* (Autumn 2004): 11-13.

lightly smoked. Coney enthusiasts especially like the way the natural casing snaps when bitten into. Koegel produces one version, called the coney and sold only wholesale, which is constituted so it can be held on the grill for extended periods.

As far as I can determine, there have been no changes in the coney since its origin (other than constant tinkering with the spicing of the sauce). But there have been significant changes in the places where coneys are sold. The biggest change is in the expansion of menus. The first coney islands offered nothing but coneys and drinks and perhaps bowls of chili.¹⁴ Such a business requires little capital and little cooking experience – a perfect start for the peasant immigrant who wants his own business. Coney islands today, many now in the third and fourth generation of the same family, have developed much more elaborate menus.¹⁵ Some (including some Albanians) have a scattering of Greek dishes – gyros, Greek salad, baklava, rice pudding – but most of the new dishes are traditional American diner foods. Nearly all are either deep fried or grilled. Especially common are all-day breakfasts, other kinds of sandwiches and a wide variety of salads. This expansion of menus has taken place among all ethnic groups, but it is particularly so of Greek coney islands. Some have even added vegetarian, children's, dietetic, and pseudo-Mexican sections to their menus. Many have come to call themselves 'family restaurants', though they continue to display a coney island sign.

Each of these different ethnic groups seems to have utilised the coney island in a somewhat different way. It is still premature to get a clear picture of the Albanian approach, but it seems they view the coney island as a stepping-stone to something better, at the very least a legitimate place in their new homeland. There is no interest in coney culture or history; it is just a job. They have been aggressively expansive, often developing second and third coney islands but without the ostentatious display of many contemporaneous Greek establishments.

The Greek approach has been to build bigger and better coney islands. Three have developed chains of twenty or so coney islands scattered throughout the Detroit suburbs and in nearby cities. One of these chains, National, is significant, because it also supplies ready-made coney sauce to

¹⁴ The complete menu of Flint's Original Coney Island in 1946 consisted of coneys (20 cents), chili con carne (25 cents), pie (15 cents), and beverages (coffee, tea, milk, buttermilk, hot chocolate, and Vernor's ginger ale on tap, another Michigan specialty). Interview with Philip Brown, 29 April 2011.

¹⁵ For the views of some coney island proprietors in Flint on this subject, see Krueger, R., 'Dogging the Menu – Coney Owners Go Beyond Franks to Keep Up with Family Tastes', *The Flint Journal* (12 March 1996): B1.

a large number of the newer coney islands, including all of the Albanian and Arab owners, who have come more recently into the business and did not grow up with it. Other Greek proprietors have built ever larger and more imposing establishments. One has water rippling down an interior wall. Another has Corinthian columns at the front of his shop. Still another has an etched glass room divider depicting the Sistine Chapel fresco of God reaching out with a coney for the hand of man. The Aloha Coney Island has a Hawaiian theme. One has a four-storey high revolving neon sign. Several have elaborate frescos depicting mythological themes, or, in one case, the 2004 Olympics in Athens. These are very different places than the crude stands and storefronts with which their great grandparents started. Greek children are expected to carry on in the footsteps of their parents, to take over the family business and make it still bigger and better.

Among Macedonians there was relatively little interest in modernisation or expansion. In the words of one of the owners of what was then Flint's most popular coney island, 'We never thought of expanding. This is good enough. If they want something else to eat, they can go elsewhere to find it'.¹⁶ Instead, they used their profits to send their children to college and, thus, to other occupations. Although they take great pride in coney island as an institution as well as a commercial enterprise, they seem content to let their establishments die out with this generation or even to sell to entrepreneurs outside the Macedonian community. In Jackson, because of the small size of the Macedonian community, this process is nearly complete. Flint coney islands tend to be very traditional in architecture and décor, small utilitarian buildings without the fanciful fittings of many new Greek establishments.

The Macedonian coney island owners who do not modernise or expand are instead trading on nostalgia. Ambiance is what brings in their customers. The mix of clientele and the opportunities this provides for people watching, the dingy walls with cracked paint, the elderly waitresses who call you 'honey' and yell your order in from across the room, are as much of what keeps customers coming back as the superior coneys.

For many customers, social aspects of the coney island are just as important as its food. Nowhere is this more true than in Flint, which regards itself as the Coney Capital of the World. Flint is a tough, gritty town with a large working class. It was the birthplace of General Motors and where the sit-down strike took place in 1936-37 that was instrumental in the creation of the United Autoworkers Union. Residents of Flint consider the coney their own, in a way that is true nowhere else. Perhaps the most important

¹⁶ Brenner, B., 'Whatever the Reason, Many Stop to Eat, Meet at this Restaurant', *The Flint Journal*, July 1968.

difference between Detroit and Flint coney styles has less to do with gastronomy and more to do with culture. Coneys in Flint are even more of an obsession and a highpoint of community pride. There is one popular song written and recorded by Dan Hall that praises a favourite coney island in Flint.¹⁷ The local historical society has sponsored at least two public events dealing with coney island history, at least one book¹⁸ and a chapter in another¹⁹ focus on the coney, and the local newspaper regularly runs articles on coney island business and culture. All of this would be highly unusual in Detroit or Jackson.

Coneys are very much a part of daily life in a way not true outside Flint. It is said, even boasted, that when those who have left Flint return for a visit, they go first to their favourite coney island, then to their moms. Flint kids will go to a coney island on prom nights, the girls carefully lifting their ball gowns off the floor. When workers at General Motors would strike, Flint women would heat sauce in a crock pot, chop onions, and deliver coneys to the picket line. When filmmaker Michael Moore (a Flint native) married, he took his bride for breakfast the morning after to a coney island. Coney islands typically draw a cross section of the population. Old and young, black and white, factory workers and management from the same firm, office workers, street people, lawyers, bikers and retirees, all sit next to one another eating the same food. The mayor of Flint frequently sits at a coney island counter eating his coney alongside other citizens. It is hard to imagine another context in America where such a variety of people assemble together and do something in common. Few situations in America express so well the ideals of democracy that Americans espouse so loudly but so seldom attain in real life.

The coney is everyday food for regular people. But it is much more: 'something substantial for the working man', but also a treat for the kids, an inexpensive yet satisfying meal for the poor, a quick lunch for the businessman, comfort food, a focal point for local pride, and, especially, a cultural icon associated with special events and everyday treats, family and children, and the place called home.

¹⁷ Bradley, E., "'Angelo's Song' Writer Wants his Music to Make People Think', *The Flint Journal* (21 March 1991): B1.

¹⁸ Florine, Davison, Jaeger, *op. cit.*, 2007.

¹⁹ Flinn, G., 'Downtown Flint's Coney Island Restaurants', *Remembering Flint, Michigan; Stories from the Vehicle City*, Charleston 2010.

Note

Primary data on which this study is based were collected by way of informal interviews with fellow customers, waitresses and coney island proprietors, usually conducted over a pair of coneys. This is unattributable, but I thank them all. I am especially grateful to Jim and Dave Todorofski of Atlas Coney Island and to Philip Brown, son of George Brown of Flint's Original Coney Island.

'Put the Coffee Pot On': Coffee Table and Visiting Traditions in Finnish America

Yvonne R. Lockwood

Coffee has had a rocky history. It has been variously described as an elixir of life and as a poison. Periodically, it has been banned in most European countries as a vice, addictive, causing impotency, and even criminality. Food writer Claudia Roden tells of one attempt to settle the controversy about coffee in eighteenth-century Sweden.¹ Identical twins were condemned to death for murder when King Gustav III commuted their sentences to life imprisonment on condition that one twin be given a large daily dose of tea and the other of coffee. The tea drinker died first at the age of eighty-three, settling the question for the time being in Sweden. Nevertheless, the Swedish government later tried, unsuccessfully, to enforce laws limiting coffee drinking.² Controversy still exists over coffee, and strict followers of certain religions, such as Evangelicals, Mormons, and Seven Day Adventists, do not consume coffee even today.

Coffee and coffee culture – the customs, rituals, beliefs, and meanings – spread from the Middle East across Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There is a ceremonial character about preparing coffee: the process of gathering the pot, coffee and water; selecting the cups, saucers, silverware, sugar, cream and accompanying food. Care is also taken in serving coffee and keeping the guest's cup filled. These patterns of behaviour can be traced to Middle Eastern ceremony³ as can the customs of coffee breaks throughout the day, coffee after a meal, and meetings and business conducted over coffee. Serving coffee is 'the' way to extend hospitality.

Coffee was already known to some upper class and aristocracy in the early 1700s in Sweden, where it became a fashionable drink, and late 1700s in Finland.⁴ It was not widely known by the general Finnish population until the 1870s, and even then it was expensive and sparingly consumed.⁵ Cooks,

¹ Roden, Claudia, *Coffee*, New York 1977, 33.

² Valeri, Renée, 'Coffee in Sweden. A Social Lubricant', in Frykman, Jonas, Löfgren, Orvar, (eds.), *Force of Habit: Exploring Everyday Culture*, Lund 1995, 146-7. Finland was part of Sweden until 1809 and subject to the laws and taxes regulating coffee consumption.

³ Cf. Roden, *op. cit.*, 1977, 36-43.

⁴ Nelson, Marie Clark, Svanberg, Ingvar, 'Coffee in Sweden: A Question of Morality, Health, and Economy', *Food and Foodways* 5, no. 3 (1993): 241. For more information about the history of coffee in Finland, see Ojaniemi, Taija, 'Coffee as a Finnish Institution', Tampere 2010, available at www.uta.fi/FAST/FIN/GEN/to-coffe.html; accessed 28.2. 2011.

servants, and domestics employed in the homes of the wealthy learned about coffee: how to make it, how and when to serve it and what to serve with it. They were the major carriers of what then was an elite coffee culture to the masses. Today, Finland is the largest consumer of coffee *per capita* in the world.

My topic is the coffee table in Finnish America. The coffee table is an important social arena where food and other features of culture intersect and explorations of this context reveal valuable indicators of both continuity and change in Finnish American culture.⁶

Finnish America

The first Finns came with Swedes in 1638 to found the colony of New Sweden on the Delaware River. Sustained immigration, however, did not begin until the 1860s. In 1864, the first Finn arrived in Minnesota, and in 1865, a group arrived in northern Michigan to develop the copper and iron ore mines. Between 1880 and 1924 approximately 300,000 Finns arrived in North America. Over sixty percent came from the western provinces of Vaasa and Oulu.⁷ About 100,000 of these immigrants were single women between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four, many of whom went to urban centers such as Boston, Chicago and New York to work as domestic servants, cooks, and laundresses until they married or found other work.⁸ Some of these female immigrants had worked as domestics in Finland. Men found work as factory workers, marble quarry workers, carpenters, construction workers, painters, commercial fishermen, lumberjacks, and miners. Although Finns are scattered throughout North America, the largest number and densest concentration are in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (called the U.P.), particularly in one region known as 'the sauna belt', and 'Finn Land' and in Minnesota. They were miners and lumberjacks. In 2000 the population of Finnish Americans was 623,559.⁹

⁵ Talve, Ilmar, *Finnish Folk Culture*. Studia Fennica Ethnologica 4, Helsinki 1997, 132.

⁶ This is a study in progress. Participants include second- and third-generation Finnish Americans and Finnish nationals, who have been in the United States five to ten years. Primary research was in the upper Midwest (Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan), and via email with Finns in Illinois, North Carolina, and Colorado.

⁷ Høglund, A. William, *Finnish Immigrants in America, 1880-1920*, Madison 1960, 7.

⁸ Wargelin Brown, K. Marianne, 'The Legacy of Mummu's Granddaughters', in Ross, Carl, Wargelin, K. Marianne, (eds.), *Women Who Dared. The History of Finnish American Women*, St. Paul 1986, 18; Lindstrom-Best, Varpu, *Defiant Sisters: A Social History of Finnish Immigrants in Canada*, Toronto 1988. See especially pages 84-102. Both publications in their entirety are relevant.

⁹ www.census.gov; accessed 28.2. 2011.

Finnish Americans are not the same as Finns in Finland, and Finnish American culture is different from the cultures found in Finland. Neither do Finnish Americans belong to a culture somewhere between American and Finnish cultures. A long, gradual, and complex process developed this new ethnic American group.¹⁰ Along with this process was a parallel development of a new subculture that both symbolises the group's uniqueness and marks its social boundaries. This developing subculture draws on many sources, but the most important one is the homeland. There is an amalgamation and standardisation of the local, regional, and class-related subcultures from Finland represented in the immigrant community. The new subculture also draws from mainstream American culture and that of other immigrant and ethnic groups. A multitude of influences reshape the new culture and old customs acquire new meanings and functions. Anthropologists and folklorists refer to this ever changing and reshaping of culture as creolisation.¹¹ One can observe creolisation in any aspect of culture, but particularly in expressive forms of culture, such as food and foodways.¹²

Coffee Traditions

Coffee traditions are practised to some degree by most of the general American population. In the Upper Midwest, for example, many of the neighbours of Finnish Americans are also descendants of immigrants who came to the area about the same time as Finns. They are Americans of Croatian, Serbian, Italian, Irish, Swedish, and Cornish descent, who have coffee rituals and traditions of their own. Historically, there was the misperception among some Finnish Americans that these people of other ethnicities, did not offer coffee to visitors. Coffee being central to hospitality in Finnish America, it is an insult not to offer it to everyone who enters your house. A third generation Finnish American reported that it was 'engraved in our hearts that all guests should be offered coffee no matter what'.¹³ It is also an insult to the host/hostess to refuse a cup of coffee. Scholars have shown that coffee and food are social openers in other parts of the world,

¹⁰ Lockwood, William G, 'United States: Ethnic Cuisines', in Katz, Solomon H., (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, vol. 3, New York, 2003, 442-6.

¹¹ Baron, Robert, Cara, Anna C., 'Introduction: Creolization and Folklore - Cultural Creativity in Progress', *Journal of American Folklore* 116, no. 459 (2003): 4-8. Special Issue, Creolization. See the entire journal for important discussions about creolization.

¹² Cf. Lockwood, Yvonne R., Lockwood, William G., 'Pasties in Michigan: Foodways, Interethnic Relations and Cultural Dynamics', in Stern, Stephen, Cicala, John Allan, *Creative Ethnicity*, Logan 1991, 3-20.

¹³ Tikkanen, Pat, *Marquette Monthly*, August 2005, 18.

and an invitation to share them is an invitation to socialise.¹⁴ A rejection of the invitation, consequently, is a refusal to spend time together. Visiting, according to sociologist Michael Loukinen, tends to draw people of a community together into interconnected clusters and promotes structural integration of the community.¹⁵ Because of the misperception about their non-Finnish neighbours, these Finns limited their interaction with them to public arenas, such as, at work, on the street, in the post office, and in the grocery store. While much that I describe about Finnish American coffee tradition also exists to some degree in the larger non-Finnish community, my study is specifically about coffee tradition in Finnish America and how changes in it reflect changes in Finnish American culture.

Coffee in Finnish America is generally the drink of choice; the term 'Finnish super food' for coffee is as appropriate for Finnish Americans as an indicator of identity as it is for Finns in Finland.¹⁶ Invitations to visit are often phrased in terms of coffee: 'come for coffee', and 'stop by for coffee'. One written invitation stated 'do stop in. The coffee is hot'.¹⁷ When the monthly newspaper the *Finnish American Reporter* (FAR) moved its office to the U.P., the announcement to readers stated, 'Put on the coffee pot. FAR is coming to the Copper Country'.¹⁸ 'Come for coffee' is an invitation to enter one's home, a private space. As a teenager, I was often embarrassed when my father would open the door of a home of people he did not know well, and who had not invited him, and shout, 'put the coffee pot on' or 'is the coffee pot on?' This way of making known your presence was normal in the heavily Finnish populated region of the U.P., where my family originated, but it was foreign behaviour in middle American California where they resettled.

Some attribute Finland's status as the world's greatest coffee consumer to the tradition of coffee parties and the daily habit of frequent breaks for coffee. These traditions are also shared with Sweden whose consumption is second to Finland. It has been suggested that heavy coffee consumption in the Nordic World led to the region's reputation for exceptionally good bakers, because

¹⁴ Pollock, Nancy J., 'Nor Any Drop to Drink: Everyday Drinking Habits in Pacific and New Zealand Societies', in De Garine, Igor, De Garine, Valerie, (eds.), *Drinking: Anthropological Approaches*, New York 2001, 40-1.

¹⁵ Loukinen, Michael, M., 'The Maintenance of Ethnic Culture in Finnish-American Rural Communities', *Finnish Americana II* (1979): 25.

¹⁶ Jelliffe, J. B., 'Parallel Food Classification in Developing and Industrial Countries', *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 20, 1967, cited by Ilmonen, Kay, 'Change and Stability in Finnish Eating Habits', in Fürst, Elizabeth L., Prättälä, R., Ekström, M., Holm, L., Kjaernes, U., (eds.), *Palatable Worlds: Sociocultural Food Studies*, Oslo 1991, 176.

¹⁷ Hoffman, Lempi, letter, 1990.

¹⁸ *Finnish American Reporter*, January 2000, 3.

pastry and coffee go together.¹⁹ Every good hostess offers something to go with coffee, which provides an opportunity to showcase one's baking skills.²⁰ There are no known figures for coffee consumption in Finnish America, but the popular belief, especially by Finns themselves, is that Finns are huge coffee drinkers. While researching visiting patterns in rural Upper Peninsula, Michael Loukinen concluded that 'the best indicator of the state of Finnish American culture ... could very well be [measured by] the volume of sweet rolls, coffee cake, and pastry stacked on the shelves of bakeries'.²¹ Finnish American cookbooks also show an overwhelming preference for pastries. At least half of each book is devoted to sweet breads, pies, puddings, cookies, and cakes, all foods for the visitor at the coffee table.

In the early 1960s, the food writer Beatrice Ojakangas described the coffee table in Finland.²² Her description has become something of a model for Finnish Americans:

The coffee table, elaborately laid out with baked items ranging from yeast coffee bread to fancy filled cookies, is the Finnish way to entertain guests. The more important the guests or occasion, the more elaborate the layout. The usual custom is to serve 7 baked items, the 3 main items being pulla [braided cardamom sweet bread], ... an uniced pound cake, and a fancy filled cake, and the other 4, an array of cookies. A ritual built through tradition governs the eating. With the first cup of coffee, guests take pulla along with a cookie or two; with the second cup, the uniced cake and a cookie or two; with the third cup, as a grand finale and the last course, a piece of filled decorated cake. With the fourth cup of coffee, it is permissible to sample the items missed or you may simply sip coffee through a lump of sugar. It is a compliment to taste all items on the table.

In 1992 she amended this description by saying 'In this day and age it is perfectly acceptable to select [serve] just pulla and cookies when entertaining only a few guests'.²³ Others have expanded on Ojakangas's description:

The table is set with beautiful linens and the best china with small silver coffee spoons. With the sugar bowl, there are special small tongs for the cubes. The cream pitcher is filled with real cream. The

¹⁹ Shortridge, Barbara, 'Ethnic Heritage Food in Lindsborg, Kansas, and New Glarus, Wisconsin', in Long, Lucy, (ed.), *Culinary Tourism*, Lexington 2004, 284.

²⁰ Ojakangas, Beatrice, A., *The Finnish Cookbook*, New York 1964, 33.

²¹ Loukinen, *op. cit.*, 1979, 25.

²² Ojakangas, *op. cit.*, 1964, 32-3.

²³ Ojakangas, Beatrice A., *Scandinavian Feasts*, Minneapolis 1992, 229. Pulla is also known as *nisu*, *kahvileipä* (coffee bread), and biscuit.



Fig. 1: Just out of the oven, this pulla will be sliced for the table. Photo by Vivian Huotari, 2008.

hostess pours the coffee in the cups and then invites the guests to the table.²⁴

According to tradition, however, the hostess's request goes unheeded. Guests act as though they had not heard the invitation. Scholars describe this as a moment of tension; who is going to the table first. After the hostess orders and then pleads, someone in the group finally makes an excuse and goes first: she came the furthest, she is seated nearest the table, or she is the eldest. Whatever the reason, the ice is broken and the party continues.

Anthropologists Renée Valeri and Fredric Roberts describe in Sweden and Finland, respectively, the ritualised performance at the coffee table and guests who refrain from showing any interest.²⁵ In his 1970s study Roberts states the tension between hostess and guests is an expression of individualism and egalitarianism. The exercise of self-restraint, the most important prerequisite for decorous participation in the coffee ceremony, is a skill that is common throughout the strata of the community.²⁶ Everyone knows the rules.

²⁴ Warriner, Sargit, Krumsieg, Lissa, *A Finnish Christmas Cookbook. Recipes and Traditions from the Old Country*, St. Cloud 1999, 11-12.

²⁵ Valeri, *op. cit.*, 1995, 139-49; Roberts, Fredric M., 'The Finnish Coffee Ceremony and Notions of Self', *Arctic Anthropology* 26, no. 1 (1989): 20-33. The Swedish bourgeoisie of the late 1700s are the source of many coffee traditions in Finland (and Finnish America) and these articles discuss very interesting parallels to the Finnish American context.

²⁶ Roberts, *op. cit.*, 1989, 31; Valeri, *op. cit.*, 1995, 146.

Ultimately, guests approach the table for coffee, but the hostess, who had to beg and plead, lost in this tug of war with her guests.

In twenty-first century Finnish America guests also hold back and must be begged to take coffee and refreshments. In one instance, the first to approach the table said, 'Oh, alright! Someone has to be first'. The hesitation was explained as not wanting to be first; a rush to the table would be impolite and rude.²⁷ Roberts said about the Finns he knew in Finland that one should not give anyone the opportunity to assume s/he does not eat cakes and cookies at home. Elegance and self-restraint are emphasised in the foods offered and in the sizes of the portions taken.²⁸ He described the striking difference in the large quantity of food on the table and the small portions people took.

Anthropologist Eugene Hammel discusses the welcoming ritual of serving food and drink in Serbia as a way to maintain distance and set boundaries between the hosts and guests.²⁹ 'Ritualized hospitality', he states, 'like much hospitality anywhere, is a distance-maintaining mechanism' and whenever the guest enters a home, he must be shown hospitality, because he is a guest, not a friend. The formal coffee table in Finland and in Finnish America with its ritualised pattern might also be seen as a distance-maintaining, boundary-setting mechanism.

One learns coffee table customs as children; they are taught visiting etiquette and never to appear greedy. One Finnish American describes a child's experience while on a visit with her mother decades ago.³⁰ She was told to wait until she was invited to take something from the table. 'If there is a choice of several items on the coffee table, take the least attractive; but if you are tempted beyond resistance, confine your choice to one'. When the hostess invited her to help herself, she looked at the plate of plain *korppu* (rusks), cinnamon rolls, sugar cookies, and home-made chocolate cake. 'If only one choice,' she had thought, 'then this is it'. She turned to her mother for approval, but her mother's eyes were hard and her lips firm. She would not relax the rule, and the little girl reached for the plain toast.

Joyce Hakala has happy memories of visiting her grandmother, who always kept a supply of tootsie rolls (an American candy) on hand for her young visitors, and for them she also made a special coffee: one part coffee,

²⁷ Jim Kangas, personal communication, 2010.

²⁸ Roberts, *op. cit.*, 26-31.

²⁹ Hammel, E. A., 'The Jewish Mother in Serbia, or, Les Structures Alimentaires de la Parenté', in Lockwood, William G., (ed.), *Essays in Balkan Ethnology*, Berkeley 1967, 55.

³⁰ McCollins, Elsie, 'From Keweenaw to Abbeye', *Pioneer Pleasures*, Ishpeming 1975, 75.

ten parts milk, which they slurped out of saucers just as their grandparents did.³¹

The offer of coffee and food as an act of hospitality in Finnish America differed from family to family in the past, as it does today, depending on a number of variables, including the social distance between host and guest, social class, location—urban or rural, and family finances. Valeri reports that in Sweden the factor distinguishing between formal and informal is how closely related one is and how often the parties see each other.³² Social distance is reflected in what is served. If the guest was invited, the hostess had time to prepare and show off what she can offer. The same is true in Finnish America. An informal coffee includes friends or relatives and the coffee might be served in mugs, not china, with a little something. Ellen Raatikka wrote about her youth and visits to nearby neighbours who served flat bread (*rieska*) with coffee, which she especially liked because in her home there was only dark bread.³³ On the other hand, another family kept *korppu* on hand for what it called 'emergency hosting', but if the family only had *korppu*, it apologised.³⁴ Today women often keep homemade *pulla* and pastries in the freezer, a luxury unavailable decades earlier, and purchased cookies, *korppu*, and other appropriate foods in the pantry. The cultural imperative was, and still prevails, to serve something, and while pastry would be preferred, it was more important to serve something like rusks, bread and butter, or even soda crackers than nothing at all. So strong was the custom of coffee with something special that Mavis Hiltunen Biesanz recalled a time when unexpected visitors arrived and her mother did not have *pulla* to serve.³⁵ She did not, however, let her embarrassment hinder her. While she chatted with her guests, she made them a cake. In another case an anxious woman, who realised she did not have anything to serve with coffee, calmed down when she realised the visitors had violated local custom by not bringing anything to have with coffee. In Finnish America one brings a 'ritual' gift of food when visiting; one should not go empty handed.³⁶

³¹ Hakala, Joyce, 'Photographic History', Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) Finnish American Family History Project, IHRC 80, Folder H-1a.

³² Valeri, *op. cit.*, 1995, 144. This is also Eugene Hammel's contention in Serbia. See note 29.

³³ Raatikka, Ellen, manuscript of family history, Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) Finnish American Family History Project, IHRC 80, Box 6, folder R-3, 2.

³⁴ Biesanz, Mavis Hiltunen, 'The Story of Our Life', Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) Finnish American Family History Project, IHRC 80, Box 2, folder H-7, c. 1973, 60.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

³⁶ Kaplan, Anne, Hoover, Marjorie, Moore, Willard, 'The Finns', in *The Minnesota Ethnic Food Book*, St. Paul 1986, 155-6; Luoma, Sonja, personal communication, July 2009. Loukinen, *op. cit.*, 1979, 21.

There are, however, times when even the most prepared are caught with nothing appropriate to serve. In a cookbook compiled in 1941 under the direction of the late Kaarina Rautalahti Wargelin is the recipe for 'Pappilani Hatavara' (the 'Minister's Last Resort').³⁷ In other subsequent Finnish American community cookbooks, similar recipes are called 'Pastor's Trifle'.³⁸ The dish consists of a mixture of crumbled cookies, whipped cream, and stewed raspberries or lingonberries (or cranberries, often a substitute). It is a quick parsonage specialty that has come to the aid of many Finnish American women.

Kaarina Rautalahti Wargelin had a lot of experience in hospitality. Both she and her mother, Thyra Hohenthal Rautalahti, were practiced in the profession of 'minister's wife'.³⁹ Parishioners came to the parish for a multitude of personal, professional, and community matters, and the minister's wife had to be prepared at a moment's notice. The minister's wife has many responsibilities besides being a good hostess. Therefore, Kaarina Wargelin, like her mother before her, prepared a supply in advance that enabled her to produce a proper coffee table. It was never just coffee, but at a minimum two to three items to be selected from a platter for a single guest; if there were a number of guests, she set out individual plates with pastries.

Finnish American (and Finnish) women have always been competitive about their pastries and coffee table, which is best illustrated in formal settings, when they lay out lavish coffee tables, attempting to outdo each other with their pastries as well as with the appearance of the table itself.⁴⁰ Women today recall that, in addition to their best pastries, their mothers would empty their pantries in order to set a more impressive and abundant table than others.⁴¹

Kaarina Wargelin did not need to compete. As a woman of considerable stature and the wife of a highly-respected minister, she set the standards and

³⁷ *The Favorite Recipes, Tried and True of Our Friends and Our Own*, compiled by Wargelin, Kaarina, and the Young Ladies Aid of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church, Berkeley 1941, 137.

³⁸ See for example, Kaukinen, Sirpa, Fulcher, Sointu, *Finnish-Canadian Heritage Recipes*, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada 2004, 54.

³⁹ I want to thank K. Marianne Wargelin Brown for generously sharing her memories about her parents and their coffee table customs.

⁴⁰ Bob Kujanpaa, personal communication, 3 April 2009. Bob reports that his mother (second-generation Finnish American) and many others in rural northern Wisconsin cooked for families who had summer homes in the area, and from this experience they knew how to set a nice table to impress guests. Eleanor Palo Stoller, personal communication, 2 August 2009 and 8 November 2010. Fredric Roberts, also, reported a strong competitive spirit among women he observed in Finland.

⁴¹ Kaplan, Hoover, Moore, *op. cit.*, 1986, 156.

was the role model for women of her time, including pastors' wives. The late Pastor Raymond Wargelin took great pride in his wife's coffee table, judging it as superior to others in the community. According to their daughter, K. Marianne Wargelin Brown, he had a template in his brain for a proper coffee table and he measured others by it.⁴² His wife exemplified it while few others did. It was important to him that Marianne learn and retain her mother's skills.

The formality of the occasion determines where coffee is served. Family and close friends usually gather in the kitchen, but for a more formal occasion, visitors might sit around the dining-room table that is set with the best china. For large groups, a buffet table might be laid and guests help themselves, balancing their coffee cups and plates of pastries as they sit or stand.

Coffee, beer, pop (soda; soft drinks) and food, ranging from snacks to full meals, are often served to family and neighbours when one bathes at a private, family sauna. It was said that people did not eat supper before going to sauna at Hilda Kujanpaa's house in order to do justice to her coffee table.⁴³ Rag cutting and sewing bees for rag rug weaving were other contexts of the past where coffee was a must and everyone brought pastries to share. Meetings of social organisations also included coffee tables laden with special foods brought by members. At most parties hosted by Finnish Americans, a table is laid, and coffee and other beverages are offered. Whenever groups of Finnish Americans gather, there always has to be coffee.⁴⁴

Finnish born Annikki Marttila confirmed that seven items (*'seitseman sorttia'*) makes an ideal coffee table.⁴⁵ Many agree with Annikki, but in actual practice on both their mothers' and their own coffee tables, three or four items are most commonly served. Annikki was adamant that one of these items must be *pulla*. Others also suggested cake, cookies, fresh fruit, *juusto* (oven baked cheese, often called 'squeaky cheese'), homemade cinnamon rolls, pecan rolls, jelly rolls, and donuts.⁴⁶ These should be plentiful, so visitors can eat as much as they want; however, taking the last piece is considered bad manners. Vivian Huotari always strives for variety, including sweets and a

⁴² Personal communication, 3 September 2011.

⁴³ Bob Kujanpaa, personal communication, 3 April 2009.

⁴⁴ Coffee is, in fact, expected. There have been several conferences about Finnish Americans held in hotels and conference centres. Invariably, Finnish American attendees expected to have coffee in the morning, before the session began, at the mid-morning break and at the afternoon break. When there was no coffee in the afternoon, there were general mutterings and complaints.

⁴⁵ Personal communication, July 2010.

⁴⁶ Stoller, Eleanor Palo, Kaminen, Ron, Koivula, Steve, personal communication, 2 August 2009; Kujanpaa, Bob, personal communication, 3 April 2009.

savoury like tuna or egg salad and cheese with hardtack and crackers. Canned tuna is something she always has on hand for salad to serve visitors.⁴⁷ Tarja Virtanen would serve whatever she had on hand, but if she does not have *pulla* and cookies, ice cream, or chocolate, she might make open-faced sandwiches.⁴⁸ In the U.P. if guests come at mealtime, they would be invited to eat; if guests come during a meal, they might be invited to eat or be served just dessert and coffee. In the past most pastry was homemade, but occasionally packaged items from the store or pastry from the bakery were included on the table. One Finnish American has fond memories of her childhood and visiting her aunt, who always put out a variety of packaged cookies with coffee.⁴⁹ This was a real treat, because she only had homemade pastries at home. Today, coffee table foods are a combination of Finnish and non-Finnish, homemade and purchased, but *pulla* is still essential.⁵⁰

When to serve coffee is set by custom and varies by region, community, and family. The timing can be contentious. If you serve coffee as soon as visitors arrive, they could think either you want them to leave, or you are delighted to see them. If you wait until the visit nears the end, visitors might think either you really did not want to serve coffee, or you are so delighted with their visit, you want to prolong it.⁵¹ One elderly Finnish American, for example, would prepare coffee and set the table as soon as a car pulled into her driveway. My father expected coffee soon after he arrived. Others prepare the coffee table when they sense the visit is nearing an end. To avoid any misunderstanding, one hostess announces that it is her custom to serve coffee when visitors arrive, and it does not mean she wants them to leave.⁵² Many Finnish Americans serve coffee without asking; they just assume, by custom, that coffee is part of the visit. Some, however, go through the motions of asking, expecting, of course, an affirmative answer. Non-Finns, however, often refuse, saying, 'No, don't go to the trouble'. Tarja has observed that non-Finns 'are often a little surprised by the fuss with coffee and something to eat'.⁵³ She, like Vivian, does not accept no for an answer and serve them

⁴⁷ Personal communication, 6 February 2010 and 21 March 2011.

⁴⁸ Personal communication, 6 July 2010.

⁴⁹ Lehto, Lillian, personal communication, July 2010.

⁵⁰ During my research I was served everything from a complete meal to single pastries, strawberry shortcake, carrot cake, rice pudding with freshly picked berries, meats and crackers, cooked *pulla*, *juusto* (ovenbaked cheese) and other cheeses, pickled herring, and more. Without asking, my coffee cup was kept full.

⁵¹ Loukinen, *op. cit.*, 1979, 22. In Serbia, unless stated otherwise, it is time to leave when one consumes her third cup of coffee.

⁵² Huotari – see note 47.

⁵³ Virtanen – see note 48.

anyway. Vivian said, 'Even if our guests say they don't want anything, I put out food anyway. I just can't put only coffee on the table'.⁵⁴

Visiting patterns have changed considerably in the last decades. In much of Europe, including Finland, socialising over coffee and pastries is now very popular in cafes and coffee shops that provide a more informal and cheaper way to get together. Where once a coffee party was the way to entertain in Scandinavia, today it seems to have given way to dinner parties. When taking a break or meeting with friends or strangers, however, coffee (and increasingly, tea) is still the beverage of choice and sharing it continues to maintain its important function to facilitate social interaction.⁵⁵

In Finnish America major changes are also occurring. In an effort to revitalise the coffee table tradition, some thirty individuals attended a workshop in 2008 about coffee table in Finland sponsored by Finlandia University, in Hancock, Michigan. Recipes for appropriate foods were distributed and some iconic foods, such as *pulla*, were also demonstrated. The basic issue, however, is not so much a change in coffee tradition as in visiting patterns.

Karen Berg Douglas, a Finland-Swede American, describes that a visit to her Finland-born mother's home several decades ago meant cookies, jam-filled torte, whipped cream covered cake, *pulla*, and coffee.⁵⁶ Coffee always served as a welcome when company dropped in. Her mother would put on a fresh pot of coffee, pull a heavily-starched white linen tablecloth from the linen closet, and set the table with her best china and sterling silver. Knowing how to set a table, she would say, was the epitome of social grace and good manners. By the time the coffee was done, the table was filled with pastries, many of which she had baked a day or so before. If it were evening, her mother added a variety of bread, cold meats and cheese. Welcoming her guests to the table, she would say, 'I just couldn't let you go away with one little cup of coffee'. The coffee table is Karen's mother's legacy, but now twenty years later, Karen's coffee table is no longer like that of her mother.⁵⁷ She explained that the coffee pot is always ready and she keeps her mother's linen tablecloth close at hand in the closet, a coffee cake in the freezer, and Finnish gingersnaps in the cupboard. But people do not come for coffee anymore; people just do not visit as they once did.

⁵⁴ Huotari – see note 47.

⁵⁵ Valeri, *op. cit.*, 1995, 148.

⁵⁶ Douglas, Karen Berg, *Coffee with Mama. A Collection of Scandinavian Recipes and Others*, Lansing, Mich. 1994, 11.

⁵⁷ Berg, personal communication, 8 October 2010.

Beatrice Ojakangas, who first described the coffee table in Finland, bemoans the fact that she herself has not had people for coffee table for a very long time. 'Coffee for me', she says, 'is a . . . get together for a meeting and we serve just one thing like muffins or scones. . . . I'd love to do a real coffee table again, but somehow it just doesn't happen anymore'.⁵⁸ Ever hopeful, she keeps *pulla* in the freezer 'just in case'.

Concomitant with changing visiting patterns in Finnish America are more and more reports about Finns who do not serve or even offer coffee when someone does visit. The coffee table is one of the deep Finnish traditions with expectations of what is culturally and socially appropriate. Not to serve coffee is insulting behaviour and indicative of tension between tradition and change. If during a visit coffee shared between members of an ethnic group promotes integration within the community, what then is the consequence when it is not served?

Conclusion

In the past, especially in rural settlements and small towns, visitors dropped in throughout the day and in the evening. This was before television and when one lived closer to relatives and knew their neighbours. One did not drink coffee alone but dropped in on neighbours. Coffee was always served with something, even bread and butter. With changing lifestyles, came changing visiting patterns and etiquette that have had a profound influence on coffee culture. Nonetheless, some have maintained the tradition of their mothers and grandmothers. While others look to the model of Finland's ideal coffee culture, there are some who no longer even offer coffee to visitors. This lack of coffee service is a marker of increasing acculturation. Culture is always changing and so, too, is coffee culture in Finnish America. Coffee, itself, however, continues to be, in Valeri's words, a 'social lubricant', establishing and reinforcing social relations, albeit often in different contexts.⁵⁹ Today most everyone socialises at some time with friends in coffee shops. What is called the coffee table has changed in style and content. Most Finnish Americans host parties in their homes where guests socialise. These gatherings are not coffee parties, per se, but the table is laden with a selection of savouries and pastries, along with coffee, wine, and beer. Finnish *pulla* is usually served also. Despite changes and deviations in tradition, coffee and food continue to be central to hospitality, both as a substance and a symbol.

⁵⁸ Personal communication, 8 October 2010.

⁵⁹ Valeri, *op. cit.*, 1995, 149.

The Monk and the Doctor: Food and Health
Meal Patterns in the Late Middle Ages

Thomas M. I. Smith

The monk and the doctor, two figures who in the late Middle Ages were often found in the same place, the kitchen. The monk's diet was a reflection of his religious life, while the doctor's diet was a reflection of his medical knowledge. Both diets were based on the principles of moderation and balance, and both diets were based on the principles of health and well-being. The monk's diet was a reflection of his religious life, while the doctor's diet was a reflection of his medical knowledge. Both diets were based on the principles of moderation and balance, and both diets were based on the principles of health and well-being.

**Part II: Everyday Meal Habits —
National, Regional and Local
Varieties**

The everyday meal habits of the late Middle Ages were a reflection of the social and economic conditions of the time. The national, regional, and local varieties of food were a result of the different climates, soils, and traditions of the different areas. The national varieties were based on the principles of moderation and balance, while the regional and local varieties were based on the principles of health and well-being. The everyday meal habits of the late Middle Ages were a reflection of the social and economic conditions of the time. The national, regional, and local varieties of food were a result of the different climates, soils, and traditions of the different areas. The national varieties were based on the principles of moderation and balance, while the regional and local varieties were based on the principles of health and well-being.

The everyday meal habits of the late Middle Ages were a reflection of the social and economic conditions of the time. The national, regional, and local varieties of food were a result of the different climates, soils, and traditions of the different areas. The national varieties were based on the principles of moderation and balance, while the regional and local varieties were based on the principles of health and well-being.

The Monk and the Duchess. Two Late Medieval Meal Patterns in the Low Countries

Johanna Maria van Winter

It is my intention to compare the daily meal patterns of two quite different late medieval households in the Low Countries: one clerical, the Benedictine monastery of St James in Liège in 1388, and the other secular, the court of Catherine of Kleves, Duchess of Guelders, at the Valkhof castle of Nimwegen from 1457–1459. Of course, there existed substantial differences between these two households, one being a religious community under the rule of St Benedict, and the other a secular coterie with unwritten rules of representation and courtly behaviour. However, there are also similarities between the two households as both groups belonged to the upper classes of their respective societies. The court of Catherine of Kleves was, of course, upper class, but so also was the Benedictine Order, since, in order to be admitted to a Benedictine monastery, the parents of the novice had to pay an entrance fee that marked them as well-to-do people.

Another point of resemblance is geographical location. While both Liège and Nimwegen are situated in the eastern part of the Low Countries, and are thus rather far from the sea, yet both towns are located on a main water artery – Liège on the Meuse and Nimwegen on the Waal. This meant that foreign and even exotic produce and plenty of freshwater fish could be easily transported by boat to these towns,

Although there is a time difference of about three quarters of a century between the meal patterns under discussion here, neither the Lutheran nor the Calvinistic reformations were yet in the offing, as far as both household regimes were concerned. This meant that the prescriptions of the Roman Catholic Church concerning fasting and abstinence were still fully valid for all concerned, although monks were subject to somewhat more fasting days than lay people. I will attend to fasting later.

Now for the sources from which we draw our data. These are quite different in nature in each case. In the case of Liège, the evidence consists of a Latin text in which dietary advice, with medical implications, is provided by an older brother for a younger fellow-monk.¹ In the case of Nimwegen, the sources in question are the low-dutch kitchen accounts of Valkhof Castle

¹ Geneviève Xhayet, 'Une diététique monastique liégeoise du XIV^e siècle. Le "Régime de Santé" du frère Léonard de Saint-Jacques', in: *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 165 (2007), pp. 373–414, text edition pp. 394–412.

in the years of residence of the Duchess with her son Adolf.² This was not the Duchess's main residence, for generally she preferred Castle Tolhuis (toll-house) near Lobith, from which she also took her grant as a Duchess in those years. Her husband, duke Arnold of Guelders, had seriously indebted himself and aroused the opposition of some of his towns. He led an itinerant life separated from his wife.

To begin with the monastic dietary recommendations at Liège: they are undated but have to be positioned in the year 1388 because of some liturgical features in the text.³ They cover almost the whole year, from Wednesday, January 1st, through Monday, December 28th, with only a few lines failing at the end. The old monk, brother Leonard, who was responsible for penning the dietary advice, was presumably a man with some medical knowledge and experience, and the young monk, to whom the advice was given, must have had a rather delicate constitution. The advice is negative in the first instance, in terms of what the pupil should not eat, but then the kind of food which is permitted, is indicated. Because the argument for much negative dietary advice is the fear of a hoarse voice, we may presume that the young monk would have been singing in the monastic choir. Interesting though the medical aspects of this source may be, it is not my purpose here to analyse them in that context. My intention is rather the opposite – to deduce evidence of daily meal patterns from the dietary advice proffered in the text. I thus conclude that the kinds of food that got negative mention in the text, were food items that appeared on the table of the monks anyhow, and would thus have formed part of their daily meals.

With regard to monastic life, we are inclined to think firstly in terms of starvation. However, the rule of Saint Benedict of Nursia (sixth century A.D.), reformulated in the ninth century by Saint Benedict of Aniane,⁴ was a

² Els F.M. Peters, 'Met Katherina aan tafel. De keukenboeken van Katherina van Kleef 1457-1459', in: Ruud Priem (ed.), *Op reis en aan tafel met Katherina van Kleef 1417-1476*, Nijmegen, Museum Het Valkhof, 2009, pp. 92-147.

³ It is a year of the second half of the 14th century, before 1401, the year of the death of brother Leonard, in which Palm Sunday occurs shortly after 21st March and the first Sunday of Advent before 30st November. This applies to the years 1361, 1372, 1377 and 1388, as Xhayet pp. 380-381 states. The year 1383, also mentioned by her, has Palm Sunday already on 15th March, so before 21st March. Moreover, although not mentioned by her, within these four years only in the year 1388 does the feast of *Homo Vetus*, i.e. the Monday after Epiphany (6th January), occur on the Octave of Epiphany (13th January 1388), as mentioned in the text of the calendar p. 398 nr. 21. Cf. H. Grotfend, *Taschenbuch der Zeitrechnung des deutschen Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, 10. Auflage, Hannover 1960 (or later edition), p. 65, *Homo Vetus*.

⁴ *Benedicti Regula*, ed. R. Hanslik, Wien 1960 (Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, vol. 75); *Benedicti abbatis Anianensis Concordia Regularum*, ed. J.P. Migne, Paris 1864 (Patrologia Latina, vol. 103).

relatively mild one, allowing the monks a main meal at noon consisting of two cooked dishes, and a third one, if fruit or fresh vegetables were available. The monks were also entitled to have a choice of dishes according to their own taste and constitution. A pound of bread per person was considered to be sufficient. On feast days, the number of dishes could be increased to four. In the evening before sunset – if it was not a fasting day – a second meal was taken consisting of bread and the remains of the noon meal. Cooked dishes could consist of pulses, vegetables, fruit, farinaceous foods boiled in water, oil, cheese, fish and easily digestible meats, probably fowl and their eggs. Meat of quadrupeds was not permitted, unless one was ill. However, this general prohibition on animal meat disappeared in the course of time, and remained applicable only to days of fast and abstinence. Regarding drinks, which consisted of beer or wine, one portion of liquid was allowed during meals and a further three cups throughout the day. In summertime, three additional cups were allowed. So it is not wholly appropriate to think of the monastic diet in terms of 'starvation'.

In our source, no advice is proffered for everyday situations, but only for special holy days and their *vigilia* (the day before a feast), as well as for the Sundays before and after Easter, Ascension day, and Whit Sunday, and the Advent weeks before Christmas. Sometimes, the monks would visit a neighbouring priory or monastery, and for these occasions, not only the food, but also table manners, are considered in our source. Special mention is made of blood-letting, occurring five times a year, and carried out on three consecutive days. The blood-letting was meant to purge the body through the emission of spoiled blood. Because the patient may be weakened thereby, the monks were allowed titbits on the days of their suffering.⁵ As this custom applied only to ecclesiastics, it is not mentioned in the accounts of the Duchess.

The Duchess's kitchen accounts are quite different in form and content from those of monks, and they do not include prescriptions or notes about medical care or table manners. They mention the weekly purchase of goods, and their prices, for the household of the Duchess, her retinue and her guests. The notes concern food as the main item, but the purchase of kitchen utensils and even the cost of repairs are also mentioned. Since church prescriptions about fasting and abstinence were taken into account to a large extent in the

⁵ The blood-lettings took place in the week of Sunday 19th January 1388, the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday after Easter Sunday (29th March 1388), three days in the week of St John (Wednesday 24th June 1388), Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in the first week of September (1st, 2nd and 3rd September 1388) and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in the week of St Martin (11th, 12th and 13th November 1388): p. 398 nr 23; pp. 401-402 nrs 44-48; pp. 403-404 nrs 62-64; pp. 406-407 nrs 80-82; pp. 409-410 nrs 97-99.

weekly purchases for the Dutchess's household, the liturgical calendar of the year is as clearly mirrored in the Duchess's household accounts as in the dietary advice of our Liège monk. Alas, no recipes are given, just as was the case in the Liège treatise, so that we only can guess at how the purchased foodstuffs were processed. However, by comparing the ingredients used with those mentioned in contemporary cookery books from the surrounding countries, a kind of reconstruction of the processing element is possible. In fact, this has been undertaken within the framework of a large exhibition in the Museum Het Valkhof in Nimwegen, which took place in 2009, centred around the Book of Hours of Catherine of Kleves, in which the kitchen books were also displayed.⁶ The Book of Hours belongs to the Pierpont Morgan Library & Museum in New York – which housed the exhibition after its conclusion in Nimwegen.

In the Duchess's household, the prescriptions of the church about fasting and abstinence were followed just as much as in the monastery. Abstinence implied that no meat and grease of quadrupeds would be consumed on any Friday and Saturday of the year, albeit without objection to the milk, butter and cheese, derived from such animals, or to the eggs of fowl. Fish was also permitted. Fasting, however, meant that during the forty weekdays from Ash Wednesday to Easter (the *Quadragesima*) and on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays of the three so-called Ember weeks at the turn of the seasons, neither the meat of quadrupeds, nor their dairy produce, and neither the flesh of birds nor their eggs, were permitted. On those days, only one meal was taken, at least in the monasteries; the situation with regard to lay households is uncertain. On Sundays in the *Quadragesima*, however, two meals were served, at least in the monastery of St James in Liège. Moreover, monks had extra fasting days on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Ascension day (the so-called *Rogationes*) and during the four Advent weeks before Christmas. Also on some *vigilia*, monks had to fast, which was not always the case with lay people.

Fish was always permitted, as was its soft and hard roe, and vegetable produce was also allowed. All told, therefore, there would appear to have been no reduction in the intake of beer and wine, nor in the use of vegetable oils, subtropical fruit, vegetables and legumes, in both households. Nevertheless, the fact that both households were precluded by Church regulations from using butter and animal fat as their grease, as was normally the case, during the forty days before Easter and during the Ember weeks,

⁶ The exhibition ran from 10th October 2009 through 3rd January 2010. Because the Book of Hours had to be bound anew, all the loose leaves could be shown separately. The kitchen books are in the Gelders Archief at Arnhem, Hertogelijk Archief inv. nrs 448-450.

gave rise to a drastic change in the kitchen organisation of these households. During this period, in order to have tasty cooking oil available, they had to have recourse to expensive olive oil imported from the other side of the Alps.

Oil was not without difficulties for the young monk anyway, for he was advised that, on the Monday after *Quinquagesima* (10th February 1388), the Monday before Ash Wednesday (although carnival was celebrated outside the cloisters fasting had already started inside), and on all Mondays until Easter, he should add vinegar to his soup to counteract the smell and taste of the oil.⁷ On Ash Wednesday, 12th February 1388, he was advised that he should not eat fish that had been baked in oil,⁸ and on Sunday, 23rd February, he was informed that he should abstain from pastries and apple-fritters baked in oil.⁹ Monks with a less tender constitution probably did eat these dishes, but, at any rate, they were put on the table. Sunday *Quinquagesima*, the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, was celebrated as a feast day in the monastery, and dairy produce and eggs were allowed. At noon on the same day, flans with a paste-bottom (a pastry filled with cream and eggs), and cheese and thin pancakes with butter, were served, while poached eggs and the yolks of eggs fried in butter, were provided for the evening meal. The poached eggs were inserted into a batiste pouch and then immersed in boiling water, so they were named *baptista*. Our monk was advised that he should not eat the crusts of the flans and also that he should abstain from the pancakes.¹⁰

The Duchess and her son celebrated carnival at an inn in Nimwegen on the Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday (13th and 14th February 1458) and returned home to Valkhof Castle in the evening to offer a banquet to friends.¹¹ On Sunday, 12th March 1458, Sunday *Letare Jerusalem*, the fourth Sunday in the forty days, the kitchen accounts mention the purchase of oil, herring, stockfish, salmon, smelt, roach, perch, bream, pike, carp, vinegar, galentine, almonds, vegetable herbs, whitebread, rye, wine and beer. Spices were taken from the household stock.¹² All these different kinds of fish were probably prepared in different ways – baked in oil, or boiled in water, or roasted on the grill or on the spit, or processed in a pie or in a cold sour aspic (galentine). Almonds were peeled, mashed, stirred with water or wine and boiled, to the thickness of a sauce, served on pike, for example.¹³ Salmon,

⁷ Xhayet, p. 398 nr 28.

⁸ Xhayet, p. 399 nr 31.

⁹ Xhayet, p. 399 nr 33.

¹⁰ Xhayet, p. 389 nr 27.

¹¹ Peters, p. 135.

¹² Peters, pp. 133, 145.

without the head, could be boiled in water and be served with parsley, ginger-powder and wine vinegar.¹⁴ Recipes existed for all of these preparations. It is striking how many different kinds of fish were bought at the same time, both sea fish (herring and stockfish) and freshwater fish (all other kinds).

Such a variety of fish probably was not served in the monastery of St James in Liège, where next to herring and bloater (smoked herring) 'only' cod, haddock, shad, eel, carp, gudgeon and goby were mentioned by brother Leonard.¹⁵ On Sunday, 8th March 1388, Sunday *Letare Jerusalem*, the young monk had to behave as on Sunday, 23rd February, that is, not to eat any of the oil-baked pastries and apple fritters. Moreover, at noon, he had to abstain from gudgeon or ragout of carp in *civé*, that is, carp prepared in a warm sour sauce with fried onions and spices, and bound with crumbs of bread. At the evening meal, which was served on Sundays during the fast, he was ordered to take only two drinks of a good wine of one kind.¹⁶

Moving swiftly to another season, we reach June 1388, where we proceed from the intake of food to blood-letting. This custom did not exist in secular households so there are no comparable purchases in the account books of Nimwegen in that connection. We know, however, from the accounts relating to Friday, 16th June 1458 – a day of abstinence from the meat of quadrupeds but with dairy produce and eggs allowed – the kind of purchases for the Nimwegen household that were made on that day. Herring, stockfish, ide, carp, cumin cheese, milk, butter, eggs, vinegar, vegetables, parsley, peas, cherries, whitebread, rye, wine and beer, were purchased, and spices were taken from the household stock.¹⁷ This enabled fish to be baked in butter, rissoles of dough with a filling of cheese and parsley to be prepared, and a pie with cherries to be baked.¹⁸ In this household, the peas were probably only used in the kitchen for the making of broth, which could serve as a basis for soups and sauces. At any rate, according to cookery books, they mainly had that function in meal preparation.

In the monastery in Liège, however, this situation was different. There peas were served, sometimes even in their pods. On Tuesday, 31st March 1388, that is, the Tuesday after Easter, the young monk was advised to remove

¹³ Ria Jansen-Sieben en Johanna Maria van Winter (eds.), *De keuken van de late Middeleeuwen. Een kookboek uit de 16^e eeuw*, Amsterdam (Bert Bakker) 1989, p. 91 nr 80.

¹⁴ Jansen-Sieben en Van Winter, p. 94 nr. 86.

¹⁵ Xhayet, pp. 396, 399, 408 nrs 11, 33, 38, 88, etc.

¹⁶ Xhayet, p. 399 nr 35.

¹⁷ Peters, p. 147.

¹⁸ Jansen-Sieben and Van Winter, p. 107, nr 122: 'Om soteren te maken', and p. 108 nr 125, 'Om criecktaerten te maken inden somer'.

the pods of the peas and the swimming lard,¹⁹ something that he should also do in the autumn, on all Sundays following the Exaltation of the Cross (14th September 1388), and on Tuesdays and Thursdays thereafter.²⁰ On Saturday, 25th April, he was advised that he should allow his hot peas to cool on an separate plate and then to eat them with half of the broth. This should be done every Saturday, if there were no vegetables served with milk available.²¹ On the Monday and Tuesday in the *Rogationes* before Ascension day (4th and 5th May 1388), peas of both kinds, i.e. chickpeas and green peas, were served. He was advised to abstain from both if the weather was very hot.²² Broad beans were served, both peeled and in their pods, in the week of 28th June 1388, during a visit to the priory of St Leonard in a suburb of Liège. If the young monk had already eaten them peeled in the soup at noon, he should not take them again in their pods, with salt, at the end of the meal.²³ He was admonished to mind his words and to behave decently towards people from outside, during this visit. This meant, *inter alia*, that he could eat all of the vegetables and beans offered, but he should leave half of the other kinds of food, such as cherries, butter, fish and pie, for his table fellow.

On blood-letting occasions, more refined titbits were served, although, to some extent, they were not fine enough for our monk. On Wednesday, 1st April 1388, the first day of blood-letting after Easter, he was advised, that he should behave modestly as on Easter Monday by eating neither greasy vegetables nor too much salted mutton, and to be content with boiled and roast dishes and flans. He was allowed to have three or four drinks of wine at noon but only one drink of wine with the evening meal. On Easter Monday, he should be content with bits of bread dipped in wine, but on the first day of the blood-lettings, he was allowed, as an evening meal, to take a soft piece of mutton from the broth, to have it cooled and to cut it in pieces, and then to eat it with a green sauce.²⁴ On that day, a wine from a special stock, the so-called pittance, was offered, i.e. a better quality wine as a treat on top of the normal portion given to the monks.²⁵ On the second day, he was advised not to eat vegetables or lard with his soup, or half-cooked beef or mutton, but only flans and cheese and roast meat.²⁶ On the third day, he should do

¹⁹ Xhayet, p. 400 nr 43.

²⁰ Xhayet, p. 407 nr 85, p. 408 nr 88.

²¹ Xhayet, p. 402 nr 49.

²² Xhayet, p. 402 nr 52.

²³ Xhayet, p. 404 nr 66.

²⁴ A green sauce was a common medieval sauce, made of breadcrumbs steeped in vinegar and mixed with pepper (or other spices) and green herbs like parsley and mint.

²⁵ Xhayet, pp. 400-401 nrs 42, 44, 46.

²⁶ Xhayet, p. 401 nr 47.

the same, but then there were also *fruoeshx* (perhaps frogs?), which he should only eat if he had vinegar available. He should also pour vinegar in the broth of finely-cut veal without lard. As a first dish, he should not eat soup but rather a poached egg (*baptista*).²⁷ Obviously, he should avoid greasy things, according to the advice of his mentor, brother Leonard.

The food provided at blood-lettings after the feast of Saint John (Wednesday 24th June 1388), resembled that available at Eastertime, except for the absence of flans. He was advised to avoid chickens with a stuffing which included the herb hyssop, as this was bad for him. During those three days, there was broth of game for the evening meal, but that was very warm and dry and made one thirsty, and so should be avoided. On the third day, there were no frogs (*froeshx*) for the evening meal, but cherries and cheese instead. However, he should not take those in the dining room, because afterwards he would get them in the house of the abbot.²⁸

Cherries were served in June both in the monastery and at the ducal court, but it is not clear how. In the monastery, the cherries were probably eaten fresh and raw, but I doubt if this was also the case at the court. Raw fruit was not considered to be healthy and, besides, fruits in comfits or pies were much more prestigious than unprocessed ones. In the general recommendations of Brother Leonard – before he started his calendar – he explicitly stated that fruits should never be eaten, and that pears, either raw or cooked, should also not be consumed.²⁹ But in practice, Brother Leonard regularly encouraged the moderate use of fruits, both wet and dry and both raw and cooked, in the course of the year.³⁰ That he was no advocate of raw vegetables, is evident from the fact that a sentence about lettuce and parsley to be eaten with vinegar in summer, had been deleted from his general introduction.³¹

Many more differences and similarities can be deduced from these two sources, but by way of summary, it can be concluded that the cuisine of both households conformed to the standards of the well-to-do classes of their age. Fish and meat played the most important role, next to fowl, with many eggs, butter, and imported oil, also being used. Vegetables and fruits held backstage status at the court, but were regularly served at the table of the

²⁷ Xhayet, pp. 401–402 nr 48.

²⁸ Xhayet, pp. 403–404 nrs 62, 63, 64.

²⁹ Xhayet, p. 396 nrs 9, 10.

³⁰ Xhayet, p. 401 nr 45, Friday, Sunday and Tuesday from Easter to the Exaltation of the Cross: 'Sed etsi fructus affuerint, modestiam habe in illis sumendi, tam de aquosis quam stipticis aut ponticis.'; p. 406 nrs 78, 81, Saturday 15th August, Wednesday 2nd September 1388, '- comedo fructus -'; p. 407 nr 86, all Sundays after Exaltation of the Cross, 'In vespera vero non comedas carnem salsam sed offas in vino, -- fructus coctos aut crudos, --'.

³¹ Xhayet p. 395 nr 8.

monastery, as were legumes, i.e. chickpeas, green peas and broad beans. Lentils were known but were hardly consumed in the Low Countries. All the other now common legumes came from the Americas from the sixteenth century onward and did not, therefore, play a role in the Low Countries in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, the link between food and health was a matter of course for these people and thus is not an invention of the twentieth century. This link is clearly shown in the dietary advice provided by Brother Leonard to his young colleague, who insisted on the avoidance of grease and salt and half cooked meat with dry crusts. Without explicitly referring to the antique Greek humoral system he did show his fellow monk the right path to a healthy way of life, both spiritually and physically.

Apple Juice and Apple Cider

Nils-Arvid Bringéus

Regional Everyday Beverages

While regional eating habits have been on the ethnological research agenda for a long time, the same can hardly be said about our regional drinking habits. Here is a brief outline of the situation in Sweden.

Carl Linnaeus, who was the first to seriously examine Swedish eating and drinking habits, praised the 'pure water' he drank during his travels in Lapland.¹ His view was scarcely shared by the Swedish peasantry. In Scania, *svagdricka* (small beer) and *drickablandning*, i.e. a mixture of beer and milk, were the everyday beverages.² During the summer, people drank sour milk. On Gotland, Linnaeus mentions in Burs on 6 July 1741 a drink that was called *standebilla*. As soon as some of it had been drunk, water was added 'thereby providing a drink for no less than three months'. A juniper drink existed in all of Sweden, but mainly in Småland, Linnaeus relates on 17 August 1741, after returning from Gotland. It could rarely keep longer than eight days. It served 'both as a healthy drink and as a medicine'. 'The juniper drink which is certainly more healthy than it is tasty is consumed by quite a considerable number here, especially poor people,' Dean Öller wrote in 1800.³ In regions of northern Sweden, whey from cheese-making was the everyday beverage and it was called *blanda* or *blanddricka*. 'The milk tub normally stood in the kitchen or even in the living room, where it was accessible to all those who wished to quench their thirst or have something to drink at mealtimes.'⁴ And unfermented apple juice, called 'must', was also part of this spectrum of beverages.

During his travels on Öland, Carl Linnaeus wrote on 18 June 1741: 'Crab-apple trees grow abundantly throughout the entire parish of Böda, bearing many apples which the farmer puts to no use, except at harvest time, after slaughtering, when he places a few apples in his fresh meat soups. He could easily, like the farmer in England and Normandy, have pressed the lovely cider or apple must, which can often compete with wine and is far more pleasant than the sea water, with which people could be seen slaking their thirst at the limestone quarry.' Linnaeus pinpoints precisely the areas

¹ Bringéus 1999.

² Bringéus 1971.

³ Öller 1800, 126.

⁴ Ränk 1966, 71.



Fig 1. The Bayeux tapestry shows barrels of apple wine or cider being transported by boat from Normandy to England. (Simone Bertrand, *La tapisseries de Bayeux et la manière de vivre au Onzième Siècle*, Paris, 1966.)

in Europe where cider was the most prominent beverage. In north-west France, i.e. Brittany, Picardy and Normandy, cider became more widespread during the late-medieval period.⁵ (In the province of Calvados in Normandy, a distilled apple brandy of the same name is still distilled.) Cider-making was introduced from Normandy to Kent and Sussex in the mid-13th century, from where it quickly spread to other parts of England. When producing on a fairly large scale, the apples were pressed in horse-driven mills.⁶

A Drink Called 'Must'

The Roman author Cajus Plinius mentions in his *Naturalis historia* that Romans and Hebrews drank apple must alongside wine during the first century A.D. The very word 'must' ('Most'/'most' in German and Danish) is derived from the Latin word *mustum*, which means 'young, new, fresh'. According to John Granlund's commentary on Olaus Magnus (book 13:21),

⁵ Laurieux 1999, 92.

⁶ Wilson 1973, 382, 404.



Fig. 2: Three men pressing fruit with a mill. Woodcut from John Worlidge's *Vinnetum Britannicum*. From Dehlén, Stefan, Israelsson, Lena, *Ciderboken*. Hur man gör sin egen cider, Stockholm 1997.

must has been pressed in northern Europe since prehistoric times. In Denmark, 'most' is mentioned in Vordingborg in 1513, and in Hamar in Norway must-pressers existed at St. Olaf's monastery in 1553.⁷ Excerpts from the largest Swedish dictionary *Svenska Akademiens Ordbok* show that barrels of must made from apples or pears were to be found in the royal wine cellars in Stockholm and Gripsholm during the Renaissance. Olaus Magnus writes in his history of the Nordic peoples (book 12:7): 'then there are also crab-apples, to which nature has given a long maturing time so that they are not ripe until the month of December. These have a taste of wine, and therefore via a fruit press a drink is prepared from them, called must.'

Apple Gruel

Linnaeus, then, saw a potential but unexploited economic asset in the fruit of the wild-apple tree. In Scania, better use was made of the apples from the wild-apple tree than on Öland. When he arrived there from Småland via

⁷ Lange 1959, 666f.

Loshult on 17 May 1749, he noted: 'Wild-apple trees grew abundantly around Glymminge [Glimminge] and other towns; they now stood magnificently in flower, and gave much fruit that was devoured by pigs. Apart from that, the people there cooked the apples with water and milk to make a gruel. No one, however, understood how to prepare the delicious cider.' In this brief note, Linnaeus captures at one and the same time the beauty of the flowering wild-apple trees and the usefulness of their fruit for both humans and animals. Clearly, he liked the taste of apple must, or apple juice as it is normally called in English. Carl Hallenborg is more hesitant in his comment: 'The question is whether wild apples are suitable for apple juice and cider if it is to be tasty and drinkable, although good orchard fruit can be used to that purpose'.⁸

That apple juice was both usable and tasty is mentioned by Dean Öller from the nearby parish of Jämshög half a century later: 'Generally speaking, in summer nothing else is drunk than so-called gruel, which is made from crumbled wild apples or crab-apples cooked in water with a little flour and milk. This is then stirred thoroughly until smooth, and the whole decoction poured into a large cask or tub with a lid on it for a kind of fermentation. There is always a ladle in the tub, so that anyone in the household can drink thereof as desired.'⁹ Apple juice was also drunk in Västra Blekinge. In his booklet *Customs, Beliefs and Popular Life etc. in Lister in Olden Times*, Per Persson (possibly based on Öller) writes: 'In olden times, a three-legged tub with a lid often stood in the cottages. This was the household's beverage supply, made from crab apples. These were cooked, crushed and mixed with a little flour and water and then left to ferment. Water was added to replace that which evaporated. In the tub there was a ladle that everyone used to drink from.'¹⁰ The flour gave the apple juice a gruel-like consistency, but it also contains carbohydrates that are converted into sugar and hasten the fermentation process. Like small beer and beer mixture in other parts of Scania, the apple beverage was placed at the disposal of any thirsty person, who was free to take a draught if desired.¹¹ When among the wooden items listed in the inventory of the deceased Matts Mattson, a commoner of upright nature, in Hemmingsmåla in the district of Lister on 7 March 1748 we find '1 gruel tub', this piece of information irrefutably proves that there was just such a tub with apple juice as that mentioned by Öller.

⁸ Hallenborg 1910-13, 310.

⁹ Öller 1800, 126.

¹⁰ Persson 1916, 35.

¹¹ Bringéus 1971.

The Apple Juice Movement of the 1930s and 1940s

The closest equivalent of apple juice preparation in north-eastern Scania and Blekinge is to be found on Funen and Falster in Denmark. In Arent Berntsen's 'The Fruitful Magnificence of Denmark and Norway' from 1659, the making of apple juice at manor houses is mentioned, and in 1787 Eric Pontoppidan relates that a large amount of the apple harvest is used for making juice.¹² The apples could be crushed in a trough with a club or special pestle. The crushed fruit was then ladled into a strong bag of coarse fabric. This was placed in a press, with which one pressed the bag with a long shaft so that the juice dripped down into a bowl and was finally ladled into a cask. Later, a special grating machine was even used. The apple juice is mainly used on Funen as a 'dip' for buck-wheat porridge, where it made a welcome change.¹³

At the end of the 19th century, home production of apple juice in Denmark declined noticeably. Instead, housewives were more interested in conserving fruit and making fruit-syrup. However, interest revived in apple juice in the 1930s. Courses on making apple juice were organised, among others by the horticultural schools, where uses to which windfall fruit could be put were demonstrated. New and better implements were invented and, first and foremost, people found out how to pasteurise the apple juice, i.e. heat-treat it so that it would keep. Initially, it was the larger households that made use of this technique and acquired the necessary implements, but many people also began to exploit their investment by pressing juice for their neighbours. At certain locations, small-scale apple-juice factories developed where customers could hand over their apples and for a certain charge, have them converted into apple juice.¹⁴

A similar development took place in Sweden. As early as 1906, Carl G. Dahl published an article in Sweden's Pomological Association with the headline 'On the use of fruit and berries in the production of so-called non-alcoholic wines'. In the Association's pamphlet no. 11, year 1935, the managing director of the Swedish Fruit Association at Urshult, Marcus Mellin and the garden consultant for Blekinge County's Agricultural Society, Peter Linde, published the document 'Preparation of unfermented juice from Swedish fruits and berries in the home and in fruit-grower associations'. In the chapter 'How do we make unfermented juice in the home and in associations?' it says: 'For co-operative work in fruit-producing, allotment, housewife, J.U.F. [Agricultural Youth Association] and similar associations,

¹² Boyhus 2004.

¹³ Højrup 1964: 36 f.

¹⁴ Boyhus 2004.

use could possibly be made of school kitchens, parish halls, community centres, shooting pavilions, disused dairies and similar premises.' The booklet concludes with some words about co-operating on production: 'To the extent that fruit growers via their own attempts within this field, with the aid of this small publication, have learnt how to appreciate and make use of these beverages and thereby a real need has arisen, it will be the task of the associations to fulfil these needs via the acquisition of transportable apparatus and equipment, similar to that used in Southern Germany.' Clearly, the authors felt themselves to be pioneers, and the year 1935 marked the breakthrough of the juice-factory movement in Sweden. Apparatus was already available on the market the same year. AB Sixten Torne in Malmö announces: 'Ever since 1935 we have been interested in the Swedish juice-factory movement and have taken part in its development. During this time, we have supplied equipment to the juice-factories in the country and today there is hardly a juice-factory where we are not represented.'¹⁵ In 1935, Ivar Åkesson (1894–1970) also began to produce apple juice in Kivik from fruit resulting from the orchards his father, shipmaster Henric Åkesson (1860–1933), had established on the stony outlying land of Kivik Äsperöd. Alongside fruit trees from nurseries, many crab-apple trees also grew which had had cultivated fruit grafted onto them. Ivar Åkesson was an inventor who loved to experiment, but the impulse to make juice was something which according to his own information came from his wife, who had been on a juice-making course. The juice-factory was housed in a small building on the farm and one person was sufficient to take care of the mill that pulped the apples. At Kivik's apple-juice factory in Karakås, fruit was initially – as in Denmark – accepted from private individuals who had it pressed and pasteurised. Among those who appreciated the non-alcoholic fruit beverage was Crown Prince Gustav Adolf, which led to the juice-factory becoming a royal purveyor to the Swedish Court. Via the brother of Queen Louise, Lord Montbatten, it was even introduced to the British court.¹⁶ At the time of its Golden Jubilee in 1985, the company had 65 employees and an annual turnover of SEK 60–65 million.¹⁷

Even though the juice-factory in Karakås was family-based, elsewhere in our country a collective juice-making industry developed. At its height, it comprised over 150 juice factories.¹⁸ A number of these were quite short-lived, but others became large concerns. Kiviks Musteri AB has remained a family

¹⁵ Engstedt 1957, 39.

¹⁶ Gärsgård 1981, 186; Gröndahl 2002, 135 f.

¹⁷ Hallström 1986, 28.

¹⁸ Hallström 1986, 28.

business since 1999, with Bengt Åkesson and his sister Christina its fourth-generation managing directors. Trensums mustereri in Blekinge also started as a family business which, as mechanisation increased, achieved an annual production of 500,000 litres of juice. In 1982, it moved to Tingsryd, where Pripps brewery was bought in.

Sövde mustereri outside Sjöbo has just acquired a new owner.¹⁹ Kullabygdens mustereri in Mjöhult markets 'Kullamust'. The juice factory in Båstad, on the other hand, has closed down. When Gösta Engstedt published his booklet 'making juice from apples' in 1957, the juice-making movement had reached its peak.



Fig. 3: Sövde mustereri. Photo: Göran Engström. Sydsvenska Dagbladet 1.11. 2009.

¹⁹ Engström 2009.

For a long time, it had been assumed that one used residue fruit for making juice, i.e. windfalls or damaged fruit, in some way or other. 'If one cannot use the fruit for anything else, it can always been made into juice,' was the motto. Östra Sönnarslöv's nursery, which started the production of apple juice as late as 26 September 2008 under the company name Öspab, had a different concept. Here, they wanted to produce apple juice as one produces wine, i.e. exclusively from apples they had grown themselves, with the varieties of apple indicated on the label, and without any artificial additives in the form of preservatives, sweeteners, colouring or aromas. This, among other things, accounts for the fine colour and the excellent taste. The pasteurised apple juice is also supplied in three-litre bag-in-box containers which, if unopened, have a shelf life of about one year and, if opened, of four weeks if kept in the fridge. The clientele lives mainly in southern Sweden as well as in Stockholm and Gothenburg. At Stenheda mustereri in Vik, Österlen – in Scania – quality requirements were raised even higher. The factory was rewarded, in 2010, by the Scanian Academy of Gastronomy 'for its whole-hearted commitment to full-flavoured apple juice made from a single variety of apple'. These apple-juice factories are good examples of how regional fruit cultivation and local production of apple juice came to play an important role in our Swedish popular housekeeping. Present-day propaganda for fruit and organic production have, without a doubt, favoured its manufacture. Apple juice fits in well with today's propaganda for fruit and organically-grown products. Apple juice is now on sale in all major Swedish foodshops as an alternative to soft drinks of various types. In Denmark, too, cold-pressed juice is making a come-back. 'Fruit-growers join forces, acquire transportable juice-making equipment – and real apple juice is back on the market.'²⁰

Despite the plentiful domestic supply of apples, apple juice is imported to a considerable extent. The apple juice sold by Coop in its 'Änglamark' range comes from Scana Noliko in Switzerland, while another apple juice is imported from C. Oostrom's canning factory in the Netherlands. Apple juice is hardly a seasonal beverage. But the word 'must' in Swedish had a good ring to it, and in the 1920s a beverage created in 1910 by the Roberts AB company in Örebro started to be called 'julmust' (Christmas must). It has nothing to do with apples, being based on malt and hops and a special blend of spices. It was sold for the first few years under the name 'Müncheneröl'. Spendrups has now established itself as the leading market producer of julmust, and in December this beverage totally dominates the soft-drink market. Its success is apparently linked to the Swedes having a sweet tooth,

²⁰ Boyhus 2004.

especially in connection with Christmas. It is even marketed as a typically Swedish non-alcoholic beverage.

Cider Manufacture

Even though apple juice was produced in north-eastern Skåne, Linnaeus complained that 'no one understood how to prepare the delicious cider' which, unlike must, contained alcohol. In housekeeping literature from the latter half of the 18th century, there is the occasional mention of cider manufacture, however. In 1772, a publication appeared in Stockholm with the title *Ways of Preparing Wine and Cider from Swedish Fruits and Berries for the Use of the General Public*. According to an article 'Making Cider' in the September 1777 issue of *Housekeeping Journal*, the fruit should be picked several days before being ground in a mill, or crushed underfoot. The juice should then filter through muslin or a sieve. After six months, the cider was ready for drinking.²¹ In the August 1782 issue of the same journal, pressing is recommended to be carried out via a conical roller of hard wood or stone, as depicted in the journal – see Fig. 4. In the *Journal for manufactures and housekeeping* from 1826 it states that 'in southern Sweden quite good cider is made at various locations'. A recipe of English origin, supplied by a landowner, is reproduced. The *Royal Agricultural Academy's Periodical* of 1870 includes an article 'On the preparation of cider or fruit wine'. It remarks, among other things: 'Cider or fruit wine is generally made at various locations abroad, and not infrequently where the grape ripens, where it even competes with wine from grapes. Good fruit wine is far better than simple grape wines and in countries that have a plentiful supply of fruit it is furthermore extremely inexpensive... The southern and central parts of our country, even certain localities even further north, are well-suited for the cultivation of fruit.'

About the turn of the 20th century, commercial apple-growing in Sweden began, and half a century later it had become extremely widespread. The Swedish fruit-growers hoped to be able to sell off their surplus production via the manufacture of alcoholic cider. In 1950, a request was sent to the Swedish government calling for a change to regulations concerning the manufacture and sale of cider beverages. This petition, as well as government bills in 1951 and 1952 revealed a negative attitude towards cider, adhering to temperance views.

It was not until the 1990s that Systembolaget (the state organisation of retail shops for wines and spirits) began to import cider. At the same time,

²¹ *Hushållnings Journal för September 1777*, 468 f.

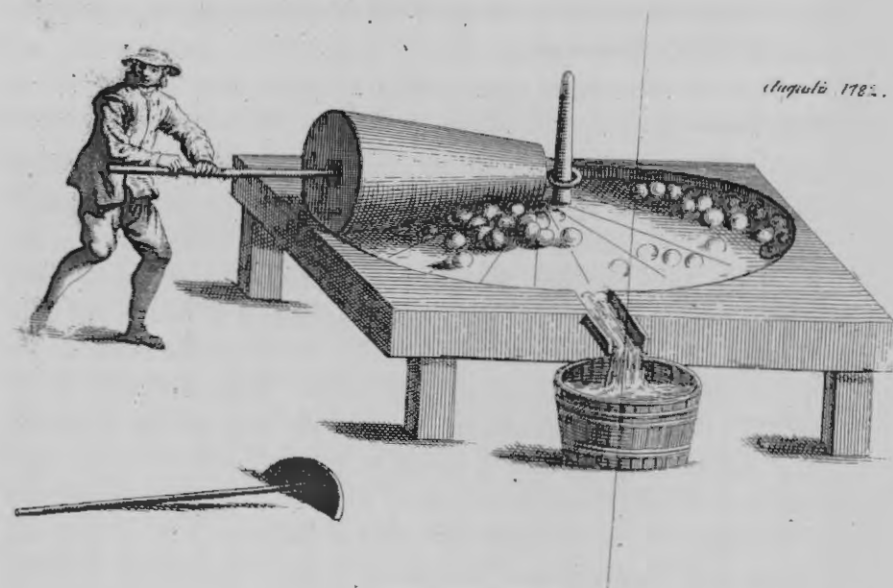


Fig. 4: A simple machine for pressing apples. (From Hushållnings-Journal för Augustus 1782.)

Ingvar Åkesson in Kivik launched the first Swedish cider named Astrakan. A look through the price lists of Systembolaget reveals that cider products are listed for the first time under their own heading in the price list on 1 October 1992. Nine brands are marketed, four of which come from Great Britain, three from France, and two from Sweden – Astrakan dry and Astrakan semi-dry. In 1994, Williams pear cider is added. In 1995, Kiviks mustereri was the sole Swedish supplier to Systembolaget.

Unlike wine, there are no common EU regulations for cider. Each country has its own definition. The Swedish National Food Administration approved cider regulations that came into force on 1 July 2006. According to these, cider must be made from apple or pear juice. Cider may have artificial flavours added, but this must be indicated on the label. Cider may even have carbon dioxide added. Sweden is the only country that prohibits farm sales of cider. It is permitted in Finland, something that has promoted industrial development in rural areas.

When this article was written in October 2009, however, the minister of agriculture in Sweden proposed that farm sales of beer and wine should be allowed, but the issue is complicated by the EU exemption granted to Sweden to retain its sales monopoly.

According to its Catalogue 2009:2, cider between 4.5% and 7% alcohol is included in the range offered by Systembolaget. Within the group dry and semi-dry cider, there are five varieties from Great Britain, four from Germany, and one from the USA, as well as four from Kiviks mustereri, and four varieties from Kopparbergs Sofiero brewery. One variety from Germany and one from England are based on organically grown products.

The sweet cider range is exclusively Swedish and includes seven varieties from Åbro brewery, five from Kopparberg, four from Spendrups' breweries, four from Three Torns breweries and two from Herrljunga Cider. Apparently, these producers have adapted their products to suit the Swedish preference for something sweet.

The Swedish cider producers are Kiviks mustereri, Herrljunga, Kopparbergs brewery, Åbro Bryggeri in Vimmerby and Spendrups' breweries in Grängesberg and Hällevik. Via uncompromising marketing, the Swedish cider manufacturers have even penetrated international markets.

Even though industrially-produced cider completely dominates the market, this does not mean that one cannot make cider from one's own apples. *The Cider Book*, with the subtitle 'How to make your own cider' by Stefan Dehlén and Lena Israelsson offers excellent guidance.

While apple juice is an everyday beverage, cider has apparently become a party beverage. Unlike glögg, which is decidedly a Christmas beverage, cider has hardly any connection to a particular season or public holiday. Like wine, it can be drunk at any time of year. This means that it has a larger sales potential. During 1999, however, Spendrups, in a co-operation with the chefs at Kronovalls Vinslott in Österlen, have introduced a recipe for warm cider with cardamom and fresh ginger for the cold season.

What is striking is how late cider had its breakthrough in our country, despite it being a beverage with extremely old traditions. As in the case of wine, greater contact with other countries by increasingly broader strata of society have apparently contributed to this development.

Carl Linnaeus' wish in Böda on the island of Öland in 1741 that people in Sweden should learn how 'to press the lovely cider or apple must, which can



Fig. 5: A bottle of non-alcoholic cider from Kivik.

often compete with wine' has now at long last come to pass to an infinitely greater extent than he could possibly have imagined.

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Time for Producing and Consuming Food in Traditional Cypriot Society. Changing Eating Habits in the Course of the Twentieth Century

Euphrosyne Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou

The aim of this paper is to examine food with regard to time in the recent past in Cyprus, and to underline the changes which have taken place in eating habits in the country in the course of the twentieth century. What we define as the 'recent past' roughly includes the last century of Ottoman rule (late 18th / 19th centuries) and the period of British administration (1878-1960). Habits in general – and not only those connected with food – have always been changing with the passage of time, so that it is almost impossible to separate clearly the way of life during the recent past from that of the present. The distinction we actually attempt to trace is between Cyprus as a land of tradition and 'primitive' self-sufficient peasant life based on a subsistence economy, and the modern, western style of life on the island of Aphrodite. Our focus is food in connection with time.

Until about a century ago, the calculation and sense of time were completely different from what they are today, as was also the pace of life in general. Only a few wealthy persons could afford to have a watch; people, especially farmers and shepherds in the villages, used empirical methods for calculating the time: at night, they watched the moon and specific stars, and, during the day, the position of the sun and the shadows of buildings or trees. Such observations were also helpful in arranging seasonal agricultural works. At harvest time, the early workmen were guided by the stars. Those who started later, observed the course of the sun, and arranged the time for breakfast and lunch accordingly. They stopped work and returned home by sunset. In general, work in the fields lasted from sunrise to sunset with short breaks.¹ Even the sharing of water from rivers or springs, for the operation of corn grinding mills or for the irrigation of farms, was regulated by such things as the length of a man's shadow, or the rise of the Pleiad or Orion.²

Time is a multidimensional phenomenon with many different meanings. As far as its connection with food is concerned, there is time spent in the production of foodstuffs, in the preparation of meals and, of course, in eating.

¹ For a detailed description of time calculations, see Xystouris, S., *The Small Town of Lysi* [in Greek], Nicosia 1980, 297-9.

² Christodoulou, D., *The Evolution of the Rural Land Use Pattern in Cyprus*, Bude 1959, 89-90.

This paper refers mainly to the rural population, which at least until the second decade of the twentieth century, comprised about 80% of the island's inhabitants; agriculture and stock-breeding were the main occupations of the people; all basic and supplementary foodstuffs, with the exception of those that could be extracted from the wild (procured from nature), were produced by the family. Ensuring the daily food supply – a task that cost most of their energy and time – was people's main concern. Furthermore, foodstuffs had to be safely stored in houses, in adequate quantities, in order to last throughout the year and, in the absence of refrigerators, special treatment was necessary for the preservation of certain kinds of foodstuffs. Although time spent in the preparation of principal foodstuffs is not recorded, even short descriptions of the laborious manual processes involved, such as given below, indicate the incredible amount of time needed in order to ensure the survival of the family over the year's cycle. Every activity required its own time and had to be carried out at the right time.

For financial reasons and because of the abundance of natural produce on the island, the traditional Cypriot diet was based mainly on the consumption of green vegetables, legumes and home-made pasta, always served with bread, while meat from the home-fed animals and chickens rarely reached the table except during wedding celebrations, on major feast days, or when a visitor came or when someone in the house was ill. The olive and oil were integral elements of traditional life and the staple ingredients of daily food. Because of poverty, the daily diet of the rural population, even in the last days of British rule, consisted of a lump of bread, a few olives, an onion, or, on better days, a piece of lard or *halloumi* cheese. The olives, which were always counted, together with bread, constituted the everyday meal of the farmers, the workers and the craftsmen. They cherished the olive as their eyes or their sweetheart; all this is summed up in the proverb 'he looks after her like the olive on his plate'.³

Agricultural production in Cyprus remained at the pre-industrial stage of development until about the mid-twentieth century. Therefore, it was a real struggle to secure the year's provision of olives and olive oil, as the process involved the cultivation of the trees, the collection of the fruit, and the extraction of olive oil in primitive olive mills and presses.

The olive trees were planted in deep pits and, if grafted, produced olives in three years.⁴ Ploughing and hoeing, thorough watering and skilful pruning, were necessary tasks; according to a proverb 'the olive tree needs a crazy

³ Xioutas, P., *Proverbs of the Cypriot Folk* [in Greek], vol. 1, Nicosia 1984, 231, no. 771.

⁴ Mavrokordatos, Y., *Dikomo: A Contribution to the History and Folklore of the Village* [in Greek], Nicosia 1987, 47.



Fig. 1: 'Crushed' green olives (*tsakkistes*) (Photo: *Euphrosyne Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou*, 2005).

pruner and a sensible picker'.⁵ Picking started in August with the green olives which, when crushed, would become *tsakkistes* (Fig. 1). The other olives were left to turn black and were picked in October/November. A certain amount was salted to keep for food for the whole year, but the main crop was turned into oil. The olives were spread out in the yards or on the flat roof-tops for about ten days, to shrivel, before they were taken to the mill, in big baskets of 40 okes⁶ each.

The process of extracting the oil consisted of two stages carried out at special installations, which were either in the open air (Fig. 2) or housed in buildings. The first stage was the crushing of the washed olives with a cylindrical millstone which turned in an upright position in a circular stone basin. The millstone was turned by men or animals by pushing the beam that formed the horizontal axis of the millstone. The second stage was to squeeze the pulp in a press with a screw. The pulp was put into round woven baskets with a hole in the middle, and five to seven of these were placed one on top of the other in the base of the press. Here the filled baskets were squeezed, again with muscle power, turning the screw with the help of a wooden beam. After the first pressing, virgin oil came out, at the second pressing, however, and also at the third, hot water was thrown onto the baskets which contained

⁵ Xioutas, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, 1985, 20, no. 1955.

⁶ One oke is equivalent to 1280 grams (measure of weight).



Fig. 2: Open air olive mill and press in Paphos (Photo: Euphrosyne Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou 2003).

the pulp, so that the rest of the oil would come out. This was collected in a container – as it floated on the water it was possible to scoop it up with cupped hands or even using the palms of the hands. The oil was left for about twenty days before use in order for the sediment to settle. It took three to five okes of olives to produce one oke of oil, which was then kept in glazed jars or in glass demijohns. The picking of olives was a collective form of work, as was also the extraction of the oil. The whole family was involved in these long processes. Some interesting information concerning time is that people worked the olive press during the night to extract the oil as they were busy with other kind of work during the day.⁷

In traditional households, special provision had to be made for having olive oil in the house during the pre-Christmas fast, because by that time the year's provision was running out and the new olive oil was not yet ready. In contrast, for the major Lent before Easter, it was necessary to have wheat for bread. 'The forty days olive oil and the fifty days bread', says the proverb.⁸

⁷ Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, E., 'Olive Oil Production and Traditional Olive Presses in Cyprus during the Recent Past', in *The Olive Tree and Oil*, Fourth Workshop, Kalamata, 7-9 May 1993, Cultural Foundation of the Hellenic Bank of Industrial Development – ELAIS, Athens 1996, 324-9.

⁸ Xioutas, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 1985, 173, no. 4613.



Fig. 3: Vineyards near the village of Omodos (Photo: Euphrosyne Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, 1992).

In a primarily agricultural economy, olive oil was only second to wheat as a food staple. Therefore, interregional exchanges were essential and itinerant merchants and even producers would exchange olive oil for grain.

Another common and time-demanding product was wine. According to the survey made by B.J. Surridge in 1929, each family consumed about 50 bottles of wine and 20 bottles of *zivania*, the Cyprus *eau de vie*, annually.⁹ While wine was also used in cooking, it was mainly employed as a food preservative, especially for meat. It played a very important role in nutrition as did other products made from grape juice. Vine-growing has always been associated with much physical toil, summed up in a Cypriot proverb which states 'The vine needs a hump-backed man'. Vineyards were usually planted in terraces and dry stone walls had to be built in order to retain moisture and to prevent soil erosion (Fig. 3). The ground had to be ploughed three times with a wooden plough driven by oxen. The planting of the vine cuttings was a kind of ritual in which the family, relatives and friends participated. Weeding and pruning were indispensable aspects of successful vine growing; 'Give me hits to the head and I will give you wine in the jar', says a Cypriot proverb.¹⁰ At harvest time, the grapes were gathered in baskets and carried with donkeys to the communal wine-presses – spacious oblong rooms with flat roofs on which the grapes were spread. The wine-press installation comprised a lever-and-screw press, functioning like a nutcracker. A stone

⁹ Surridge, B.J., *A Survey of Rural Life in Cyprus*, Nicosia 1930, 22.

¹⁰ Xioutas, *op. cit.*, vol. I, 1984, 297, no. 1056.



Fig. 4: Flaounes, the Easter specialty in Cyprus. Made in Paphos (Photo: Euphrosyne Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, 1997).

weight at one end of a huge beam counterbalanced the grapes at the other end. The weight was raised and lowered when two or three men turned the screw, and the grapes, which were covered with layers of planks, were pressed accordingly. Depending on the quantity of grapes, this laborious task could take many days and nights. In simpler smaller wine-presses, found in village houses, the grapes were first trampled by foot and then pressed in a barrel with the help of a hand-rotated screw. Must was also extracted by men pressing the grapes barefoot at a stone-built pressing ground, or with a hand-driven grinder. The fermentation process took place in huge wine jars and required about forty days for completion.

Shepherds raised their flocks outside the settlements, but every peasant household kept several sheep and tethered goats that provided milk, most of which was turned into cheeses. Following the annual life cycle of the animals, people knew, by experience, the right time for making different kinds of cheeses and other milk products. The best season for making cheese was springtime when there was an abundance of milk, after animals had had their young and were well-fed with new fresh grass. This was also the time when special cheeses were needed for the *flaounes* – the Easter specialty in



Fig. 5: Making halloumi cheese in the village of Kornos. Sprinkling the fresh halloumi with salt and mint (Photo: Euphrosyne Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, 2002).

Cyprus, made of pastry stuffed with grated cheese mixed with eggs, raisins, mint, mahlep and mastic (Fig. 4). Also, for a whole week before the Easter Lent, people used to eat cheese preparations or handmade pasta with grated cheese or filled with cheese.

Cheeses, especially *halloumi*, the most renowned Cypriot cheese, were generally produced at home by the women-folk (Fig 5).¹¹

Meat, which was not a common dish, was mainly provided by pigs. As late as the mid-twentieth century, there was one pig per Greek rural household, which was reared during the year and slaughtered for Christmas; this was the time for meat consumption and also the time for preparing the annual meat supply for the family. Meat cured with salt, wine and lard, was almost the only meat consumed by the peasant families in Cyprus.¹²

¹¹ The long procedure of the traditional method of making *halloumi* is described by Welz, G., Andilios, N., 'Modern Methods for Producing the Traditional: The Case of Making *Halloumi* Cheese in Cyprus', in Lysaght, P., (ed.), with Burckhardt-Seebass, C., *Changing Tastes. Food Culture and the Processes of Industrialization*, Basel 2004, 218-20; see also references by travellers in Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, E., 'Food at Cultural Crossroads: Dietary Habits in Cyprus under Ottoman Rule (1570-1878) as Perceived by Foreign Travellers', in Lysaght, P., (ed.), in collaboration with A. H. B. Skjelbred, *Food and Meals at Cultural Crossroads*, Oslo 2010(a), 60-1.

¹² Christodoulou, *op. cit.*, 1959, 193-4.

Cyprus produced wheat and barley in abundance, and bread formed the principle staple of nourishment, and the main part of the daily diet (Fig. 6). People produced their own bread from the grain they cultivated and they literally lived on bread. For all the stages of grain cultivation, from the preparation of the fields for sowing, to the storage of the grain, primitive tools and methods were used until well into the twentieth century. The wooden plough, drawn by oxen and donkeys, was similar to that described by Hesiod in the eighth century B.C. Reaping was done with sickles in the same way as in Antiquity. The cut wheat was bound into sheaves, then stacked in ricks, and later taken to the threshing floor. Here a threshing sledge studded with cherts was dragged by animals over the cut wheat; the chaff was then blown away by means of winnowing with wooden forks and shovels, as in Antiquity.¹³ The heap of grain produced was measured and sealed by the tax-collector, as until 1926 one tenth of the produce was given as a tax payment, called *dekati* (tithe), to the government. The remaining grain was stored so as to provide the year's food for the family, and the straw was used as animal feed. Grain was turned into flour in primitive, mostly water-powered, mills. In Mesaoria, known as the granary of Cyprus, corn was ground in man- or animal-driven mills based on rotary motion, due to a lack of water. Most of the grain, however, was transported long distances by animals to the 32 mills of Kythrea. Access to the mills was also very difficult, due to the absence of a proper road system. Old people still remember how hard it was to cover long distances on foot and to cross flooded rivers with mules laden with unground wheat and barley, or, on their return journey, with flour. Grain had to be sifted through a sieve, washed, dried and put into sacks in order to be carried to the mill, where people might spend days and nights, waiting for their turn. Bread was baked at home once or twice a week, and because flour could not be preserved in storage for a long time, frequent visits to the mill were necessary. According to Surridge's survey of rural life in Cyprus in 1929, a family with three children consumed three kg of bread a day.¹⁴ A detailed description of the preparation of flour for making bread, in terms of time, is found in the diaries of the American Missionary, Lorenzo Warriner Pease (1837):

We now do our baking in our house [in Larnaca]. It is surprising how much labor it brings.... All this work would be done in a few hours in America by a machine, while here we must spend at least three days in processing 150 lbs of flour.¹⁵

¹³ For references see Ionas, I., 'Subsistence Economy in Cyprus', *Epeteris tou Kentrou Epistimonikon Erevnon* XX, (Nicosia 1994), 437.

¹⁴ Surridge, *op. cit.*, 1930, 32.

¹⁵ Severis, R., (ed.), *The Diaries of Lorenzo Warriner Pease 1834-1839. An American Missionary in Cyprus and His Travels in the Holy Land, Asia Minor and Greece*, London 2002, 742-3.



Fig. 6: Bread with sesame. Made in Paphos (Photo: Euphrosyne Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, 2005).

The making of bread, the preparation of the yeast with holy water, the kneading and the baking of the loaves in traditional private ovens, was another time-consuming common practice.

All the above-described processes clearly show the immense amount of time spent by the rural population in ensuring the daily food-supply, and offer an insight into the lifestyle of a traditional society in the pre-industrial stage of development. Time, however, was not only spent in daily activities that were absolutely necessary, but also to a great extent in relation to events considered important because of the dictates of custom and religious belief (Fig. 7). A huge variety of dough preparations connected with feasts and celebrations, such as the feasts of the Virgin Mary and the Saints, the twelve days of Christmas, Green Monday and Easter, and also with main events in a person's life, such as birth, marriage and death – were made with great care and strict observance of customs (Fig. 8). These had to be of the best quality and were produced in large quantities, in order to be offered to the church and distributed among neighbours, relatives and friends. Much time was devoted to the shaping of each special kind of bread or pie and its decoration with religious or other symbols which were regarded as having protective

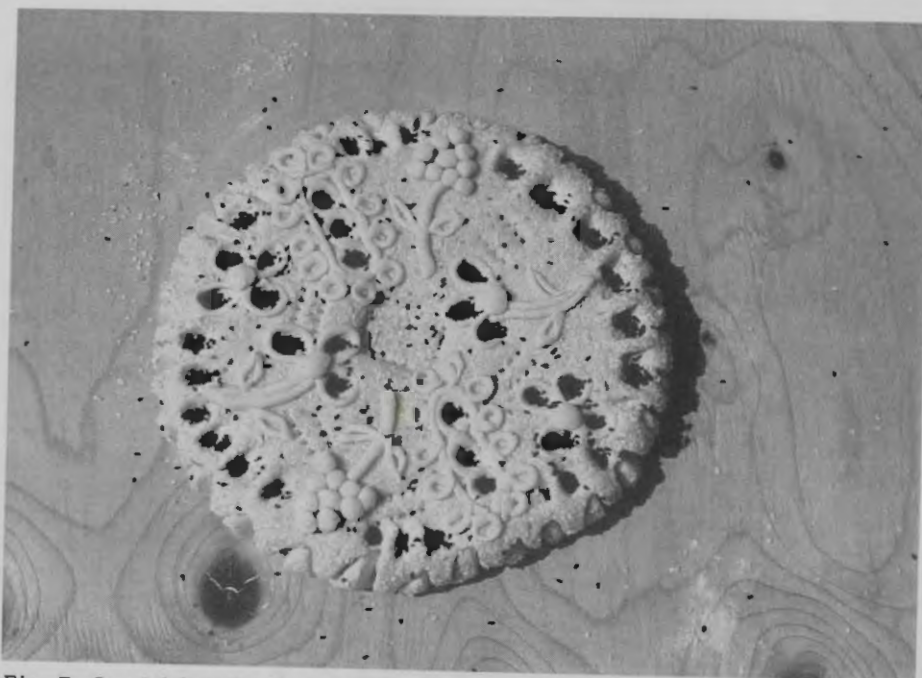


Fig. 7: Special bread offered to the church by a person who celebrated his/her nameday. From the village of Vathylaka. Prepared by Eleni Leontiou (Photo: Kalliopi Protopapa, 1993).



Fig. 8: Special bread offered as a present to the bride on the day (Monday) after the wedding. From Lapithos. Prepared by Penelope Athanasiou (Photo: Kalliopi Protopapa, 1991).

qualities. There was always competition among housewives as to who would present the most beautiful shapes and designs. It was the best opportunity women had to show off their skill, imagination and creativity. Decorated breads and pies are often masterpieces of folk art.¹⁶

The time spent in the consumption of food is hard to ascertain as it depends on many factors. There is a great difference between time spent in the preparation and consumption of meals during working days on the one hand, and during feasts and celebrations on the other. People used to eat three times a day; peasants, shepherds and workmen carried their food – bread, olives, onions, cheese – in a leather bag called *vourka*, and had a break in the morning and another about mid-day – just enough in order to eat and rest before resuming work. On coming back home after sunset, they usually cooked pulses and vegetables with olive oil, on the hearth. Food was served on a common plate which was placed on a big straw tray called *tsestos* (pannier).

The beginning or end of seasonal collective work, like the planting of vineyards, the sowing and harvesting of cereals, the gathering of olives, and so on, were marked with feasting involving special food. The same was true for important religious feasts, especially Christmas and Easter, as well as for important events like baptism and marriage, the latter involving a whole week of feasting, eating and drinking. The celebration dinner for a betrothal would last 'until the ant became visible', namely until dawn.¹⁷ Special food was prepared for each life-cycle event and it was consumed by many guests; in villages, the whole community was invited. The spending of a lot of time eating and drinking together, after the accomplishment of collective work, or in the celebration of an important event, served to strengthen the solidarity and cohesion of the community.

The development which Cyprus experienced after the Second World War, and the economic boost which the island has known since her independence in 1960, brought about profound changes in a way of life that had remained almost unaltered for centuries. However, progress (electricity, better transport and other facilities of modern life) was much slower in the countryside than in the urban centres, which have always been the first to adopt technological advancements and new ideas about fashion or food. Furthermore, innovations did not affect all classes / groups of Cypriot society, at the same time, or to the same extent. This was also the case in the past:

¹⁶ Kypri, T., Protopapa, K., *Traditional Dough Preparations of Cyprus. Their Use and Importance in Customary Life*, [in Greek], Cyprus Research Centre Publications XVIII, Nicosia 2003.

¹⁷ Protopapa, K., *Customs of Traditional Marriage in Cyprus* [in Greek], Cyprus Research Centre Publications XLV, Nicosia 2005, 46.

though living under foreign rule – Frankish, Venetian, Ottoman – the wealthy classes, which formed a small part of the population, could afford to enjoy the ‘value of the unnecessary’ and indulge in conspicuous consumption far beyond the essentials of daily existence. Under Ottoman rule, the elite of Cyprus enjoyed a variety of imported foodstuffs and the best local products. Refined food habits are indicated by special equipment, such as skewers for roasting meat, grills, sets of European casseroles, china tea and chocolate cups, pots for mustard, spoons for serving punch, cutlery for dessert, and so on.¹⁸ Travellers’ accounts offer further evidence concerning lavish receptions organised by the elite, consisting of many courses with dishes cooked and served by servants.¹⁹ Again, the upper classes were the first to adopt a western lifestyle; among other innovations, they abandoned the oriental-style low sofas on which they sat for hours to enjoy meals served on copper trays, and replaced them with wooden chairs and tables. The gradual Europeanisation of the island was enhanced under British rule. In the course of the twentieth century, the rise in the standard of living of the Cypriots affected the food habits of wider strata of the population; there were several other factors, however, that transformed the traditional self-sufficient communities into a modern consumer society, such as the improvement of means of communication, the mechanisation of production, and the expansion of the import trade.

The development of tourism brought people from all over the world to Cyprus. Since independence (1960), the numbers of young Cypriots who study abroad each year, who get used to the food habits of foreign countries and who, on their return, bring not only new experiences with them but, in many cases, a husband or wife as well, is increasing. So what do they cook? The large communities of Cypriots living abroad, in many parts the world, tend to preserve and promote traditional Cypriot cuisine, but, at the same time, they are influenced by the food habits of the country in which they live, and transfer this knowledge to Cyprus on their return. On the other hand, many thousands of foreign people, mainly from the Far East, who come to work in Cyprus, introduce their home eating habits as part of their culture.

Having lived in Cyprus since 1978 and having carried out research on the material life of the island, I have had the opportunity of experiencing the rapid changes in the way of life of the island during the last three decades. As far as food is concerned, striking differences, even with the very recent past, are discernible. Restaurants offering various European dishes, as well

¹⁸ Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, E., ‘Lifestyle and Social Behaviour of the Elite of Cyprus, c.1775-1821’, *Folk Life. Journal of Ethnological Studies* 48, no. 2 (2010[b]), 87-111.

¹⁹ Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou, *op. cit.*, 2010(a), 67-8.

as Indian, Mexican, Japanese, Chinese or Levantine specialties, sprang up like mushrooms all over the island, especially in tourist areas. Fast food is now available in almost every street; at lunch-time and at night, the streets are full of motorcycles rushing to deliver an immense variety of dishes; one gets the impression that all inhabitants of urban centres live on delivery menus. There is a flood of food advertisements everywhere. For those who insist on cooking, supermarkets offer all sorts of foodstuffs, fresh or frozen. Bakery products and confectioneries surpass all imagination. There is also an increasing number of shops selling foodstuffs imported from the Far East or Africa, to be consumed by people from those countries who live in Cyprus. Even the weekly street market is full of exotic products, including fruits, vegetables and spices. Cyprus entered the European Union as late as 2004, yet European eating habits, tendencies and problems connected with food, had arrived much earlier on the island. The mass media, especially the TV – the indispensable companion in every household – have played their role most effectively in this context. In Cyprus, the general food-consumption pattern resembles that of developed or developing countries: people consume much more food and do much less manual work than in the past; consequently, a great percentage of people, even schoolchildren, are overweight, and diabetes, heart diseases, and so on, are flourishing. Various TV programmes concerning cooking and eating, are shown on a daily basis. At the same time, advertisements promoting weight-loss (through the use of medicaments, exercise, various devices, and so on), very frequently appear in the mass media, and skinny models are presented as the ideal of beauty. As an alternative to the consumption of mass-produced food, a healthy diet, based on biological foodstuffs provided by special shops, is promoted.

The trends and attitudes described above are well known in most developed countries, as is also the nightmare of famine in countries of the Third World. However, each country has its own peculiarities. Thus, the question arises as to how Cypriot food tradition reacted or responded to the provocations of the twentieth century?

The present eating habits of the Cypriots have not been a subject of systematic research to date. The following remarks are, therefore, based on my own personal experience of the subject.

Generally speaking, modern Cypriot food habits have been differentiated from those of the past and the traditional kitchen has been modified and adapted to the new circumstances. In fact, the Cypriot kitchen has been enriched by foreign influences, while at the same time, many old traditional dishes have been abandoned. Home-baked bread is now the exception rather

than the rule, while, on the other hand, *halloumi* cheese, a main product that was industrialised about a century ago, is still made in many village households for family consumption and for sale. The same is true for home-prepared cured meats and smoked sausages. What is even more important is that, although oven-ready food is widely available and eating in restaurants and taverns is becoming more and more fashionable, Cypriot families, as a rule, insist on home cooking. In urban centres, distances are close and the majority of people use private cars. Most people finish work early in the afternoon and return home for lunch. It is usually the youngest generation which often takes advantage of delivered food; in many cases, however, Cypriot mothers still cook for the new couples and the grandchildren, as family bonds are still tight in Cyprus. What do they cook? Home cooking covers a wide spectrum of dishes, tastes and flavours and includes, for example, *pourgouri*, made from cracked wheat steamed together with fried onions to make a light pilaf served with yogurt, *louvia me lahana*, a mixture of greens cooked with black-eyed beans and served with olive oil and lemon juice, *koupepia*, rolled vine leaves stuffed with meat and rice, also stuffed vegetables, tomatoes, onions, courgettes, peppers, aubergines or marrows, lamb or beef cooked with tomatoes, lots of onions, potatoes and cumin in earthenware pots, *stifado*, a rich stew of beef or rabbit cooked with plenty of onions, vinegar and wine, *moukentra*, lentils combined with rice and onions, *keftedes*, meat balls, roast meat with potatoes, or artichokes and other vegetables fried with eggs. These are only some of the favourite dishes of the Cypriots, which are now also served in taverns. For a large family meal, *souvla* consisting of large chunks of lamb, flavoured with fresh herbs, threaded onto a spit, and grilled over charcoal, is very popular, especially at weekends or for a picnic. If there is a traditional sealed oven in the garden, then *ofto kleftiko*, baked meat, is the order of the day. As for sweetmeats, Cypriot housewives display a real flair in the making of puddings with pastry, or rice puddings. Many of them still prepare a variety of annual fruits preserved in syrup (*glyka*). Sweets with milk, like *mahalepi*, a creamy pudding floating in rosewater syrup, is much loved, especially by Turkish Cypriots. Dinner parties with Cypriot families are a delightful experience – local specialties can easily co-exist on a buffet with an Indian curried dish, Italian pasta, and Chinese sweet and sour. Cypriot cuisine is flexible and selective; it welcomes innovations and has the ability to assimilate them. Older housewives do not hesitate to try new recipes presented on TV programmes. It is interesting to see a Paphian lady in her nineties instructing a girl from Sri Lanka on how to cook Cypriot food; she then watches how the girl cooks her own spicy

meal. It takes time until the two cultures meet to form a couple of dishes acceptable to both.

In June 2010, the Pope visited Cyprus. The meal offered by the Archbishopric of Nicosia included salmon and beans, the first a luxury foreign food, the latter a traditional Cypriot legume. On the other hand, the menu on the Cyprus Airways flight back to Rome, was Italian, which comprised aubergines with mozzarella and parmesan cheese in tomato sauce, then pasta, followed by beefsteak in a wine sauce, accompanied by mash potatoes and grilled vegetables. The dessert was a juicy chocolate cake. The Pope described his meal as perfect!

In conclusion, Cyprus nowadays presents an immense amount of eating choices, depending on what one can afford. Cypriot cuisine is part of the Mediterranean diet combined with oriental flavours; in principle, it offers a healthy diet based on olive oil, cereals, wine, pulses, vegetables and fruit. Successive conquerors, both from East and West, made their contribution to the local food, which, with the passage of time, became a rich, sophisticated traditional cuisine. Recently, as a counterbalance to the threat of globalisation, there developed a strong tendency to preserve and promote traditional food with all its regional variations and communal differentiations, as an essential aspect of cultural identity.

The study of eating habits in Cyprus, from Antiquity to the present, is the main target of a new two-year programme (2009-2011) of the University of Cyprus, funded by the Research Promotion Foundation, Cyprus, and European structural funds. Within the framework of this project, which is called 'Cyprus Food Virtual Museum', a database will be created, which will be accessible to the wider public through a virtual museum.

Cultural and Symbolic Aspects of Everyday Meals in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in Norway

Eldbjørg Fossgard

In this presentation I would like to explore ideas surrounding everyday meals in Norway in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In order to do this it is necessary to examine closely how everyday meals were described and practised by the middle classes and farming communities from the beginning of the nineteenth century until the 1930s. I shall thus pose the following questions: which ideas about everyday meals were thematised by Norwegian society during this period? What kind of table behaviour was expected of the men, women and children of the various social groups in society at that time? Did changes in the ways in which the family institution itself, children's upbringing, and middle-class prescriptions of hygiene, were perceived, lead to new ideas about the form of everyday meals?

In view of the above questions it is evident that it is the social dimensions of the meal that are being emphasised here, rather than the food itself. The anthropologist Mary Douglas was one of the first scholars to stress the importance of the meal as a social action and as a structured event, one which takes place within a certain period of time, is clearly delimited, and has a beginning and an end.¹ In the Nordic context, Ingrid Nordström, in particular, has made important contributions to the study of meals. She has emphasised that the sharing of a meal involves 'participating in table manners, that is, using props together and acquiring common rules'.²

The Everyday Meal of the Middle Classes in Norway in the Nineteenth Century

According to the Dane, Hans Boll Johansen, middle-class culture developed its eating rituals at an early period. He states that the very act of being together at table played an important social role, and special rituals arose when those gathered there considered themselves to be a family.³ The French

¹ Douglas, M., Nicod, M., 'Taking the Biscuit: The Structure of British Meals', *New Society* 30 (19 Dec. 1974): 744-7.

² Nordström, I., *Till Bords. Vardagsmoral och festpresitge i det sydsvenska bondesamhället* ('At Table. Everyday Morality and Festive Prestige in Southern Swedish Peasant Society'), Stockholm 1988, 86.

historian, Phillipe Ariès, postulated that a dramatic strengthening of social life took place within the aristocracy of Central Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with a corresponding weakening of social structures outside of this class. Class divisions became more obvious as the rich and well-off sections of society increasingly isolated themselves from society at large, and their children were separated from the day-to-day adult world of the family. More separate attention was now being given to children, and spiritual and religious dimensions to their upbringing were considered to be as important as their physical development.⁴ With regard to Norwegian society, however, the historian Ståle Dyrvik believes that this shift towards focusing on the upbringing and development of children took place much later in Norway than elsewhere. It would appear that the idea that children should be 'invisible' was maintained for a much longer period by the middle classes and other social layers in Norway than in equivalent sections of society in some other countries.⁵

In the nineteenth century, however, a cultural change occurred in middle-class culture in Norway, with families being increasingly regarded as consisting of both parents and children. 'Familism' was coined as a term to describe this situation, and the children's upbringing became important. It was thus not just fellowship through labour which would bind individuals together, but rather the care and feelings existing between parents and their children.

The protection of children from work, force and distress became important, as did shielding them from the adult world. In some sections of middle-class Norwegian society, therefore, the organisation of 'childfree meals' became common: the children were supposed to eat in the kitchen or nursery with the nanny. Adults took their meals in the dining room. This middle-class ideal also prescribed that the lady of the house should refrain from all forms of cooking, leaving such tasks to the servants or to the older daughters in the family.⁶

In a description of everyday life in Bergen in the 1850s and 1860s, Peter Jessen recounts the following scene from the lives of the petty bourgeoisie:

³ Johansen, H.B., *Vid bordet. Madkultur i nord og syd* ('At the Dining Table. Food Culture North and South'), København 2003, 83.

⁴ Ariès, Phillipe, *Barndommens historie*, Oslo 1980. Translation of *L'enfant et la civilisation familiale sous l'ancien régime*, Paris 1963.

⁵ Dyrvik, S., 'Introduksjon', ('Introduction') *Barndommens historie*, Oslo 1980, 13-14.

⁶ Fossgard, E., 'Måltid og måltidsrammer' ('The Social Context of Meals'), in Holthe, A., Wilhelmsen, B., *Mat og helse i skolen. En fagdidaktisk innføring* ('Food and Health in School. A Didactic Introduction'), Bergen 2009, 190.



Fig. 1: Organising 'childfree meals' became common among the middle classes in the nineteenth century (Anette Anker 1882).

When the children left school at noon, father left the Stock Exchange, and by 12.30 the whole family had gathered round the dining table for the first shared meal of the day, 'lunch'.⁷

The parents sat at the top and foot of the table, and the children were perched along the sides.

Concerning the setting of the table, he recounts:

On the table there was either a white cloth or a white oilcloth, on which stood the cruet of vinegar, pepper and salt. For each of the adults there was a folded napkin, and for each of the children a bib. The spoon was usually of silver, the knife of steel with a black handle, and likewise the three-pronged fork of steel with a black handle.⁸

⁷ Jessen, P., *Bergens Hverdagsliv i Femti- og sexti-aarene* ('Daily Life in Bergen in 1850-1860'), Bergen 1910, 52.

⁸ *Idem.* 52.



Fig. 2: By 1890-1900 a reaction had set in concerning the exclusion of children from having meals with their parents (Le repas de bébé. Lumière, 1895. Norwegian Film Institute).

In the nineteenth century, a new ideology emerged among the middle classes, one emphasising the importance of children's upbringing. Children were regarded as being essentially different from adults. The eating rituals and fellowship of the parents at table, in the absence of the children, was also thought to play an important role in establishing wedded bliss in the family. Women were allocated the role of 'staging' family life both in everyday contexts and for special occasions, but they should avoid housework and the preparation of food.

When families could no longer afford to employ servants – something which did not occur until well into the twentieth century – middle-class women had to take charge of food preparation, while 'concealing' this activity, as best they could, from society at large.⁹

As far as the content of meals was concerned, daily food preparation by the middle classes and the families of government officials, was rather simple. Moderation formed a fundamental part of middle-class upbringing. By and large, the economic resources of middle-class families were also rather modest. This is exemplified by a description of a daily meal at merchant

⁹ Frykman, J., Löfgren, O., *Det kultiverede mennesket* ('The Cultured Human'), oversatt av Kari Bolstad, Oslo 1994, 84; available at: <http://ask.bibsys.no/ask/action/show?pid=942217470&kid=biblio>; accessed 28.2. 2011.

Krohn's residence in Bergen in the first half of the nineteenth century. In the portrayal of the event, both the food and the table accoutrements were mentioned: 'they were sitting one evening in the dining room ... The cornmeal porridge had been eaten, the girls had gone to bed'.¹⁰ Here we can see that the family had their own dining room, ate together, and had simple food.

Gradually, a reaction set in to children being excluded from family meals, on the basis that when they were left in charge of the servants, they encountered a culture different from what their parents would like to impart to them. It was also asserted that the exclusion of children from family meals would lead to the loss of something essential – good childhood memories. An article from 1901 expressed this sentiment as follows:

Perhaps nothing is of such importance to the cosiness of the home as meals. In happy, well-run homes, they are a place of refreshment and a point of rest.¹¹

Here we can discern the notion that mealtimes represent a safe and pleasant framework for the family, both in terms of social fellowship and rest. Arguments, silence, or hurtful comments, should be avoided at such times. Children should be allowed to eat with adults as often as was deemed appropriate, as they could then be taught elementary table manners, such as taking 'small mouthfuls', chewing food, and not showing any 'interest in which dish might arrive at table'.¹²

Everyday Meals in the Farming Community

It took a long time for middle-class ideas about family life and the shielding of children from strife and harm, to reach the rest of the population, because, until the end of the nineteenth century, it was the household, farm, and the cluster of habitations in their vicinity, which constituted the most important elements and contexts of the social milieu of the village.¹³

In farming communities, meals helped to shape the workday. They offered people a chance to rest, and to take a break from labour, and they played an important role in the duration of each work shift.

¹⁰ Ring, B., *Norske hjem i 1814* ('Norwegian Homes in 1814'), Urd 1914, 20.

¹¹ 'Den daglige Omgangstone' ('Daily Manners'), Urd 1901, 33.

¹² See Stormark, Hege, 'Norsk Barnemuseum' ('Norwegian Children's Museum') 2005, available at: [http://www.norskbarne.museum.no/barn100utstillingside\[1\].pdf](http://www.norskbarne.museum.no/barn100utstillingside[1].pdf); accessed 28.2. 2011.

¹³ Frykman and Löfgren, *op. cit.*, 1994, 92.

At table, each member of the household had his or her set place. In its make-up, farming society was patriarchal, and the farmer took pride of place at the head of the table, with his back to the wall – from which position he could survey the whole room. The farmhands, servants and working sons had their place along the side of the table and sat on the bench adjacent to the wall. The farmer's wife, daughters, and other women of the household, had their places along the other side, and sat on the bench on the room side of the table. In the first half of the nineteenth century, it was usual for small children to stand at table to get their food. There were practical reasons for this, as there were usually not enough chairs or benches for all those at table. When standing, it was also easier for them to reach up to the table to get their food. The right to sit at table was granted to children only after they had reached a certain age.¹⁴ However, it would appear that, by the beginning of the twentieth century, children no longer stood at table at mealtimes. The allocation of places at table clearly reflected the hierarchical situation operating in the family and household. The farmer, foreman, and the farmhand (those doing hard physical work) were given the best food and largest portions. The women had to ensure that the food was ready when the men came in from their labours in the fields.¹⁵

Although the women were clearly expected to serve the men of the household, they were also in charge of orchestrating the daily meals. The farmer's wife was mistress of the food and was also the cook. This was especially the case when meat and fish were served as it was she who doled out the food, apportioning meat, fish, and flatbread, to each according to the established rules of food entitlement.¹⁶

The serving of the food took place following fixed patterns. The usual method was to place food, such as porridge, in a bowl on the table, with everyone using a spoon to serve himself or herself from the same bowl. This was most often the case when the household was not very large. But a British traveller, who visited a farm in Trøndelag in the first half of the nineteenth century, says that he saw thirty people share food from three porridge bowls placed on the table. They dipped their spoons in the barley porridge, filled them half-full, and then dipped them in milk before consuming the contents.

The nineteenth-century pioneering Norwegian sociologist, Eilert Sundt (1817-1875), describes his experiences of mealtimes in the Østerdalen and Setesdal regions of the country. He stated that the farmer's wife licked the spoon, dried it, and then, in a hospitable fashion, offered it to him as a guest.

¹⁴ Nordström, *op. cit.*, 1988, 111.

¹⁵ Fossgard, *op. cit.*, 2009, 186.

¹⁶ *Idem.*



Fig. 3: Porridge or soup was put in its own bowl on the table. Then each person served himself, using his own spoon, from the same bowl. Drawing by C.A. Diriks (1814-1895). (Repro: Hedmarksmuseet, Norway).



Fig. 4: Norway 1925. From around 1900, it became more and more common to place a plate or a bowl for each person on the table, even on non-special occasions.

Sundt almost excuses this lack of hygiene as he observed that, in his opinion, the farmers were no worse in this regard than the more 'cultivated' middle classes, who would often dry the mouthpiece of a tobacco pipe and then offer it to guests. He thus demonstrates that, in Norway, unhygienic habits were rather equally dispersed across the different social layers at that times.¹⁷

Others, such as the Norwegian folklorist, writer, and naturalist, Peter Chr. Asbjørnsen (1812-1885), claimed that bad cooking and poor hygiene were most typical among the farming community and the lower classes of the population. Asbjørnsen tried to do something about this by passing on new knowledge about protein, lard, and carbohydrates to people, and by teaching them better forms of cooking.¹⁸

It was only with the establishment of the first schools for housewives, and the teaching of home economics, at the end of the nineteenth century, that efforts were made to discourage people from eating from the one bowl. Around 1900, the use of individual ceramic bowls for soup and porridge became the norm.

When eating other kinds of food, however, such as potatoes, fish and meat, the pieces of food were placed directly onto flatbread, using one's fingers. A knife was most often used to cut the meat, and there was no fork. But, after forks became *de rigueur* and began to be used extensively around 1920, eating with the fingers or putting the knife in the mouth, soon came to be regarded as bad manners.

Around 1900, the use of wooden 'platters' when eating herring and meat had become more or less usual; later on, ceramic plates were used. It then became more and more common to lay a plate, for each person, on the table, even on non-special occasions. It also became usual for the adults to serve themselves from the food bowl, but the children were still given their portions. When the children grew big enough to serve themselves from the bowl in the middle of the table, they could take part in the meal on the same basis as adults. Norwegian sources show that the aim was to get the children to eat unaided as quickly as possible.¹⁹

Table manners changed when the use of cutlery and glasses became usual on an individual basis, producing new rules and taboos and shaping new routines. The new table manners required less body movement: according to Ingrid Nordström, the ideal table behaviour was that one should not lean

¹⁷ Sundt, E., *Om renligheds-Stellet i Norge* ('On the Position of Cleanliness in Norway'), 1869, available at: http://www.rhd.uit.no/sundt/bind9/eilert_sundt_bind9.html; accessed 30.7. 2010.

¹⁸ Meltzer, H., Nordhagen, R., *Norsk matkultur i et helseperspektiv* ('Norwegian Food Culture in a Health Perspective'), Bergen 2007, 75.

¹⁹ Fossgard, *op. cit.*, 2009, 187.

over the table to the porridge bowl, but sit as still as possible.²⁰ But this habit did not gain ground equally quickly in all social milieus, as table manners were practised in a strictly-disciplined fashion in some households, and rather more freely in others.

Socialisation

The meal undoubtedly had an important socialising function. It was at table that a great deal of cultural socialisation took place. By observing the adults, the young people could learn about the roles they themselves would be called upon to perform as adults. The meal provided a setting in which different forms of adult behaviour could be imitated, and knowledge, skills, and norms acquired, though this was never explicitly expressed.

The sons of the family could learn about manly pursuits and manly behaviour, as there was talk of work and the daily chores around the table, and it was here that the different male generations of the family could meet. The boys could observe what belonged to 'the manly repertoire', and they were socialised into the male collective to which, as adult sons, they would belong. According to Nordström, the socialisation of girls at table was less clear than that of boys, as their role was to acquire the female skills of cooking and the setting of the table.

Children were not supposed to engage in the conversations that took place at table, but, instead, they were expected to observe and listen. In a study of children's upbringing, carried out in western Swedish villages in the second half of the nineteenth century, the historian, Helene Brembeck, found that this pattern was confirmed. The ideal in that part of Sweden was that children should be silent, and it was during mealtimes especially, that respect for their elders was imparted to them.²¹ At meals, it was thus clearly shown that children were inferior to the adults present, but that 'becoming more grown-up' was an aim for which to strive. Making the children strong and industrious as early as possible was also considered an important family aim.

But mealtimes did not only offer the possibility of raising children imbued with respect for adults; in some families, they were also seen as opportunities for the development of a sense of godliness in children. Material from *Norsk Etnologisk Gransking* (Norwegian Ethnological Research) on the use of the Scriptures or the saying of grace at table, shows, however, that religious

²⁰ Nordström, *op. cit.*, 1988, 95.

²¹ Brembeck, H., *Tyst - lydig - arbetsam. Om barnuppföstran på den västsvenska landsbygden* ('Parenting in Western Swedish Peasant Society'), Gothenburg 1986, 18.



Fig. 5: A great deal of cultural learning took place at table (1915) (Repro: Hedmarksmuseet, Norway).

practice in Norway varied from household to household, and from village to village.

The ethnologist, Ragnar Pedersen, has pointed out that in the farming community in Norway, 'supraindividual norms' applied 'which the individual had to learn to live by'.²² However, other aspects were under-communicated in family life, such as the parents' love for, or closeness to, their children.

Conclusion

As in farming communities, it was usual for the daughters of the middle classes to serve at table and, in addition, to have certain food-preparation duties which they had to carry out. Nevertheless, there are clear differences to be observed between these groups – middle-class women were supposed to leave the preparation of meals to the servants, while in farming communities the farmer's wife was also the cook.

To summarise, it may be said that for the children of farming communities – late into the twentieth century – meals were primarily an arena of

²² Pedersen, R., 'Etnologiske perspektiv på sosialiseringprosessen', ('Socialization Process from an Ethnological Perspective'), *Dugnad* 14, nos. 2/3 (1988): 71.

socialisation, preparing them for adult life and the world of work, while for the adults, meals provided breaks from physical labour. They were an arena, but only to a limited extent, for learning correct forms of social behaviour. Although we have seen that everyday meals in farming communities required children to eat their food and to sit still, it would seem that, for the middle classes at least, meals were regarded as an arena for bringing up children so that they would adopt the manners they would need in later life. Nevertheless, Ragnar Pedersen believes that a conscious effort to prepare children for the adult world was being made in farming communities also at the end of the nineteenth century.²³

Which ideas about everyday meals and everyday life were thus thematised by society in nineteenth-century Norway? The ideas seem to have been concerned with the teaching of good manners, unity, and fellowship in the nuclear family, and also with the improvement of hygiene norms, diet and nutrition. The middle-class ideas of the importance of good table manners were gradually disseminated to other social groups.

²³ *Idem.*

Is a 'True' Meal Still a Social Act? Meal Habits Among French and German Young Adults

Giada Danesi¹

The concept of commensality, that is the sharing of food with others, refers to a social phenomenon, which prescribes with whom we should eat, and which social rules are associated with expected behaviour while eating together. A 'proper' or 'true' meal is usually eaten together with others.

Commensality is a central concept for an understanding of changing meal patterns. In recent decades, the practice of grazing is said to have replaced meals to a large extent. Societal changes, increased choice, and anomy, seem to have favoured the individualisation of eating practices, as well as solo eating. However, some recent surveys have emphasised that this phenomenon is not equal in extent in all socio-demographic groups and countries.

This paper is based on an ethnographic study aimed at examining the social dimension of eating among French and German young adults. It describes and explains similarities in forms of commensality observable among young adults, and cultural differences noticed in the course of fieldwork carried out in France and Germany.

Commensality and Changing Meal Patterns

Mary Douglas and Michael Nicod (1974) defined a meal as food eaten as part of a structured event, which is a social occasion organised by rules concerning time, place and sequence of action.² Meal arrangements vary along temporal, spatial, and activity lines.³ The combination of these three arrangements provides the social setting within which mealtime interactions occur.⁴

¹ Centre Edgar Morin/IIAC/EHESS (Paris) & Research Centre of the Institut Paul Bocuse (Lyon). Contact: Centre de Recherche de l'Institut Paul Bocuse, Château du Vivier BP 25, 69131 Ecully (France); giada.danesi@institutpaulbocuse.com.

² Douglas, M., Nicod, M., 'Taking the Biscuit: The Structure of British Meals', *New Society* 30 (1974), 744-7.

³ Ochs, E., Smith, R., Taylor, C., 'Detecting Stories at Dinnertime: Problem Solving through Co-narration', *Cultural Dynamics* 2 (1989): 238-57, cited by Sobal, J., 'Sociability and Meals: Facilitation, Commensality and Interaction', in Meiselman, H.E., (ed.), *Dimensions of the Meal. The Science, Culture, Business and Art of Eating*, Gaithersburg 2000, 126.

⁴ Feiring, C., Lewis, M., 'The Ecology of Some Middle Class Families at Dinner', *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 10, no. 3 (1987): 377-90, cited by Sobal, *op. cit.*, 2000, 126.

A meal could be also defined as a ritual, which is a regulated, codified and repeated act, arising from social interactions, involving an emotional charge, and which permits social cohesion. Food and eating habits are markers of social relations.⁵ Meals are one of the main focal points within a culture and within a family, and mealtimes serve as a major point for the socialisation of children and young people into the culture in question.⁶

As several anthropological works have already shown, the functions of the meal and commensality are the establishment, definition, and the maintenance of social relations.⁷ The sharing of food signifies equivalence among insiders and simultaneously defines a social boundary with outsiders.⁸

The element of sociability seems to truly define a meal. A recent study conducted by Jeffrey Sobal noticed that a 'proper' or 'ideal' meal is one that is typically eaten with others.⁹ Thus, even though eating is an individual activity, the meal is a social practice governed by social and cultural norms. The sociability of eating is related to the refinement of social forms of interactions, and people gather in order to eat meals.¹⁰

Changes in social organisation which have occurred over the last forty years in developed and emergent countries – such as an increase in urbanisation, in people living alone, in mononuclear families, and in working women – have redefined the relationship between human beings and food, and the associated social rules.¹¹ In 1974, Douglas and Nicod clarified the difference between meal and snack, which could be symptomatic of a statement of changes in the way of taking food.¹² Claude Fischler, in an article entitled *Gastro-nomie et Gastro-anomie*, used two concepts to describe

⁵ De Garine, I., 'Food, Tradition and Prestige', in Walcher, D.N., Kretchmer, N., Barnett, H.L., (eds.), *Food, Man and Society*, New York/London 1976, 150-73.

⁶ See, for example: McIntosh, W.A., 'The Family Meal and its Significance in Global Times', in Grew, R., (ed.), *Food in Global History*, Boulder 1999, 217-39; Ochs, E. and Shohet, M., 'The Cultural Structuring of Mealtime Socialization', *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 111.

⁷ See, for example: Robertson-Smith, W., *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*, New York 1889; Durkheim, E., *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, Paris 1912; Richards, A., *Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe: A Functional Study of Nutrition among the Southern Bantu*, London 1932.

⁸ Mennell, S., Murcott, A., Van Otterloo, A., *The Sociology of Eating: Food, Diet and Culture*, London 1992.

⁹ Sobal, *op. cit.*, 2000, 119.

¹⁰ Simmel, G., 'Sociology of the Meal', in Frisby, D., Featherstone, M., (eds.), *Simmel on Culture*, London 1997. First published 1910.

¹¹ Meiselman, H., (ed.), *Meals in Science and Practice. International Research and Business Application*, Gaithersburg 2009.

¹² Douglas and Nicod, *op. cit.*, 1974.

contemporary eating patterns: commensalism and vagabond feeding. He associated vagabond feeding with the contemporary practice of grazing.¹³

Recent changes in meal habits include a statement about the individualisation of eating patterns, linked to the phenomenon of 'destruction' of the meal and the practice of 'snacking' or grazing. On the one hand, physiological rhythms and work schedules seem to have replaced social norms regulating food intakes, thus preventing the possibility of sharing meals. On the other hand, the existence of a wide choice of foodstuffs as well as convenient food, implies more flexibility and freedom for people to choose food following their own tastes and preferences, and this also facilitates the practice of not sharing a common meal content.¹⁴ Moreover, even if people eat at the same time and in the same place, they do not always interact socially, because they are watching television during the mealtime, or doing other activities, such as surfing the Internet, or working, for example, while eating.¹⁵

These changes clearly have a strong impact on everyday meal patterns, and particularly on the social context of eating events. Thus, several researches are trying to answer the following questions: are people still eating together or not? Why? How? What consequences do the practices of eating alone or eating together have on food consumption and health?

Very little research has been carried out to date on forms of commensality in everyday life, and in lower and middle social classes.¹⁶ Moreover, because of a shortage of data, it is not possible to generalise about individualisation and the 'destruction' of meals. Difficulties also exist with regard to noticing changes on the basis of declarative data, because informants tend to adapt their discourses to diffused norms rather than to their own actual practices.

Recent studies investigating the concept of commensality observed the existence of social and cultural differences in this context. The increase in solo

¹³ Fischler, C., 'Gastro-nomie et Gastro-anomie', *Communications* 31 (1979): 189-210.

¹⁴ For further information about the debate concerning meal 'destruction' and individualisation of meal patterns, see: Fischler, *op. cit.*, 1979; Herpin, N., 'Comportements alimentaires et contraintes sur les emplois du temps', *Revue française de sociologie* 21 (1980): 599-628; Poulain, J.-P., 'The Contemporary Diet in France: 'De-structuration' or from Commensalism to 'Vagabond Feeding', *Appetite* 39 (2002): 43-55; Mestdag, I., 'Disappearance of the Traditional Meal: Temporal, Social and Spatial Destructuration' *Appetite* 45 (2005): 62-74.

¹⁵ See, for example: McIntosh, W.A., 'The American Family Meal', in Meiselman, H., (ed.), *Meals in Science and Practice. International Research and Business Application*, Gaithersburg 2009, 190-218.

¹⁶ Grignon, C., 'Commensality and Social Morphology: An Essay of Typology', in Scholliers, P., (ed.), *Food, Drink and Identity: Cooking, Eating and Drinking in Europe since the Middle Ages*, Oxford/New York 2001, 23-33.

eating, for example, is not observable among all social groups.¹⁷ International comparison brought to light the existence of differences with regard to temporal synchronisation and the duration of meals, from one country to another, something that was basically related to a diverse conception of food, and its role in their daily life.¹⁸ The absence of commensality seems to be more pronounced in northern European countries and in the United States, than in southern Europe – a region in which people seem to afford more importance to the act of eating together than is the case elsewhere, and where mealtimes are still a social institution.¹⁹

This research, which includes the possibility of a decrease of normative pressure concerning meals, and an increase in food intakes, because of recent changes in the social organisation of society, does not exclude the emergence of new forms of meal sharing and table rituals. The purpose of this study is to analyse whether the logic of change conforms to a progressive increase of individualisation of food practices, or whether the appearance of new forms of commensality, matching young adults' lifestyles and cultural conceptions of eating and local custom, can be observed. In order to respond to this question, it was decided to study forms of commensality among French and German young adults. Thus, the focus of our attention was on collective consumption in a specific age group, in two countries – France and Germany.

Research Design: Population and Methods

The population selected for this study was composed of young adults (18-27 age group) with different socio-demographic backgrounds and living in big cities. We chose this age group because of the independence and autonomy

¹⁷ See for France and United Kingdom: De Saint Pol, T., 'Le dîner des Français: étude séquentielle d'un emploi du temps', *Rapport du CREDOC* 19 (2005): 1-46; Réours, F., Hébel, P., Gagnier, C., 'Exercice d'anticipation des comportements alimentaires des Français. Modèle Âge-Période-Cohorte', *Cahier de recherche CREDOC*, 222 (2005): 1-129; Hébel, P., (ed.), *Comportements et consommations alimentaires en France*, Paris 2007; Warde, A., Cheng, S.L., Olsen, W., Southerton, D., 'Changes in the Practice of Eating: A Comparative Analysis of Time-use', *Acta Sociologica* 50 (2007): 363-85.

¹⁸ De Saint Pol, T., 'Le dîner des Français: un synchronisme alimentaire qui se maintient', *Economie et Statistique* 400 (2006): 45-69; Warde, A., Cheng, S.L., Olsen, W., Southerton, D., *op. cit.*, 2007.

¹⁹ Rozin, P., Fischler, C., Imada, S., Sarubin, A., Wrzesniewski, A., 'Attitudes to Food and the Role of Food in Life in the U.S.A., Japan, Flemish Belgium and France: Possible Implications for the Diet-Health Debate', *Appetite* 33 (1999): 163-80; Fischler, C., Masson, E., (eds.), *Manger: Français, Européens et Américains face à l'alimentation*, Paris 2008.

it displayed in favour of specific forms of consumption.²⁰ Recent surveys report that the younger generations have more irregular food intakes, as well as nomad behaviours (e.g. eating while walking), street-food consumption, and a variety of contexts for eating, as distinct from other age groups.²¹ Moreover, it was possible for us to focus only on forms of commensality in a specific age group because of their large social network composed of peers.²²

It was decided to study French and German young adults. This choice was partly based on the results of a survey conducted by Fischler and Masson, who compared the significations of eating in six countries.²³ This survey drew attention to two different kinds of relationship with food: (1) an individualistic and nutritional conception of food, centred on the possibilities afforded by the choice of food, with individual responsibility being more general in the United States and in northern European countries than in southern Europe, and (2) a commensal conception of food where the notions of sharing, and shared pleasure, are central and characteristic, for example, in France, and in the French-speaking regions of Switzerland and Italy. It was thus decided to compare meal habits of young adults in France and Germany because different food practices and representations could be supposed to exist between them.

Data were collected, using ethnographic methods, between October 2009 and June 2010, in France (Lyon and Paris) and in Germany (Berlin). Forty-four in-depth interviews were conducted with twenty-five French young adults (twenty-two living in France and three living in Berlin), and with nineteen German young adults, all living in Berlin. I have also engaged in participant observation in various eating settings, such as in homes, universities, fast-food restaurants, street-food situations, restaurants and public spaces.

²⁰ Several studies have shown that leaving the family home, living with a partner, or getting married, represent transitional steps in life. See, for example, in this context: Kemmer, D., Anderson, A.S., Marshall, D.W., 'Living Together and Eating Together: Changes in Food Choice and Eating Habits during the Transition from Single to Married/Cohabiting', *The Sociological Review* 46, no. 1 (1998): 48-72; Beasley, L.J., Hackett, A.F., Maxwell, S.M., 'The Dietary and Health Behaviour of Young People aged 18-25 Years Living Independently or in the Family Home in Liverpool, UK', *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 28, no. 4 (2004): 355-63.

²¹ Bartsch, S., *Jugendesskultur: Bedeutungen des Essens für Jugendliche im Kontext Familie und Peergroup*, PhD thesis, Pädagogische Hochschule-Heidelberg 2005; Diasio, N., Hubert, A., Pardo, V., *Alimentations Adolescentes en France*, Cahiers de l'OCHA, Paris 2009.

²² Torres, C., McIntosh, W., Kubena, K. S., 'Social Network and Social Background Characteristics of the Elderly who Live and Eat Alone', *Journal of Aging and Health* 4 (1992): 564-78.

²³ Fischler and Masson, *op. cit.*, 2008.

Results and Discussion

The variability and flexibility of social contexts among young adults

The collected data show that where and when young adults eat varies enormously. Young adults might have three mains meals a day (breakfast, lunch and dinner) in conventional meal hours reflecting cultural patterns. These habits seem to be more diffused when young adults have a regular working activity. Nonetheless, they might also skip some meals in order to work or to do other activities (e.g. sleep more instead of having breakfast, or going to a concert or cinema instead of having dinner). Their daily schedule might vary a lot, especially for university students and part-time working students. Moreover, they might eat snacks as a substitute for skipped meals during the day, or they might introduce other meals to suit their rhythms. For example, during the weekend, it is possible that they might wake up late with the result that all eating times for the rest of the day are deferred, or they stay up later and have an additional meal in the middle of the night before going home to sleep. Additionally, unpredictable mealtimes are also evident due to seasonal changes (especially for students) and celebrations, which could be many in number and could arise for various reasons – such as when moving flat, at the end of the school term, and so on.

There is a considerable amount of flexibility evident with regard to places in which they eat. For example, they might have breakfast at home, on their way from home to school or work, at school, in work, in cafeterias, or in bars, and so on. It seems that lunchtime is observed more regularly by working people and by students who spend the whole day at school. Young adults have dinner in a greater variety of places than people living with their family – for the latter dinner is generally eaten at home with other members of the household during the working day. Young adults, to a greater extent than other age groups, appear to eat more often at friends' houses, but they also eat out regularly. It was noticeable that they tend to eat in various rooms in the house.

The people with whom young adults share food events are multiple, and, depending on context, it could be their flatmates, or their family if they live nearby. The commensal units²⁴ of young adults could be their own family, their partner's family, colleagues, intimate friends, and so on. In this study, I am focusing only on eating events of young adults with their peers. I have thus paid particular attention to their eating events in the context of friends,

²⁴ 'Commensal units are groups of people assembled at a particular time and specific place to consume meals, snacks, or beverages.' Citation from Sobal, J., Nelson, M.K., 'Commensal Eating Patterns: A Community Study, *Appetite* 41 (2003): 181.

flatmates and partners, and also in the context of colleagues in situations in which students or young people work together.

There are several eating events – especially evening dinner or meals during the weekend – which young adults share with friends. Meals shared with flatmates depend on the relationship between people living together, the arrangements made at the beginning of the flat-sharing arrangement (about sharing food and costs), and their timetable. People living as couples share several meals with their partner. As regards the sharing of meals with colleagues, there are differences in this connection between students and working people. Students tend to eat more often with colleagues, who could also often be their friends. For working young adults, the situations are very different depending on the kind of relationship they have with colleagues, the presence of other young people in the workplace, and proximity to their friends' workplace, home, or to commercial eating-places.

The unpredictability of social contexts observed in the eating events of young adults seems to suit their lifestyles. Young adults' lifestyles are characterised by an absence of consolidated routines and rigid time-schedules, the desire to engage in numerous leisure activities, and the existence of several groups of people with whom they can potentially eat.

Sociable eating events: structure of the meal and social interactions

By observing the eating events of young adults and by means of interviews with them about their eating habits, I identified sociable meals that are widespread among urban populations. These meals are: *apéritifs dînatoires*,²⁵ brunches, picnics, and barbecues. They are organised as matters of everyday life, but they are also arranged for special occasions, such as birthdays, for example. *Aperitifs dînatoires* take place at home at dinnertime. Brunches are mostly organised during the weekend around lunchtime at home, but also in bars or in parks. Picnics take place in public spaces, generally in a park or close to a river. In literature and iconography, picnics take place mostly in the afternoon and are related to lunch. In this study, I observed that young adults in France had several picnics in the late afternoon or in the evening as an *aperitif dînatoire*. In Berlin, barbecues are mostly organised in parks, because this is permitted.

In this kind of meal, food is rarely the motive for the meeting. It is mainly a pretext for bringing people together, thus performing the role of 'social lubricant'. The food could be really simple and even convenience food is allowed – people could just go to the supermarket and buy some bread, cheese and sausages for the picnic and the *apéritif dînatoire*. But special

²⁵ Literally 'dining aperitif'.

preparations, in which time and effort are invested in order to make the event special, could also be made for them.

These meals have several elements in common: they include flexible hours (no special mealtime at table), informal table manners (fingers food, synchronic meal structure, little material equipment, and relaxed body positions), nomadic behaviour (the possibility to change place and meal partners, during the event), intimacy, and informal social interactions (common plates, the sharing of tasks and costs, carrying out several tasks during meals, and easy interaction with other people).

The synchronic structure of these kinds of meals involving several dishes facilitates the meeting of young adults with their friends in the context of food. The structure of these meals allows freedom and choice with regard to what, when, and how much, they eat. These kinds of eating events, which can be organised relatively spontaneously and easily, and which enable costs and tasks to be shared, allow young people to spend a long time together. As Julier noticed in her analysis of sociable meals at home in the United States,²⁶ even the most informal or spontaneous of shared meals are structured. These meals are social forms and, as with any social forms, there must be a balance between the individual's desires and the desire for sociable interactions. The responsibility for sociability is more diffused among participants in these kinds of meals. The commensal event shifts towards an informal structure thus creating opportunities for equality to emerge among the participants.

Firstly, the existence and diffusion of these kinds of meals indicate the importance of food in sociable meetings as an element leading to feelings of cohesion. Secondly, it seems that these are meals which are responsive to young adults' lifestyles, their living conditions (e.g. little material equipment and monetary income required), and shifts in social roles. Moreover, these kinds of meals respond to the social interactions and relationships which young adults desire to build and perform.

Differences in French and German commensality: food conception and eating practices

I observed several differences between French and German young adults concerning the importance of sharing meals and in how this was done.

German young adults emphasise that they eat when they are hungry and mealtimes do not seem to structure their day. Food is not always a matter of great importance to them in daily life. Most of my French informants stated

²⁶ Julier, A.P., *Feeding Friends and Others: Boundaries of Intimacy and Distance in Sociable Meals*, PhD thesis, University of Massachusetts-Amherst 2002, 21-2.

that they try to eat during the day at the times during which their friends, colleagues or flatmates eat, and thus daily meals are perceived as social activities.

French young adults who are represented in this study stated that they did not enjoy eating alone. When they have to eat alone, they state that this is a pleasure only because they can choose what to eat and have time for themselves. However, it seems that eating alone can be done only in specific places, generally at home. When this is not possible, they prefer to eat something quickly while doing something else. German young adults seem to have fewer problems about eating alone and they do it more often. When they do not have the same schedule as their possible commensal units, they prefer to eat when they are hungry rather than having to wait for other people to be hungry also, or for the meal-time established by social convention. Moreover, rules concerning mealtimes are not so uniform in Germany as in France. Most of the German young adults who were interviewed were not able to say what the usual times for lunch and dinner were. They stated that the school schedule was not always the same throughout their life. When they were children, some of them were at school until 2.00 p.m. and had a hot lunch when they arrived home, and they generally had *Abendbrot*²⁷ at 6.30 p.m. At the university, they could eat a warm lunch at the *Mensa* (university restaurant) around noon or 1.00 p.m. and have a cold dinner at home or in their flat. However, many of them said that they often have a quick cold lunch and a hot dinner later in the evening.

In daily life, German young adults seem to share fewer meals with friends, colleagues or flatmates than is customary for their French counterparts, and they do not think that eating is always a social matter. Nonetheless, they enjoy having occasional sociable meals and shared eating events. Comparing sociable meals in the two countries, I observed differences concerning the contexts and the prescribed protocols involved in each. For example, with regard to the temporal context, I observed that German young adults might invite people for a late breakfast (brunch) and they might also organise a birthday celebration around this meal. This practice is very unusual in France, where people generally eat with friends, usually at meals (lunch or dinner). The existence of this practice in Germany is probably related to the custom of having a sweet and salty breakfast, and the importance that breakfast has in daily life, which could also be an important moment in family life.²⁸

²⁷ Literally, 'bread of the evening'. This term defines a cold dinner in Germany, where sausages and cheese accompany bread, which have the main place.

²⁸ See for example: Audehm, K., *Erziehung bei Tisch. Zur sozialen Magie eines Familienrituals*, Bielefeld 2007; Leonhäuser I.-U., Meyer-Gräwe, U., Möser, A., Zander, U., Köhler, J., *Essalltag in Familien. Ernährungsversorgung zwischen privatem und öffentlichen Raum*, Wiesbaden 2009.

German young adults placed emphasis on the practice of cooking together when they invite people to eat, or when they cook with flatmates. For them, cooking together is a social activity and one of the objectives for sharing a meal. Not one of the French young adults interviewed mentioned this kind of activity. I noticed that, in practice, when a big event is being prepared, some people do help with the cooking. For French young adults, eating together is the main activity and the host generally takes care of the dinner.

In Germany, when young adults invite a person to join them in cooking dinner, they decide together what to cook. The costs are shared between the participants or everyone brings something to cook. In France, it is mostly the host who decides what to prepare and who pays for the dinner. The custom is that guests generally arrive with a bottle of wine or a dessert.

When eating at a restaurant in Germany everyone pays for himself. In France, the bill is generally divided in equal parts among the dining group. Moreover there is a difference in the way the sharing of food and costs are arranged in flat-shares in the two countries. In France, most of the people who were interviewed, and who lived in a flat-share, stated that food costs are shared with flatmates, and they do not have individual shelves for their own food. In Germany, flatmates often divide spaces for food, and they usually have just a few ingredients which are shared between all the flatmates. German young adults reported that they do not divide food costs and food space with flatmates, because they do not have the same time schedule or because they eat different things (have special diets, are vegetarians, and so on). So, it is difficult for them to find a suitable time arrangement or to have the same meal content. French people who do not share food with flatmates said that the main reason for this was that one of the flatmates wanted to spend less. So, this person decided to buy food only for himself in order to better control his own costs.

Eating together seems to have different meanings in France and Germany. In France, the act of eating together is related to sociability to a greater extent than in Germany. The host offers food by paying and preparing food for the guests and, ideally, the guests are free of obligations other than to interact with each other. Julier said that 'the unequal division of labor is expected to be made equal through reciprocity, but a reciprocity that takes place over time: that is, the guests are, at a later time or date, expected to switch roles and become hosts'.²⁹ In Germany, even for dinner invitations, there is very often a distribution of tasks, collaborative work, and the sharing of costs such as is the case when a brunch or a barbecue is organised. Thus meanings and

²⁹ Julier, *op. cit.*, 2002, 25.

practices seem to be related to the idea of creating a communal feeling, where everyone contributes to the preparation of the meal as a member of the community.

Conclusions and Perspectives

In this paper, I have discussed the meal as a social act in which an age-group lifestyle and particular cultural patterns are enacted. To Simmel, social forms involving food serve to create connections between different people. Participants' connectedness emerges from their shared experiences, thanks to their being together and interacting in a temporal and spatial context by eating food together. Nevertheless, young adults emphasise that eating is also about feeding the body, an aspect which those working in the social sciences sometimes tend to forget. Physiological rhythms, time pressure, productivity, and living conditions, sometimes prevent people from eating together and from participating in all of the social meanings linked to the sharing of food.

Meals vary according to the kind of rules marking the event as formal or informal. In the case of young adults, a preference for informal meal events, which are potentially egalitarian social forms, is evident. Pierre Bourdieu argues that the production of a food lifestyle is connected to social class.³⁰ However, social forms, such as commensal eating events, show that the production of a food lifestyle is also linked to age group and cultural belonging. In this study, it can be observed, on the one hand, that the synchronic structure of the meal is strongly connected to young adults' lifestyles, due to the variety of common characteristics observable in their sociable meals. During these meals, they perform a kind of sociability specific to their peer groups and they are socialised into specific ways of being together as young adults. On the other hand, it is also evident that the importance which the sharing of food has, in daily life, in formal dinner invitations, in cooking tasks, and in cost redistribution at restaurants or in flat-shares, reflects societal cultural patterns.

This study is part of a broader research project in progress, which requires further investigation. Cultural and other social differences, which became apparent during fieldwork must be more thoroughly analysed. Gender, as well as whether young adults are working or studying, and with whom they are living, seem to play an important role in commensal social forms among them. It is interesting to investigate these social and cultural differences as they could point to other crucial elements of commensality in this age group.

³⁰ Bourdieu, P., *La Distinction. Critique sociale du jugement*, France 1979.

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Meal Habits of Cypriot Schoolchildren: Associations with Socio-Economic Factors

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Introduction

Certain dietary practices, such as eating breakfast and having meals with family members, have been associated with a sound diet and the prevention of childhood obesity.¹ Available data, however, indicate that children nowadays do not adopt these behaviours which were common among their parent's generation. A study in Australia, for instance, showed that one third of children ate dinner together with other family members less than three times per week, while 15% of the parents did not consider family meals a pleasant occasion.² In view of these and other data, the Expert Committee on Pediatric Obesity of the American Paediatric Academy put forward the following five recommendations with regard to behaviour, aimed at the prevention of obesity in children: (1) take breakfast daily; (2) limit eating out at fast-food restaurants; (3) limit television and other screen time; (4) enjoy family meals, and (5) limit portion sizes.³

Cyprus is a Eurasian island country which, during the past four to five decades, has experienced socio-demographic changes and a shift to a flourishing market economy. These changes have been followed by major changes in lifestyle and health, and have given rise to an epidemiological transition to chronic disease. Obesity rates, in particular, in Cyprus, are among the highest in Europe. According to the International Obesity Task Force, one in two adults in Cyprus is overweight or obese, while one in four children is overweight.⁴ These figures place Cyprus in ninth position in

¹ Rodríguez, G., Moreno L.A., 'Is Dietary Intake Able to Explain Differences in Body Fatness in Children and Adolescents?', *Nutrition and Metabolism in Cardiovascular Disease* 16, no. 4 (2006): 294-301; Patrick, H., Nicklas, T.A., 'A Review of Family and Social Determinants of Children's Eating Patterns and Diet Quality', *Journal of the American College Nutrition* 24, no. 2 (2005): 83-92.

² Campel, K.J., Crawford, D.A., Salmon, J., Carver, A., Garnett, S., Baur, L., 'Associations Between Home Food Environment and Obesity-promoting Behaviors in Adolescence', *Obesity* 15, no. 3 (2007): 719-30.

³ Barlow, S.E., and the Expert Committee, 'Expert Committee Recommendations Regarding the Prevention, Assessment, and Treatment of Child and Adolescent Overweight and Obesity: Summary Report', *Pediatrics* 120 (2007): S164-S192.

⁴ Data are from the International Obesity Task Force (IOTF) database, London 2005.

Europe for obesity in children between the ages of seven and eleven years, and in third position for obesity in adolescents.

Obesity has a complex etiology, with genetic and environmental factors interacting to create and sustain an energy surplus in a person's nutrition. Claude Bouchard, who conducted the most significant of the studies on the genetics of obesity, using pairs of twins, has suggested that the etiology of obesity can be attributed to genes at a rate of 25% to 40%, leaving another 60% to 75% to environmental parameters. Thus, the current consensus with regard to the etiology of obesity is that about 30% of the predisposing factors lie in behaviours that are transmitted *culturally*. These factors include: a lack of appropriate exercise habits, a prevailing sedentary lifestyle, a lack of a sound education, unemployment, an adverse food culture – where people are prone to over-consumption and to eating without being hungry, for instance while watching T.V. –, and an adverse *built*-environment – where people are exposed to food advertising and live in residential areas, which enable easy and unlimited access to food to take place and, at the same time, provide few opportunities for physical activity.⁵

The objective of the study was to assess practices associated with meal habits in a representative segment of Cypriot schoolchildren and to evaluate associations between these practices and socio-economic parameters and anthropometric indices. The present work was part of the CYKIDS [CYPRUS KIDS] study, a national, cross-sectional study that was conducted among schoolchildren in Cyprus.⁶

Methods

Study Population

Data were derived from fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade schoolchildren. A total of 1589 children were identified for potential inclusion in the project; 1140 children agreed to participate, representing 3.7% of the reference population. In order to secure a representative sample of children, sampling was multistage and stratified by the number of students in each of the five provinces of Cyprus. Twenty-five primary schools in Cyprus, located in rural and urban regions, in all non-occupied districts of the Republic of Cyprus, participated in the study.

⁵ From the Obesity Society, 2010; available at: www.obesity.org/subs/childhood/causes.shtml; accessed 28.2. 2011.

⁶ A detailed description of the study and its methodology can be found in: Lazarou, C., Panagiotakos, D.B., Matalas, A.-L., 'Dietary and Other Lifestyle Characteristics of Cypriot Children: Results from the Nationwide CYKIDS Study', *BMC Public Health* 9 (2009): 147-55.

Anthropometry and Obesity Definition

Children's height and weight were reported by parents via a short socio-demographic questionnaire sent out from the participating schools. Obesity and overweight conditions were calculated using the criteria developed by the International Obesity Task Force (IOTF)⁷ which provides sex- and age-specific cut-off criteria for a Body Mass Index – an obesity index which is calculated on the basis of height and weight.

Socio-demographic Variables

Children provided information about themselves and their family by completing a simple questionnaire. To determine the type of residence environment, that is, urban versus rural, for each child, the location of the school was used as a proxy resident environment (using the definition of the statistical Office of the European Communities – Eurostat). A family's socio-economic status (SES) was estimated according to the definition of the University of Nicosia Research Center, which takes into consideration the parent's educational level and profession. These data were obtained from the child's parents, who also provided information on the family's income.

Assessment of Meal Habits

Information on meal habits was obtained via the administration of a nine-item questionnaire. Among others matters, the questionnaire requested information on the frequency of eating breakfast, of eating meals in fast-food and other restaurants, of having meals with family members, of eating foods because they are perceived as being healthy, as well as the number of meals and snacks eaten during the day, and whether the children had foods because they were advertised (see Table 1). Repeatability of the questionnaire was checked by re-administering the questionnaire to a 100 children (The Spearman ρ value⁸ was found to be very satisfactory, being equal to 0.821).

⁷ Cole, T.J., Bellizzi, M.C., Flegal, K.M., Dietz, W.H., 'Establishing a Standard Definition for Child Overweight and Obesity Worldwide: International Survey', *British Medical Journal* 320 (2000): 1240-3.

⁸ The Spearman ρ value expresses the extent to which the outcomes of the questionnaire can be repeated if administered anew. When the two outcomes are perfectly correlated, then ρ is equal to 1.0.

Table 1: Questions Included in the Meal Habits' Questionnaire and Response Categories (*wk=week; mo=month*).

	Response categories			
	Almost Daily	2-4 times/wk	Once a week	1-3 times/mo
Frequency of having breakfast	Never	1 time	≥2times	
Frequency of having eaten in fast-food or other restaurants during the previous two days	Almost Daily	1-4 times/wk	1-3 times/mo	Seldom
Frequency of eating with family				
Frequency of eating alone				
Frequency of eating the least favourite but 'healthy' food				
Frequency of eating meals in school in the afternoon	2-3 /day	4-5/day	≥6 /day	
Number of main meals and snacks	Yes	No		
Whether foods are eaten because they are advertised				
Whether the food that is prepared at home is eaten				

Statistical Analysis

As all variables were categorical, associations among the various parameters were assessed using contingency tables and calculating the χ^2 test (with the aid of the SPSS 13.0 software). All *p-values* are based on 2-sided tests and were compared to a significance level of 5%.

Results

The children's mean age was 10.7 (± 0.98) years. Obesity rates were calculated for 823 of the children, representing 2.7% of the entire reference population. Almost 30% of the children were overweight or obese, of which 10% were classified as being excessively overweight. The present data, therefore, confirmed findings of previous research which indicated that one in every four children in Cyprus is classified as being either obese or overweight, but it also revealed a slight difference between girls and boys in this regard, a difference which had not been previously shown. Rates of obesity were somewhat higher among boys than among girls – 11.4% of boys as against 8.5% of girls were considered to be obese – a difference that has also been discerned among samples of adolescents in most European countries. Furthermore, in this sample, boys were seen to be three times more likely to be obese if their father was obese or overweight, than a contrary situation (Odds ratio = 3.14, 95% Confidence Interval = 1.54–6.40). A similar trend was observed among girls, except that, in this case, the predictor was the mother's weight status (Odds ratio = 1.87, 95% Confidence Interval = 1.00–3.52).

The most significant of the findings that emerged with regard to children's meal habits concerned: the frequency of eating main meals and snacks, the frequency of breakfast intake, and the frequency of their participation in family meals. About half of the children reported that they have four to five meals and snacks daily; one third reported that they have two to three, while one reported that he/she has six or more. Children who lived in the mountainous and sub-mountainous areas of Cyprus reported on more eating events during the day than their counterparts living in non-mountainous areas. Similarly, the reports of children living in rural areas, as well as of children of families with higher SES, showed that they had more eating events during the day than their urban and low SES counterparts. In addition, a trend was found which indicated that normal-weight children had more meals and snacks than overweight children, but this difference did not reach the level of statistical significance.

Breakfast was the meal that children were most likely to skip as results showed that 22% of the participating children did not have breakfast on most days of the week (see Table 2). More specifically, a fifth of boys and a quarter of girls reported 'not having breakfast on most days of the week', while 12% of children took breakfast only once per week or even less frequently than that.

Table 2: Meal Patterns among Boys and Girls.

	Boys	Girls	P*
N	533	607	
Intake of breakfast ≥ 5 times/week vs. ≤ 4 times/week(%)	81.3	75.3	0.019
	18.7	24.7	
Number of main meals and snacks daily ≤ 3 /day vs. ≥ 4 /day(%)	39.1	35.9	0.301
	60.9	64.1	
Number of snacks per day ≤ 1 per day vs. ≥ 2 per day(%)	26.5	22.3	0.116
	73.5	77.7	
Eating outside the home or ordering in fast-food in the past two days 0 times vs. ≥ 1 times(%)	54.2	60.8	0.033
	45.8	39.2	
Having meals with family ≥ 5 times/week vs. ≤ 4 times/week(%)	84.6	82.1	0.261
	15.4	17.9	
Having meals alone ≥ 5 times/week vs. ≤ 4 times/week(%)	41.8	33.0	0.030
	58.2	67.0	
Having lunch at school 4 times/week vs. ≤ 3 times/week(%)	14.9	10.5	0.032
	85.1	89.5	
	50.6	55.2	
	58.6	63.3	

Breakfast intake did not differ according to urbanisation index, refugee status, obesity status, or parents' education. It did differ however by SES, being more frequent among children of lower SES.

Forty-three per cent of the children reported that they had eaten food prepared outside the home at least once during the previous two days. Children in mountainous and sub-mountainous areas ate fast-food less often compared to children in non-mountainous areas (10% and 24% reported two visits or more to a fast-food restaurant during the previous two days, respectively). Similarly, normal-weight children reported having made two

visits to a restaurant during the previous two days at a much lower rate than their overweight counterparts (18% as opposed to 23%). Children's visits to fast-food restaurants, however, were not aligned with either their parent's socio-economic status, or the urbanisation index of their area.

The majority of the children (83%) reported that they had meals with their family at least five times per week (see Table 2). Differences were found according to several socio-demographic characteristics. More specifically, compared to children who lived in urban centers, children in rural, and especially children in mountainous/sub-mountainous, areas, were more likely to participate in family meals – at least five times a week. Joining in family meals was also more frequent among normal-weight children as compared to overweight children.

One in three children (33%) said that they never taste food just because it is healthy, while another 20% reported that they did not eat food just because it is healthy even once a week. Finally, one out of four children (26%) reported that he/she frequently tastes or eats foods that are being advertised.

Conclusions

It is of concern that a fifth of boys and a quarter of girls do not eat breakfast on most days of the week. Similar figures with regard to the skipping of breakfast (10% to 30%) have been reported in earlier studies conducted in Europe and the United States which dealt with children's meal patterns.⁹ As was evident also in previous studies,¹⁰ it was also found that girls, more so than boys, are more likely to skip the first main meal of the day, in all likelihood as a means of losing weight. The vast majority of children, however, eat most of their meals with family members. Family cohesiveness is still very strong in Cyprus and it is still common for grandparents to take care of children when they finish classes in school. Grandparents often prepare lunch and/or dinner on weekdays, and even at weekends, for their children and grandchildren. In this way, children have the opportunity to eat home-made meals with their family.

⁹ Rampersaud, G.C., Pereira, M.A., Girard, B.L., Adams, J., Metz, J.D., 'Breakfast Habits, Nutritional Status, Body Weight, and Academic Performance in Children and Adolescents', *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 105, no. 5 (2005): 743-60.

¹⁰ Siega-Riz, A.M., Carson, T., Popkin, B., 'Three Squares or Mostly Snacks – What do Teens Really Eat? A Sociodemographic Study of Meal Patterns', *Journal of Adolescence Health* 22, no. 1 (1998): 29-36; Albertson, A.M., Franko, D.L., Thompson, D., Eldridge, A.L., Holschuh, N., Affenito, S.G., Bauserman, R., Striegel-Moore, R.H., 'Longitudinal Patterns of Breakfast Eating in Black and White Adolescent Girls', *Obesity* 15, no 9 (2007): 2282-92.

A mountainous, rural environment was found to be the most influential of the factors examined in determining children's meal habits in Cyprus. Living in mountainous or sub-mountainous regions was generally found to be associated with healthier behaviours, such as having breakfast regularly, joining in family meals, and consuming fast-food less often, than was evident among their counterparts in other regions of the country. Mountains are generally acknowledged in Europe as being a living milieu where traditional ways of living have not yet been abandoned and where family cohesiveness has been largely preserved. Initiatives should be undertaken to encourage families and children living in mountainous regions to preserve their beneficial foodways practices.

In contrast to the mountainous milieus, this study showed that an urban environment (Cyprus also has a non-mountainous rural environment) is associated with detrimental eating behaviours, especially for children in refugee houses. These children have fewer eating events, they join in family meals less regularly, and they consume fast-food meals more often.

Children of higher socio-economic status were found to take more meals during the day but to skip breakfast more often. In general, socio-economic status, which is a composite of the professional and educational levels of the parents, did not seem to be significantly associated with children's meal habits. This may be due to the fact that the population we examined is an exceptionally homogeneous one.

A couple of problematic forms of behaviour were related to children's obesity status: compared to normal-weight children, overweight children were found to participate in family meals less regularly and to have fast-food meals more often. No differences were found with regard to the mean number of meals and snacks they reported as eating, while a tendency to skip breakfast more often was noticed in this group.

This is the first study which reports on meal habits of Cypriot schoolchildren. The study revealed problematic forms of behaviour among the children, especially concerning the skipping of breakfast and having meals away from home too often. Furthermore, given the maintenance of the family dining traditions that was identified, family-based interventions can be regarded as effective means for the promotion of healthy lifestyles for Cypriot children.

Limitations

The present study has certain limitations which should be taken into account when interpreting the data. First, it was a study of cross-sectional design.

Therefore, conclusions cannot be attributed to plausible causes, but instead they are valuable indications that can be used in future investigations. Even though sample selection was multistage and stratified, it was not random. In spite of this, the inclusion of 1.3% to 3.7% of the total reference population of Cyprus permits generalisation of the results. Finally, the assessment of obesity status was based on parental reported heights and weights than on direct measurements, but this practice has been previously used with satisfactory results.¹¹

Acknowledgements

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¹¹ Goodman, E., Hinden, B.R., Khandelwal, S., 'Accuracy of Teen and Parental Reports of Obesity and Body Mass Index', *Pediatrics* 106 (2000): 52-8.

Food Intake Patterns and their Nutritional Impact on Young Women Living in Australia

Jennifer Olive McArthur¹ and Samir Samman

Like most developed nations, there are dietary guidelines for Australians.² Unlike other countries, however, there is a paucity of information on food intakes, meal composition and food selection for Australian sub-populations, notably young women. The last national nutrition survey was completed in 1995³ and was predominantly limited to information concerning nutrient intakes following a twenty-four hour recall and not the associated eating behaviours. Despite little information being available in the literature on meal composition and the eating behaviours of young women, there are considerable food intake studies for females in infancy, adolescence and senior years. It raises the question: 'How can nutrition experts help communities when so little is known about the food management practices of young women?' Their lifestyles are commonly described as unstructured and complex⁴ which challenges the statistical generalisations linked to traditional research design. There is, however, an imperative to untangle the food management behaviours of these young women as the presence of a happy demeanour, active participation in sports, involvement in social events with family and friends, and lack of medical illness, does not assure an absence of nutritional stresses.

In this paper, we aim to investigate the daily food intake of healthy, educated, young women to ascertain their approach to food intake and the impact of this on their nutritional well-being.

Participants

The young women providing the dietary information for this study responded to recruitment posters (in Sydney, in 2008 and 2009) seeking

¹ The author acknowledges financial support through postgraduate scholarships from the Australian Government (2009-2011) and the King and Amy O'Malley Trust 2009, 2010.

² Dietary Guidelines for All Australians, (2003); <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/dietsyn.htm>; accessed 24.2. 2011.

³ National Nutrition Survey: Selected Highlights, Australia, (1995); <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4802.0>; accessed 25.2. 2011.

⁴ Huntley, R., *The World According to Y: Inside the New Adult Generation*, Sydney, Australia 2006; <http://www.learningtolearn.sa.edu.au/Colleagues/files/links/UnderstandingGenY.pdf>; accessed 25.2. 2011.

volunteers for an intervention trial that was examining the iron status of women. It was felt that the data collected in the embedded dietary study of this larger trial, could throw some light on the eating patterns of young Australian women, which is lacking in the literature. The inclusion criteria for the primary research were women aged between eighteen and thirty-five years, who had no objection to consuming meat (including pork), who did not have any major illness, including recent gastrointestinal distress, who did not take nutritional supplements, non-prescription or prescription medications (except for oral contraceptives), who did not have an eating disorder or known malnutrition, and who did not donate blood in the previous twelve months.

Study Design

An integral part of this study was the maintenance of relationships with forty young women over a period of four months using individual meetings, telephone conversations, e-mail exchanges, newsletters and texting. The frequency and style of communication, apart from the contact required for the dissemination of research tasks, was driven by each of the women to occur at a time convenient for them and using their preferred mode of communication. The University of Sydney Human Ethics Review Committee approved the study and all women gave written informed consent prior to their participation.

Data Collection

The primary data sources were the women's self-completed food diaries. The formatting of these diaries was kept to a minimum, thus allowing the women to convey their food selections using their own words and manner. The participants recorded all foods and liquids they consumed for a total of twenty-one days onto sequentially numbered recording sheets, and they determined the status of each of their eating sessions to be either 'meal' or 'snack'. There were no predefined criteria provided for these assignments. The food diaries were recorded during three periods of seven days equally distributed throughout the length of the study and checked for possible misinterpretations at coding. As well as coding for style of eating event, the food diaries enabled an analysis to be made of intake patterning within and between days.

Complementary data sources included conversation logs of meetings, self-completed participant questionnaires and validated self-administered

semi-quantitative food frequency questionnaires (FFQ).⁵ The participant questionnaires and conversation logs provided information relating to the general knowledge of the participants concerning nutrition, their cooking skills, and their preferred cooking methods.

The FFQ was completed at the commencement of the study in order to measure the customary nutrient intake of each woman for a reference period of twelve weeks. Food items were divided into major categories⁶ and sub-categories reflecting those used for the 1995 Australian National Nutrition Survey. Eric B. Rimm *et al* compared FFQ outcomes and weekly food diaries using a similar study-design and reported that the correlations supporting the FFQ to be a good measure of an individual's attainment of the nutrient baselines for health.⁷

The average daily nutrient intake of each participant was calculated from the FFQ, using purpose-built mathematical and reporting software that facilitated the linking of responses in the FFQ to one of the food composition databases of Australian foods.⁸

All of the participants completed a 36-Item Short-Form (SF36) Health Survey⁹ to measure their feeling of well-being and health. The results were compared with norms for the Australian population¹⁰ to ascertain any relationship between mental or physical health and their nutritional intake.

⁵ Fayet, F., Flood, V., Petocz, P., Samman, S., 'Relative and Biomarker Validity of a Food Frequency Questionnaire that Measures the Intakes of Vitamin B₁₂, Folate, Iron, and Zinc in Young Women', *Nutrition Research* (2011): 31, 14-20.

⁶ McArthur, J.O., Samman, S., 'A Randomized Control Trial in Young Women on the Effects of Consuming Pork Meat or Iron Supplements on Nutritional Status and Feeling of Wellbeing', *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society of Australia* (2010): 34, 64. See also <http://www.amj.net.au/index.php?journal=AMJ&page=issue&op=archive> *Australasian Medical Journal* (2010), 3; accessed 23.2. 2011.

⁷ Rimm, Eric B., Giovannuci, E.L., Stampfer, M.J., Colditz, G.A., Litin, L.B., Willet, W.C., 'Reproducibility and Validity of an Expanded Self-Administered Semi-quantitative Food Frequency Questionnaire among Male Health Professionals', *American Journal of Epidemiology* (1992): 135, 1114-26.

⁸ Food Standards Australia New Zealand. 'NUTTAB 2006 - Australian Food Composition Tables'. Canberra: Food Standards Australia New Zealand 2007. <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/nuttab2006/>; accessed 20. 2. 2011.

⁹ Ware, J. Jr., Sherbourne, C., 'The MOS 36-Item Short-Form Health Survey (SF-36): I. Conceptual Framework and Item Selection', *Medical Care* 30, no. 6 (1992): 473-83.

¹⁰ Sanson-Fisher, R., Perkins, J., 'Adaptation and Validation of the SF-36 Health Survey for Use in Australia', *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 51, no. 11, (1998): 961-7.

Data Management

Sequential two-phase coding prepared the completed food diary entries for the initial qualitative and later statistical analyses. In the first phase, predetermined criteria were used to code the young women's eating events as either 'meal' or 'snack'.

A 'meal' was defined as a food event where there is a culturally conventional collection of foods, which have undergone preparation before eating, from a minimum of two food groups (see box to right¹¹), where at least one is a grain- or cereal-based food. Allowing for the multicultural nature of Australian society, there may be some meals demonstrating acculturation of meal constituents.

Unlike 'meal', the definition of 'snack' is not bounded by format, culture, nutritional inclusions, frequency or time of ingestion. It consists of one or more foods where the only relationship between them may be ingestion within the one eating event. Both participant assignments of the eating events in their diaries and the phase one coding by the researchers, were entered into the database for later comparison. In the phase two coding, there was grading of the nutrient quality of breakfast, lunch and dinner events using methodology adapted from Maria Lennernäs and I. Andersson.¹² In the present study, we clustered food groups under six categories – 'complete', 'incomplete', 'vegetarian', 'less balanced', 'snack' and 'omitted'.

Statistical analysis was performed using the commercially-available statistical software (SPSS 18.0; SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA) with the descriptive statistics presented as mean \pm standard deviation or median (range) as appropriate. A relational database (FileMaker Pro 11; FileMaker Inc., Santa Clara, CA, USA) held all collected data from the primary study, including food diaries, nutrient intake calculations, communication logs, evaluations, and FFQ responses.

FOOD GROUPINGS
IN AUSTRALIA
*meat, fish, poultry,
eggs, nuts, legumes*
~
*bread, cereals, rice,
pasta, noodles*
~
milk, cheese, yoghurt
~
vegetables, legumes
~
fruit
~
(extra foods)

¹¹ Kellet, E., Smith, A. and Schmerlaib, Y., 'The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating: Background information for consumers'. Commonwealth of Australia 1998, 2.

¹² Lennernäs, M., Andersson, I., 'Food Based Classification of Eating Episodes (FBCE)', *Appetite* (1999): 32, 53-65.

Findings

The Women

The mean age for participants was 24.6 ± 4.4 years and mean Body Mass Index 21.8 ± 2.8 kg/m². All exercised regularly, but not at elite athlete levels, and their feelings of well-being were higher than the age-matched Australian norms. However the differences did not reach statistical significance¹³ and no relationship was observed between nutritional status and well-being.

Food Management

Almost half of the women shared dwellings with friends (49.2%), a rate which was only slightly more than the 43.1% living in the family home. Food (or meal) purchasing was the responsibility of 44.6% of the women, while meal-preparation responsibility was slightly less, applying to 40% of the women in the survey (Fig. 1):

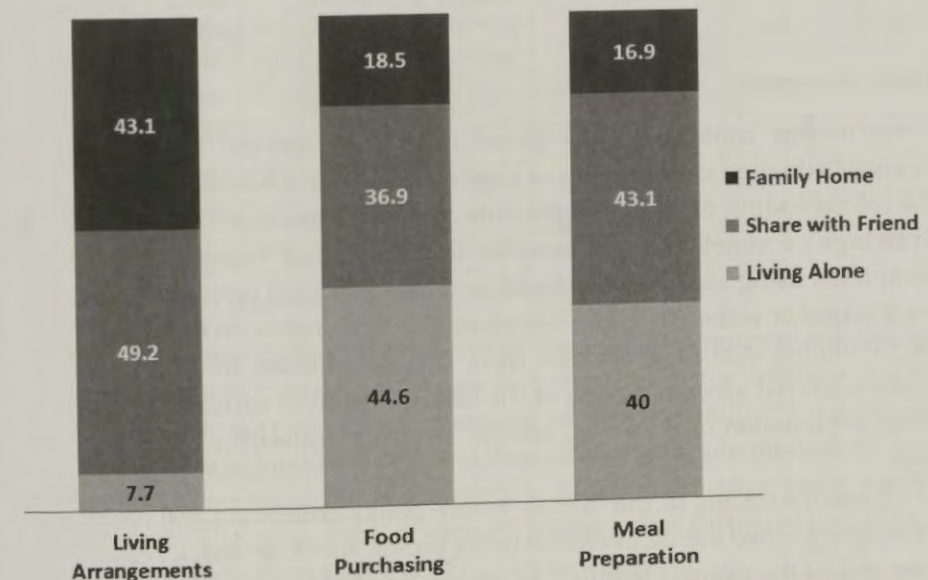


Fig. 1: Living Arrangements and Food Management.

¹³ See note 6.

Details in the conversation logs and food diaries showed that very little food was purchased in its raw state. Table 1 (following) presents some of the meal and drink behaviour reported in the diaries and conversation logs. The number of lunch or dinner meals purchased were approximately three per week and the number of omitted meals for lunch or dinner were as high as five per week for some women. Although a normal distribution pattern for meal behaviour was discerned, the daily drinks intake was positively skewed. The conversation logs clarified that meal preparation for these women included the microwave heating of convenience meals – 'reheating mum's casserole', 'deciding what fillings to have included in my sandwich order', and relocating prepared, but not assembled, meals from the refrigerator onto the dinner plate. The process of removal from the oven, rather than the refrigerator, means that someone else prepared the meal.

Table 1: Frequency of Consumption of Meals and Beverages.

	Each Week				Each Day	
	Purchased Lunches	Omitted Lunches	Purchased Dinners	Omitted Dinners	Gourmet Drinks	Alcoholic Beverages
median	2.7	0.5	3.4	0.5	1.0	0
range	0-7	0-5	0-6	0-5	0-5	0-15

Diary Reporting

Some diaries contained only broad meal descriptions, whereas others itemised weighed components of sandwiches, brand-named products, and the colour coding of meal components. Some also included photographs or drawings of vegetables of varieties that were not recognised, or were completed using student shorthand, and also included references to recipe-book pages or websites. There were handwritten entries on crumpled pages and e-mailed diaries generated from mobile phones. In addition, some women offered an explanation of the health benefit of each item consumed, or an explanation of why they ate the 'high fat, unhealthy snack food' for dinner.

Phase one coding of the diaries, where both participants and researchers broadly classified eating events as being either 'meal' or 'snack', established that 18% of the events classified as 'meals' by the participants were, in fact, assessed as 'snacks' by researchers. The more in-depth phase-two coding (Table 2 below), which assessed the nutritional quality of the events, evaluated the larger percentage of the breakfast sessions as being incomplete meals (33%), and almost as many breakfast sessions were assessed as being

snacks (26%). Only 42% of lunches and 39% of the dinners were assessed as being nutritionally complete.

The diary entries for the same day for three of the young women highlight diversity of meal content:

- Andrea started the day with yoghurt and apricots, and then purchased a Greek spinach and feta pie with green salad for lunch. Pizza was ordered for dinner.
- Susan avoided fruit, preferring to start the day with cheese and vegemite toast, followed by chicken and salad for lunch, and then an Asian dish for dinner.
- Jane ate only lunch that day which was a Middle Eastern beef wrap.¹⁴

Assessing the quality of the day's meals for these three young women reveals only one nutritionally complete meal. This was the spinach and feta pie with salad which sourced nutrients from the animal, grains and plant groupings.

Table 2: Meal Categories Consumed for Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner (%).

	Meal Categories					
	Complete foods	Incomplete foods	Vegetarian foods	Less Balanced foods	Snack	Omitted
	animal	animal	grain	animal		
	grain	grain	plant	plant		
	plant					
Breakfast	19	33	7	4	26	11
Lunch	42	14	8	12	17	7
Dinner	39	17	7	20	10	7

Food Frequency Outcomes

The FFQ responses provided estimates of the women's nutrient intakes for the previous three months and were consistent with the intake of foods recorded in the diaries. The percentage of women failing to meet the Estimated Average Intakes (EAR) and Recommended Daily Intakes (RDI) of the main nutrients important for women in their childbearing years, can be seen in Fig. 2. The proportion of women failing to eat sufficient iron (55%), folate (38%) and calcium (28%) is of particular concern.

¹⁴ All names used are fictitious.

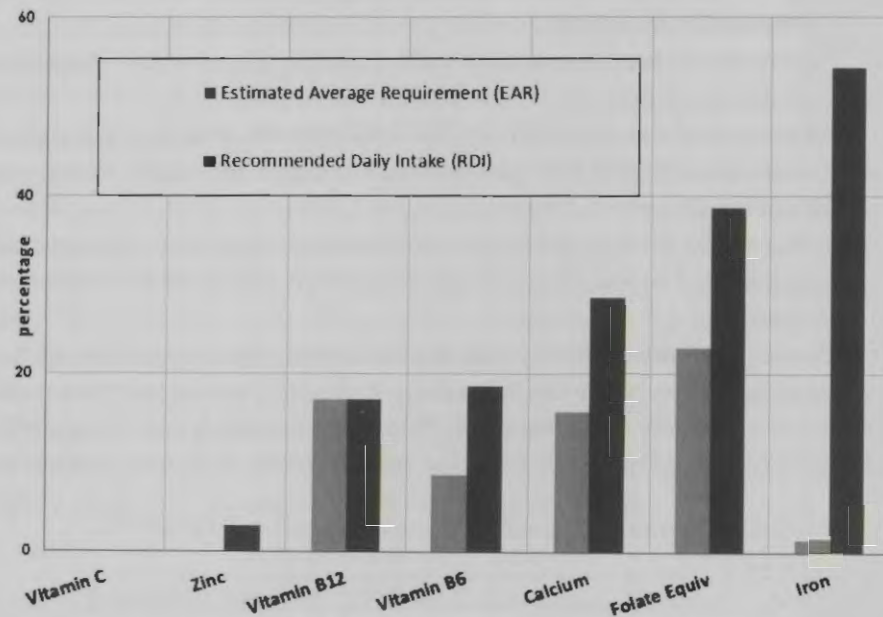


Fig. 2: Percentage of young women failing to meet the EAR and RDI for selected vitamins and minerals

Discussion

Commencing with colonisation in 1788, the Australian population has consumed breakfast (first meal of the day following an overnight fast), lunch (a midday meal often eaten away from home), and dinner which is the largest meal, at the end of the day.¹⁵ Snacks have always featured in the diets of school-aged children and have gradually been introduced into the work-force by the trade unions.¹⁶ Snacks, frequently with beverages, are now consumed between meals and, increasingly, also following the evening meal. This is the prevailing pattern in Australia today regardless of the large number of cultures living on this continent,¹⁷ although cultural eating patterns would favour a different model.

¹⁵ Clements, F., *A History of Human Nutrition in Australia*, Melbourne, Australia 1986.

¹⁶ Bannerman, C., *Acquired Tastes: Celebrating Australia's Culinary History*, Canberra, Australia 1998.

¹⁷ Cox, D., 'Australian Meals: As Reported by Australian Adult Women', in Meiselman, H., (ed.), *Meals in Science and Practice. Interdisciplinary Research and Business Applications*, Cambridge, UK 2009, 483-508.

Our results show that these young women minimise the home preparation of meals and demonstrate an uncertainty about what constitutes a meal. Our results also indicate that young women consume many nutritionally incomplete meals, and that they have a compromised nutrient intake of vitamins and minerals.

Meal Preparation

The women in this study are part of 'Generation Y'¹⁸ which characterises members as spontaneous in their approach to life including unplanned eating events. The young women minimised meal preparation by purchasing semi-prepared foods or frozen meals from the supermarket, by selecting meals from one of the many cafés and food outlets surrounding the university (frequently for later reheating), by eating home-delivery pizza with study groups, or by socialising with alcohol and bar meals. When these women shift the responsibility of meal preparation to commercial providers, they consume meals containing fewer grains, vegetables and fruits than the home-made meals described in the diaries. This translates into a lower intake of minerals and vitamins but a higher intake of salt.¹⁹ Linda H. Eck Clemens, D.L. Slawson and R.G. Klesges²⁰ investigated the impact of away-from-home meals on the quality of the diet of young women. Their study '...demonstrates that women who report eating out a greater number of times per week appear to be consuming a poorer quality of diet'. We found that a further impact on the nutritional quality of the meal was the splitting of purchased meals over two eating sessions without the inclusion of supplementary grains or vegetables in an attempt to rectify the nutrient reduction. The women who choose to prepare meals overwhelmingly report that their preferred cooking methods are microwaving, steaming, and stir-frying, rather than more time-consuming methods such as baking, grilling, and slow cooking, used by earlier generations.

What Constitutes a Meal?

The women classified an eating event as a 'meal' (breakfast, lunch or dinner) and not as a 'snack' according to the time at which it was consumed each day. This was independent of the foods or the manner of eating. Lunch was

¹⁸ Patterson, B., 'A-Z of Generation Y'. *Sunday Herald Sun*, 8 July 2007; see also note 4.

¹⁹ Larson, N.L., Perry, C.L., Story, M., Neumark-Sztainer, 'Food Preparation by Young Adults is Associated with Better Diet Quality', *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* (2006): 106, 2001-7.

²⁰ Eck Clemens, Linda H., Slawson, D.L., Klesges, R.G., 'The Effect of Eating Out on Quality of Diet in Premenopausal Women', *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* (1999): 99, 442-4.

a meal consisting of '8 fries, small handful of nuts and some chocolates' or 'half a skim-milk banana smoothie'. In studies dealing with the criteria for meal definition, some researchers have used the energy content of the event,²¹ social interaction,²² food quality,²³ and the interval of time between eating events, in this context. Energy content of the event was the crucial dimension for both de Castro,²⁴ and Cox,²⁵ who considered meals to be higher in energy than snacks which they considered to be lower, empty-calorie eating experiences. However, in this century, limiting analysis to one dimension, such as time of day, or energy content, is crude, given the complicated snack and meal continuum. In the present study, the energy content of late-afternoon snacks such as 'hummus, carrot, crackers and beer', contained more energy than lunchtime salads. For these 'Generation Y' women our proposition is that a multi-dimensional definition of meals should be provided, and that the incorporation of the time of day and the nutritional quality of the eating event, beyond energy, will more accurately represent meal content. Meal context is another crucial dimension, which is beyond our data and the scope of this paper.

A methodology to define meals considering their appearance and nutritional value was developed by Maria Lennernäs and I. Andersson.²⁶ Using their approach, we have included the categorisation of meal- and snack-quality, frequency of eating events of various food compositions, and applicability to dietary recalls, qualitative diet histories, and food records in our study. The energy-content element is de-emphasised. By applying the Lennernäs and Andersson methodology in this study (Table 2; see above) the nutritional intervention emphases for the women are highlighted.

Nutritionally Incomplete Meals

Initially, there was researcher concern that the diaries may only include what the students felt comfortable about revealing to a dietician. We hold that this concern was minimised through two approaches and one unexpected truth.

²¹ Bernstein, Illene L., Zimmerman, J.C., Gzeisber, C.A., Weitzman, E.D., 'Meal Patterns in "Free-running" Humans', *Physiology and Behaviour* (1981): 27, 621-3.

²² Skinner, J. D., Salvetti, N.N., Ezell, J.M., Penfield, M.P. Costello, C.A., 'Appalachian Adolescents' Eating Patterns and Nutrient Intakes', *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* (1985): 85, 1093-9.

²³ de Castro, J., 'Genetic Influences on Daily Intake and Meal Patterns of Humans', *Physiology and Behavior* (1993): 53, 777-82.

²⁴ de Castro, J., 'Physiological, Environmental, and Subjective Determinants of Food Intake in Humans: A Meal Pattern Analysis.' *Physiology and Behavior* (1988): 44, 651-9.

²⁵ See note 17.

²⁶ See note 12.

Firstly, being predominantly students completing higher level studies, the participants understood the obligation for accuracy and the futility of fabricated records. Secondly, the women were research collaborators, and thirdly, the unexpected element was the uncensored recording of their food intakes. Students included details of blatantly-poor dietary choices, including multiple omitted meals, in their diaries. They also referred to high celebratory-food intakes, regular intakes of alcohol that were at least double those recommended for healthy living, and to snack foods replacing meals. The diaries showed that the students had but a limited understanding of traditional meal constituents and of the essential interplay of nutrients to meet the body's nutrient demands.

The results of the survey show that breakfast is a particular concern. Although 11% of breakfasts were omitted, an even greater percentage (26%) of consumed meals were 'snacks' and 'complete meals' only amounted 17% of the food eaten. After an evening's fast, it is an expectation that the first foods consumed on the following morning will provide a balance of the exhausted nutrients. However, 80% of these crucial meals may not provide the nutrients necessary to meet this metabolic need. In Australia, breakfast meals consisting of ready-to-eat fortified cereals, or breads, usually toasted, are equally popular. By simply adding fresh fruit to the cereals, or by consuming vegetables with the morning toast, more than 50% of the breakfasts would provide the balance of nutrients required of the meal. Similarly, the inclusion of green vegetables or fruits for the 'incomplete' lunch and dinner meals would provide nutritional balance for these meals, making 56% of each nutritionally 'complete'.

Constance Georgiou *et al* have reported that the diet quality of college students in America is significantly better than that of their peers in the work-force.²⁷ However, studies need to be undertaken to determine whether the same applies in the Australian context. If it does, our findings may prove to be the critical case for ascertaining whether any young women in this country can manage their nutritional well-being.

Inadequate Vitamins and Minerals

All of the women reported stable weights and were within the healthy weight-range suggesting that their energy intakes are balanced by their moderate physical activity. Their diets, however, fail to provide all of their

²⁷ Georgiou, Constance, Betts, N.M., Hoerr, S.L., Keim, K., Peters, P.K., Stewart, B., Voichick, J., 'Among Young Adults, College Students and Graduates Practiced More Healthful Habits and made More Healthful Food Choices than did Nonstudents', *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, Issue 7, (1997): 754-9.

nutrient needs. The majority of the women did not reach the RDI for iron, and calcium and folate intakes were problematic for a third of the women despite regular public-health campaigns on the importance of calcium for bone health, and folate fortification of selected baked goods. Folate fortification of flour is now mandatory in Australia.

The public health campaigns have failed to adequately improve the nutrient intakes of iron, calcium and folate which would be sufficient for these women to reach the recommended baselines. The continuance of low intake levels of vitamins and minerals by young women poses health risks such as anaemia, heart failure, lethargy, bone fractures, and congenital neural tube defects.

The conversation logs, and the questionnaire replies provided by the study participants, supported observations that current nutritional programmes are misdirected and that they require to be refocused on the relationships between foods and nutrients. The women being studied eat more protein than required for health. Their choices of meats, however, and the knowledge of how to combine foods to promote the absorption of iron from non-meat foods, are insufficient to meet their nutritional baselines for iron.

Study Strengths

The relationship between researchers and participants was responsible for both the depth of the data and participant continuance within this demanding study. Despite being time poor, the women voluntarily maintained diaries during the semester, completed repeated questionnaires, were weighed and reweighed, and provided monthly blood samples. They were interested in the process and in learning more about their diets. Self-realisation of the questionable quality of their diets increased as they completed the diaries, and they began to formulate plans for change. Whether these changes took place after the completion of the study, or whether they have been maintained, is not known. The multiple communication modes used by researchers, with the participants favouring text messages followed by e-mails, was one of the strengths of the study. Lastly, the decision to opt for descriptive, non-measured food records, appealed to these women, and we believe that this factor reduced any sensitivity surrounding energy intakes and helped to elicit comprehensive reporting.

Limitations

The meal is a central construct with multiple dimensions,²⁸ and the dimensions examining the social context of meals and snacks have not been part of this research. An agreed meal definition was assumed to exist prior to our analysis. However, in order to determine how women were managing their nutritional needs it was necessary to provide a workable definition.

Conclusion

Restaurant dining, and effortless reheat technologies, are emerging as the new kitchen essentials in this population. These 'Generation Y' women are noted for complexities and impulsiveness in their lifestyles and, until now, there has been but minimal analysis of their eating patterns and behaviours. This paper reports on a methodology that engages young women and produces insight into their meal patterning, food selection, and nutrient intakes, thereby enabling the emergence of potentially new directions for nutrition educators.

²⁸ Tolksdorf, U., 'Strukturalistische Nahrungsforschung – Versuch eines generellen Ansatzes', *Ethnologica Europaea* 9 (1976): 64-85.

The Demise of the Family Meal – A Covert Survey of Food Scholars

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In September 2008 I was asked by Greenwood Press/ABC-CLIO to edit a 4-volume, 700,000-word *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia*. This work would complete the Food Culture Around the World series I had been editing since 2002 which at that point had 20 volumes in print or soon to be published. These volumes naturally covered nations the publisher knew would sell well such as Italy, China, Mexico and France, but they could not justify publishing entire books on less populous places or those perceived by the public to be less interesting. Moreover, the series was ripe for closure in my opinion. This new encyclopedia would cover every possible place and people on earth for which an author could be found: Kazakhstan to Costa Rica, the Masai to Malaysia, plus articles written by the original authors of the series on those topics they had already covered, in reduced length.

Conceptually, the intention was first to provide an easy reference about food cultures for which information is hard to find – primarily students writing reports, journalists or food writers seeking obscure information but it would also serve as a resource to facilitate cross-cultural comparison on a range of topics in a way that would be impossible to generate using specialised focused articles or books. By imposing a standard format on each article including common ingredients, cooking methods, meal structure, eating out, celebrations, diet and health, one could, for example, trace the diffusion of a particular ingredient, a specific utensil, or a certain holiday merely by consulting the index. A small vignette of how a 'typical family' shops and eats would lend a personal living feature (even though often fictional) and would perhaps afford the authors some room for nuance that a strict format would preclude.

So, for example, if one wanted to track the celebration of the fast of Ramadan (or Ramazan, as it is called in some places) across the world, you could consult each article which had been indexed under Ramadan, not surprisingly, all predominantly Muslim, but perhaps surprisingly ranging from Indonesia to East Africa, and then see how differently the holiday is actually practiced in each vignette. The mode of breaking the fast at sundown does in fact vary widely from country to country. Likewise if one wanted to trace the diffusion of taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) as a staple starch, once again

one would resort to the index, and follow the root vegetable across a staggering array of tropical and subtropical locales, from its probable origin in Indonesia to South East Asia, across the Pacific to Hawaii, to the Caribbean, Nigeria, and even Cyprus. Presumably reading about taro in the context of each individual food culture would offer many more points of comparison than merely searching for taro in a standard reference work. We would learn, for example, that the processing method of grating, soaking, draining and reconstituting, did not always travel intact with the root itself, much as nixtamalisation did not travel with corn to Europe.

As the articles began to arrive from contributors a few ideas came to mind. Despite the fact that there would be no index until the completion of the entire encyclopedia, nonetheless, some comparative research could be conducted since the entire text would have to be read anyway. Since the prompts demanded that authors address certain topics, their responses were probably influenced in ways that might not have occurred to them had not a standard format been imposed. It seems unlikely that every author, for example, would have addressed obesity, but since there was a section on diet and health, not surprisingly, every single author reported either that there is, in fact, an obesity epidemic – in every single advanced industrial nation, or no, there is not – in every single developing nation, where poverty is still a concern. There were practically no authors who did not fall on one side or the other, or they pointed out differences between rural and urban populations or differences among social classes. For the wealthy, obesity is becoming a problem, not for the poor. This kind of question would not in the end make for terribly interesting research; it was completely predictable.

Far more intriguing would be to track a question that had *not* been asked to see how it plotted geographically, and, more importantly, to find some characteristics of the authors themselves that might have influenced their decision to discuss that particular topic. In other words, would a contributor's gender affect their propensity to cover a particular subject, their discipline or profession, or perhaps whether they had first hand knowledge of the subject area as a native? The subjects did not know their submissions were being analysed in this way, hence this was really a covert study. In any case, no contributors are named in the results and the findings have been kept as anonymous as possible.

This is the specific topic examined: 'Is there a decline in the family meal eaten together in the home' or rather does this contributor *perceive* a decline in the family meal and, if so, why? What other factors might have influenced this decline? There was no expectation that many authors would come right

out and specify details such as: two working parents, late hours at the office, latch-key children and soccer practice, therefore families resort to quick and easy options; hence they tend not to eat together any more. Surprisingly, some did say exactly that, and in places one would definitely not expect. On the other hand, many never brought up the topic because they were not asked specifically to address it, even though the vignette about a typical family indirectly invites the topic.

The variables tracked were 1. Are family meals in decline? 2. Are convenience foods and appliances replacing traditional foodways in the household? 3. Is fast food replacing healthy meals eaten in the household? (The issue here is not merely with the presence of fast food outlets, but also with the perception that this contributes to the erosion of the common shared meal). The importance of these variables would next be rated by gender, discipline or profession, and nationality – native and direct experience versus arm-chair researcher. There were a few other topics that seemed relevant: the introduction of industrial agriculture, the percentage of people involved in growing their own food, and the like, but in the end there was not a critical mass of contributors who went into detail about growing food. A topic not considered in this study, though most did discuss it, is where people shop – local markets, souks, specialty bakers and produce stands, or supermarkets. But since this question was not necessarily related to the initial question about family meals, it was left out of the analysis. At best there might have been a correlation between supermarkets and convenience foods, so presumably the latter question would suffice on its own.

The following excerpt from a conference paper proposal reflects initial expectations of findings, but was written before having read most of the articles in the encyclopedia:

Historically, the demise of the family meal, in concert with the breakdown of the traditional family itself, has been seen as the root of all society's evils by politically conservative groups. If only families would eat together as a rule, parents would be more actively engaged in their children's welfare, they would raise them more conscientiously and we would return to a blissful crime free world where active socialization and engendering behavior norms take place in the home preventatively rather than in corrections facilities. Or as one recent insidious strain of this dialogue puts it, albeit in caricature: If only women would forgo their cherished liberties in the workplace, we would have good home cooking and secure families again.

While it is easy to prove the ahistoricity of the revered family meal, as well as the cherished traditional family unit, the image still holds a powerful sway over discussions of food in the private and public arenas. Everything, from the prevalence of junk food and obesity to eating disorders and unequal access to nutritious food, are linked to the lack of familial commensality in the modern world. Parents are too busy to cook or never learned how, so children are left to fend for themselves, eating mass-produced junk food and fast food on the run. Eventually, they come to prefer these well-marketed quick and easy and often solitary meals to well-prepared fresh and nutritious food eaten with family members. This is only one step away from gastronomic retardation, malnutrition, sloth and moral torpor. Even without an explicit political agenda, there is something about this scenario that sounds right to many people (especially those of my generation who grew up eating dinner alone in front of the TV).

Proving or disproving causal connections between food crises and the breakdown of family meals would be futile. But the perception of a linkage among those who write about food is nonetheless fascinating. Even food scholars are not immune from connecting solitary meals with larger dietary problems. In fact, it often seems so obvious to many food writers that it needs no supporting evidence. Modernisation and gastronomic anomie go hand in hand. Furthermore, it is often assumed that while the US and advanced industrial nations have already suffered from a lack of family meals, the phenomenon is rapidly expanding to the rest of the world, which, as industrialisation and globalisation pick up pace, so too will consequent dietary problems. In other words, it was fully anticipated that authors covering the US and Europe would discuss the erosion of family meals as a *fait accompli*, but not underdeveloped and impoverished nations. The interesting results would probably appear somewhere in between, among the emerging, industrialising nations, those intensifying participation in the global economy.

The results are as follows. There were 154 articles, the majority based on the unit of the nation state, but some were independent city-states like Singapore, others were minority groups transcending national borders such as the Roma or Inuit. For the purposes of this study, focus would be on each article as a discrete unit even though there were many that overlapped – there was separate coverage of Laos and the Hmong, for example. Furthermore, even though some contributors wrote two or sometimes three articles, their responses might have differed when covering different locales. So there were

only about 110 contributors, but each article was tracked statistically, not each author.

Among the articles, 118 or 77% were written by women. That is something that could not have been anticipated, and there is no explanation for it. There were only 35 men (23%) and one person whose sex could not be identified from the data to hand.

Of these 154 articles, 53 (35% of the total) were written by people categorised as food writers. This group ranges from a few who are prominent TV personalities or those who have written many cookbooks, to people who engage in food writing and often have impressive résumés, but are not professional journalists, nor receive their primary income from food writing. The reason these contributors were lumped into one category is because they are all non-academic writers. This would make possible the tracking of whether academic orientation was a significant variable in addressing the question of family meals. The categories turned out to be a little less definitive and precise than originally envisioned – for example, a few popular cookbook authors are also employed full-time by a university. Some would definitely consider themselves to be food scholars but do not have current academic appointments or are retired.

The remainder of the contributors was broken down by discipline. There were 14 anthropologists or 9% of the total. This, incidentally, includes those at any stage of their career, from graduate students to full professors. Contributors could easily have been divided by rank also, but this would not likely have been a significant variable. But those contributors, who self-identified as graduate students either in a food studies programme or in a gastronomy programme, were kept separate. The point was not seeing if graduate students per se would answer the question in a particular way, but if people engaged in interdisciplinary study, focused entirely on food, would be more attuned to social and political issues revolving around the family meal. It was anticipated that they would be more so than academics in single disciplines. There were 13 contributions from food studies programmes (primarily New York University, The School of Oriental and African Studies in London and Indiana University, USA) and 14 contributions from gastronomy programmes (at Boston University, USA, and the University of Adelaide, Australia, as well as at the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo, Italy).

In total, there were 77 articles written by academics comprising 50% of the total. The academics can be broken down as follows: 11 were historians (7%), 4 were in English departments (2.5%), 3 were literary scholars (2%), one was

a linguist, 2 were nutritionists, and 1 was in public health; there was also 1 botanist, 2 sociologists, 2 ethnographers, 1 geographer, 5 librarians, and 2 worked in communications. None of these latter would be considered statistically significant – if, say, 100% of the sociologists said X, this could not be regarded as significant since there were only 2. In the end, the discipline was not an important factor, nor did consistently correlate to any particular position on the issues.

Lastly, the remaining 15% (not food writers or academics) are employed in other assorted professions related to food – 2 were artists, only 3 were journalists, 2 were administrators, and 3 were chefs.

The other variable was country of origin. 60% or 93 of the articles were written by US authors, 5% or 8 entries were by British contributors. The other 49 contributions or 32% of the total were written by authors from all around the world – Japan, Mexico, South Africa, Belgium, Philippines, Germany, Ireland, and so on. None were above 1 or 2 per cent and were thus statistically insignificant. We could not say that 100% of Norwegian authors were concerned with the breakdown of family meals because there was only one. But we can say that 32 authors or 21% were writing about their native land or people, as insiders. That number includes 7 US articles about a US region. It should be mentioned, incidentally, that I am myself included in all of these statistics as the author of several articles, but I did not know that I would be surveyed when I wrote them, so I do not think that I was biased towards any particular position.

The largest surprise is that only 16 authors – a mere 9.6 in total – directly addressed the topic of the erosion of family meals. Thus, this is apparently not as huge an issue on the food policy radar as one might imagine. It may be that this is a topic of greater concern to those with conservative agendas and that the majority of people asked to contribute are more liberal in outlook, though there is no way to affirm this. Political orientation was not something contributors were asked to include in their author surveys for the publisher. Equally interesting is that a large number of contributors said that family meals are definitely not declining; in fact they stressed exactly the opposite, stating that people are struggling, despite job pressures, broken families, fast food, and so on, to eat together at least once a day. Places as disparate as Serbia, Palestine, and Norway, were all included in this group.

In the section on meal structure, there were some interesting variations on the question regarding lesser meals. In places where an evening dinner is the largest meal, every single article said that lunch is eaten outside the home – at school, in the workplace, and so on. In those places where the largest

meal is at midday, every single contributor said that it is taken at home with the family. So lunch and dinner it seemed best to leave out of the equation, and, for all practical purposes, the question became: 'is the largest meal of the day no longer eaten as a family?' Breakfast, incidentally, was the most homogenous meal globally, consisting of starchy mush or bread and caffeine – another topic, but very interesting.

Something else worthy of mention: exactly what a 'typical' family should be was not specified. About 90% of contributors described it as a conjugal unit of a young man and woman with between 1 and 3 adolescent children (most had two). There were a few examples of retired couples with grown children being regarded as a family unit, and, very surprisingly, there was not even one article in which a single parent was regarded as constituting a typical family, and there was only one contribution describing an unmarried childless individual (written by me).

Another variable to be accounted for was that in a few cultures men and women eat separately, and if this tradition was maintained, it would add a factor that might upset the idea of a 'family' meal consisting of parent and children eating together, likewise if they practice polygamy. But in no example describing this separation by gender was there a perceived erosion of the custom.

Of the 16 articles that directly addressed family meals, 5 were written by men, which is statistically about one third or roughly the same as the total proportion of male authors in the entire encyclopedia. So gender was not a factor. Two of the authors were anthropologists, one was a sociologist, and one was a historian. Two were in gastronomy programmes. So 6 were academics, 6 were food writers and two were chefs, and one was in education. Again, this breakdown is quite close to the overall makeup of contributors. If 16 articles constitute a critical mass, then profession has no bearing on whether or not one thinks that family meals are important.

But, perhaps the most interesting finding is that of these 16 articles only four were from places that could be categorised as developed industrial nations. These included the US South, Japan, Belgium and Australia. But, apart from these, no other article on the US mentioned family meals and, amazingly, no other European article apart from Belgium did either. It seems that in places where this process has already happened, the erosion of family meals did not seem worthy of mention in an article on food culture in general. The remainder of contributors who broached the topic wrote about places that are currently in a state of transition, where it is apparent that traditional ways of eating, meal patterns, and even traditional labour intensive recipes,

are manifestly disappearing. Thus we find that Ethiopia, Mexico, Iran, Egypt and Swaziland are among those countries that, for lack of a better term, can be called second tier, modernising nations.

Once again though, it is doubtful if 16 articles can be regarded as constituting a broad enough sample to enable a sound generalisation to be made. But the other questions traced did yield significant results. The second question was 'Is convenience food eroding traditional foodways?' By 'convenience food' was meant frozen food, cans, jarred sauces, ready-made meals, microwavable dishes, that is, anything consumed within the home that would make eating outside the family unit easier and more frequent. Here some articles distinguished between rural and urban or rich and poor households, but included anyone who mentioned this as a significant factor regardless of to whom or where it happened. 54 articles or 35% addressed this topic without specifically being asked to do so, with 15 of these being written by men, exactly the breakdown of the sex of the contributors overall, so gender was not a factor. 29 of these 54 (a little over a half) were written by academics – which is exactly the same proportion of contributors over all. So academics are no more attuned to this question than writers or other professionals. Twenty-two of those contributions which mentioned this topic were written by natives, that is, people who live in the place about which they are writing now or who have recently emigrated from it. 40% of contributors who thought this was significant were natives, who had presumably seen it all happen. That compares to only 21% of the total number of native contributors. So it is fair to say that there is a significant correlation between considering convenience foods important and having grown up in the culture about which you are writing. Perhaps equally interesting is that only 16 of these cultures (about 30%) can be considered fully modern industrialised nations – such as Japan, Belgium, and the US Midwest. The rest, 70%, were places where the change is apparent and underway right now or at least had happened in recent history. South East Asia and the Philippines, Ethiopia, Ghana and Senegal, Ecuador and Korea, are all places where convenience foods are perceived to be increasingly important factors in people's homes.

Lastly, the question of fast food must be addressed. Once again, the mere presence of fast food was not tracked, which would be simple to do using the annual reports produced by McDonalds and Pizza Hut, but only places in which fast food is perceived as being a threat to traditional foodways and in which it is persistently replacing meals eaten in the home (and perhaps by implication with the family). Note also that these were not necessarily the

same people who addressed the question of convenience foods. Only 37 contributors were explicit about the role of fast food. 11 (a third of authors) were men, so this was not a significant variable. Of these, 23 were academics, or 62% of all academics who comprised 50% of the total. So there is a slight tendency for fast food to be more on the radar of academics than on that of food writers and other non-academics. 18 members of this group or about 50% were natives writing from direct personal experience. Natives or inside writers constitute only 21 per cent of the whole roster of contributors to the question of meals in the encyclopedia. So here, as with the convenience-food question, the fact that some writers were commenting on native locales seemed to give them a much greater sensitivity to the erosion of traditional food through the introduction of fast food outlets. Only 14 (38%) of these authors were writing about modern industrialised nations, the rest being places – such as Madagascar and Mozambique, Costa Rica, South East Asia, Bulgaria and Croatia – where industrialisation was underway as a recent phenomenon, and which authors perceived as being a threat to traditional foodways. Also included in this group were Native Americans and Aboriginal Australians, but not a single author dealing with the US mentioned fast food! Maybe this was because it has already become traditional.

In conclusion, the significant variable factor in this study appears to be direct experience of and investment in the topic at hand. It appears as if many of the contributors writing from a distance – academic or otherwise – were content to describe the traditional culture about which they were writing only in an ideal and perhaps simplified form. Perhaps these authors did not feel confident enough to describe the breakdown of the traditional food system, or thought it was not important enough to introduce it into a reference work, or perhaps they resisted expressing personal bias. A personal, albeit anecdotal example of this is the article on Uganda that I co-authored with someone living there. Had I written it myself I would most likely have gathered all possible reliable information but would have been cautious about saying anything about convenience food or fast food without direct experience, but my co-author mentioned them both as very important factors in changing foodways.

Had these questions been offered as possible topics, no doubt many more authors would have addressed them. But they were not mentioned anywhere in the guidelines or sample essay and it was, very interestingly, only those authors who could draw from personal experience rather than written evidence to support their assertions, that included family meals, fast food

and convenience food in their articles. Encyclopedia writers may well be biased when they feel confidently knowledgeable about a topic, but the erosion of family meals is not prominent on the agenda of the average encyclopedia contributor today.

12 Role of Home-grown Food in the Food Part of Strategies

Part III: Home-produced Food, Farmers' Markets and Wholesale Provisioning

The Role of Home-grown Food in the Food Culture of Slovenes

Maja Godina Golija

In every culture food acquisition and preparation have been the most fundamental economic activities of mankind while other community practices were of secondary importance. The high level of interest in this subject displayed by archaeologists, anthropologists, and ethnologists is, therefore, perfectly understandable.¹ The number of studies focusing on traditional elements of food culture greatly exceeds those dealing with modern aspects of food provision. And yet this area of traditional food provision, like other aspects of the material world, has been subjected to radical changes over the last five decades, changes arising from migration to cities, the urbanisation of rural areas, the rapid development of the food industry, and the growing purchasing power of consumers.

Agricultural Produce and Food Supply in Slovenia

At the beginning of the twentieth century a substantial majority of the Slovenian population lived in rural areas supported by agricultural production. Large towns and industrial centres were few in number and provided a living for only a segment of the population. In 1921, the percentage of the population engaged in agrarian activities (66%) was still very high, despite increasing industrialisation, particularly after the First World War. By 1931, the percentage had dropped to 59.9% and stood at a little over 50% in 1940.² Only a number of larger towns, such as Ljubljana and Maribor, had significant industrial plants that employed several thousand people each.

Before the Second World War Slovenian farms were generally self-sufficient. Their inhabitants' daily activities focused primarily on the provision of food and heat. One of the most important agricultural activities was the production of food, which was either cooked or processed for later use by the farmer's household.³ At this stage, the sale of agricultural products was still largely insignificant as most of what was produced was consumed by the farm households themselves. The quantity of crops produced by each

¹ Wiegelmann, G., *Alltags- und Festspeisen. Wandel und gegenwärtige Stellung*, Münster 2006, 14.

² Cvirn, J., Vidic, M. and Brenk, L., *Ilustrirana zgodovina Slovencev* ('Illustrated History of Slovenia'), Ljubljana 2000, 339.

³ Ložar, R., *Narodopisje Slovencev 1* ('Ethnography of the Slovene 1'), Ljubljana 1944, 98.

farm depended on its size and its geographical location – matters which dictated climatic and other conditions relevant to agricultural production. Farmers generally grew crops which regularly yielded enough produce for household needs and which were indigenous to the part of Slovenia in which they were grown. Since Slovenia is a geographically diversified country comprised of Alpine, Pannonian, and Mediterranean regions, its food culture differed from region to region.⁴

Food production was also an important activity for town dwellers. Although its significance diminished after the mid-1960s, home-grown produce still occupies a special place in the food culture of the urban Slovenian population. Especially important has been the cultivation of certain kinds of vegetables and fruit, as well as the raising of poultry, pigs, and rabbits. Even though the growing of vegetables and fruit was particularly significant for those of little means who were trying to augment their income and lower the cost of living, the most affluent urban middle-class families also grew their own vegetables and fruit. In addition to their regular chores, the servants in these middle-class families, particularly the maidservants and cooks, frequently had to cultivate the family vegetable garden also.⁵ The products were then preserved for winter to be consumed by the master of the house and his family. Even at that time, home-grown food was regarded as being superior to store-bought produce.

The gradual changes affecting traditional food habits in that period were largely the result of the greater mobility of the rural population and the easier movement of goods. Employment opportunities in larger towns enabled people from the country to come into contact with new kinds of food and food preparation, some of which they adopted and incorporated into their hitherto more traditional menus. New and better roads, and railway connections, introduced new kinds of foods into more remote locations. Then the rural population started to buy some of the staples used in their daily dishes in stores, which considerably influenced the structure of their menus. As the meals were no longer chiefly dependent upon home-grown produce for their content, they became more uniform in nature and thereby lost some of their regional characteristics.⁶

These changes became much more pronounced after the Second World War, particularly at the end of the 1950s and in the 1960s. This was mainly due to the higher standard of living and the increased purchasing power of

⁴ Godina Golija, M., *Prehranski pojmovnik za mlade* ('Concepts of Food Culture for Young People'), Maribor 2006, 51-2.

⁵ Žagar, J., 'Služkinje v Ljubljani' ('Housemaids in Ljubljana'), *Traditiones* 15 (1986): 30.

⁶ Godina Golija, *op. cit.*, 2006, 53.

the majority of the population, not just in Slovenia, but in the entire socialist Yugoslavia. When compared to other socialist countries, however, it was evident that stores in Slovenia offered more imported foodstuffs, such as citrus fruits, bananas, chocolate, tea and coffee, although usually offering only very few varieties of each, than elsewhere in the socialist world. Slovenes were introduced to a new type of store, the so-called market, which offered its customers foods that were stored on accessible shelves and which could be perused at will.

This was also the period of increased interest in industrially-processed food. As was the case elsewhere in Europe, Slovenes started to buy processed and canned food, such as meat and fish, vegetables, industrially-produced beverages such as Cockta and Ora, and bottled varieties of mineral water, instant soup mixes, and powdered pudding products. According to the British sociologists, Alain Beardsworth and Teresa Keil, people in the 1960s craved processed foods. This has changed significantly, however. As people now believe that they contain only empty calories, these products have acquired a very negative connotation and are regarded as being artificial, 'dead' food.⁷

Home-grown Vegetables and Fruit

Despite the relatively high standard of living enjoyed by people in Slovenia, the last two decades have witnessed an increased interest in growing one's own vegetables and fruit, both in urban centres and in the countryside. This might be explained, among other reasons, by the fact that the majority of the Slovenian population has rural roots. Many people, therefore, still feel strong ties to a rural lifestyle that focuses on village life and on the tilling of the land. On the other hand, there is also an increased trend, typical for most of the Western world, of growing one's own food, as this is considered to be healthier and of better quality than that which is mass produced. In addition, new leisure concepts promote the ideal of a healthy lifestyle and emphasise organic and biodynamic gardening. An increasing percentage of urban Slovenes spend their leisure hours growing vegetables, in their own or rented gardens, in their towns or in their vicinity.

According to various sources and fieldwork data, as many as two thirds of Slovenes – a fifth of whom reside in urban areas – own or rent a garden in which they grow primarily vegetables and, to a far lesser extent, fruit also. In comparison to town dwellers, rural families grow larger quantities of produce, preserving some of it for later use. Farmers primarily grow potatoes,

⁷ Beardsworth, A., Keil, T., *Sociology on the Menu*, London, New York 1997, 158.



Fig. 1: Rented gardens in the town of Maribor.

beans, lettuce, tomatoes, cabbage, peppers, turnips, kale, carrots, apples, pears, peaches, cherries, plums, and strawberries. The smaller urban gardens, which are usually just large enough to grow vegetables and fruit for daily

consumption, are planted with lettuce, radicchio – a type of leaf chicory – peas, beans, tomatoes, peppers, and strawberries. Any surplus produce is usually frozen and consumed during the winter months.⁸

Preserving Vegetables and Fruit at Home

The need to preserve home-grown produce was a matter of necessity in the past when certain kinds of fresh foods were scarce or unavailable during the winter months. Although not predominantly restricted to rural areas, the preservation of food was typical for farming families whose land yielded an abundance of produce. Meat and meat-products were, for many years, preserved by smoking or drying. These preservation methods were replaced by freezing in the mid-1970s when deep freezers became widely available in the Slovenian market. Until the 1950s, pigs were slaughtered, not only in the countryside, but also in towns. Bacon (which could also be store-bought) was mixed with lard to make cracklings or minced lard. Pork lard was generally used for cooking until the mid-1960s by which time vegetable oils predominated. Some meat pieces and sausages were first fried, then put into lard and kept in special containers. Sausages and salami were sometimes wrapped in paper and stored in grain.⁹

The preparation of sauerkraut and turnips, which used to be the chief staples in wintertime, was a widespread activity. An informant from Celje said, that every year until the end of the 1960s, her family used to prepare a hundred kilos of sauerkraut, which was the basis of daily meals throughout the winter. Some people also made apple and wine vinegar. In May and August, when good quality eggs were inexpensive and available in large quantities, they were bought and stored for later use.

Before the Second World War, sugar was only rarely used for the preservation of vegetables and fruit, something which was probably due to its high price. Many households could not afford to buy sugar or the many jars needed for food preservation by bottling. Consequently, only small quantities of stewed fruit and marmalade were preserved.¹⁰ Raspberries were made into syrup and other fruit was usually dried or made into a fruit brandy. The most popular vegetable for preservation was the tomato which was cooked to form a tomato sauce. Cucumbers and beets were pickled. When freezers became widely available vegetables and fruit were frozen, and deep-freezing has remained the most popular method of preservation to the

⁸ Godina Golija, M., *Oblikovanje sodobnega potrošnika* ('The Formation of the Modern Consumer'), *Etnolog* 18 (2008): 99.

⁹ Baš, A., *Slovenski etnološki leksikon* ('Slovenian Ethnological Lexicon') 2004, 232.

¹⁰ Godina Golija, *op. cit.*, 1996, 46.

present day. Many Slovenian households freeze vegetables for winter use, particularly carrots, kohlrabi, spinach, and peas. Even more popular is the freezing of fruit such as strawberries, blueberries, and blackcurrants. Apricots and plums are also preserved but to a lesser extent.

The widespread habit of preserving vegetables and fruit at home was further confirmed by a questionnaire circulated by the author in 2008 to eighty randomly-selected households. On being asked about their family's food-supply habits, respondents answered that they still grew, and preserved, a large portion of produce at home. Besides freezing, the most popular method of preserving fresh food is pasteurisation. While fruit, especially cherries, peaches, apricots and plums, is preserved using sugar, vegetables, particularly cucumbers, beets, peppers, and kidney beans, are pickled in vinegar. Inhabitants of the Primorsko region also make *salsa*, the tomato sauce that is an important ingredient of Mediterranean dishes such as spaghetti, lasagna and gnocchi.

These findings have been corroborated by sociological research. According to sociologists, food self-supply is relatively widespread among the Slovenes. Almost one half of Slovenian households grow vegetables for their own consumption, and a third also grow fruit. Approximately a half of Slovenian households preserve vegetables for wintertime use on an annual basis, and two fifths preserve fruit. One quarter make their own meat products, particularly sausages, and a third freeze larger quantity of fresh meat. One fourth of households freeze different kinds of vegetables, and some freeze fresh fruit.¹¹

The Role of Ready-made Foods and Meals

Industrially-preserved food, which was almost unknown to Slovenian consumers prior to the Second World War, gained their confidence very slowly after the War. Due to the development of the food industry and the rise of their standard of living, this food gradually became accessible to the majority of the population. The mid-1960s saw an increase in the consumption of canned foods, particularly processed meats, such as liver pâté and luncheon meat, and also canned fish. Preserved beets, pickled cucumbers, peppers, olives, and mixtures of preserved vegetable salads, became equally popular.

¹¹ Kos, D., Tivadar, B., Ule, M., Renner, T., Hočevnar, M., *Razvoj orodij in model za spremljanje rabe kmetijskih in živilskih proizvodov* ('The Development of Tools and a Model for Monitoring the Use of Farming and Food Products'), Ljubljana 2000, 96.

Despite the fact that Slovenes feel a considerable aversion towards canned and ready-mixed food, the data indicate that, in fact, its consumption is rapidly growing. In Ljubljana alone, the largest supermarkets report that the sale of these foods has increased fivefold in recent years.¹² This is due to several factors, such as that a much larger percentage of women are working that was the case in the past; the fact that family members in general have much busier schedules than previously, which makes it difficult to find the time necessary to prepare fresh food; and an increasing number of small households with only one or two members.

On the other hand, two-thirds of the adult Slovenian population still believes that all artificial chemical additives may cause cancer¹³ and they do not trust industrially processed foods which contain additives. Instead, they place high value on home-grown food and on dishes prepared with fresh home-grown ingredients. Researchers have also established that the joy of cooking, and a willingness to take enough time to cook fresh food, are equally significant factors. Both are closely related to the values of the individual, or of the community in which that individual lives, and with her or his organisation of time.

According to a poll conducted by Delo, the largest Slovenian daily newspaper, the most important daily meal in Slovenia is lunch. Family members try to prepare it and to consume it together. Although employed on a full-time basis, women are prepared to give the time necessary for its preparation since Slovenes generally believe that a home-cooked meal is by far the best. Lunch partaken by all, or most, family members is more common in urban centres than in rural areas, as it is much more difficult for rural families, whose members generally work or study elsewhere and return home at different times, to take lunch together. Each person eats her or his lunch on arriving home, often at very different times. In such cases, the traditional Slovenian lunch, with all family members gathered at the table, takes place at the weekend.¹⁴

In conclusion it can be stated that Slovenes still largely reject ready-made foods and meals, as they believe that these do not taste well, that they are no longer fresh, and that they contain artificial and harmful additives, inferior ingredients, too many calories, and too much fat. In their opinion, the food

¹² Tivadar, B., *Prihraniš čas, zapraviš ljubezen: ambivalenten odnos do kupljene (pol)pripravljene hrane* ('You Save Time But Waste Love: An Ambivalent Attitude Towards Store-Bought and Pre-Prepared Food'), *Annales* 13 (2003): 89.

¹³ Toš, N., *Slovensko javno mnenje* ('Slovenian Public Opinion Surveys'), Ljubljana 2000, 93.

¹⁴ Podkrižnik, M., *Jemo in klepetamo, za televizijo nam ni mar: Slovenci za mizo* ('We Eat and Chat, Not Caring for Television: Slovenes at the Dinner Table'), *Delo* 41, no. 6, 1 (2000): 12.

industry is fuelled by a wish to amass large profits and does not pay sufficient attention to how these foods are processed. The highest on the list of food priorities for Slovenes are home-cooked meals, particularly the family lunch as the main meal of the day. For the wife (the mother) who usually prepares it, lunch represents a means by which to strengthen family ties and it symbolises a close link with home, her love for other members of the family, and her wish for a harmonious family life.

The home-production of fruit and vegetables and the preparation of food at home, also represent a means by which to control one's nutrition and, by extension, one's entire life. They denote acts of rebellion against the modern manner of alienated food preparation and consumption and a rejection of consumer goods, including food, the origin and processing methods of which are largely unknown, and deemed to be motivated only by a desire for high profits. In their studies, food scholars state that food culture is the means by which the majority of the population can regain their dignity, and, as such, it can be designated as a field of freedom.

Philosophy and Practice of Home-made Food in Croatia

Nives Rittig Beljak, Mirjana Randić and Orlanda Obad

Introduction

In the calm periods of European history, people did not suffer from hunger any more, as was previously the case, even after the introduction of the potato and maize. A plentiful supply of food has helped to broaden the variety of food on offer so that nowadays it is a matter for people themselves to decide on their own approach on feeding their family – by following advice provided by nutritionists, marketing advertisements, cookery books or schools, or simply by adhering to the old cooking habits inherited from their grandmothers, which originated in their own local region. The dilemma about food choice affects both rural and urban people.

At the same time as a wide variety of foods are on offer in the market, people are also concerned that the large quantities of inexpensive, low-quality foods, which are offered by a market eager to make money, may be injurious to their health. A certain amount of confusion reigns, as there is no clear signal or guidance for consumers about which products are good for their health. To whom should consumers listen, then? Whom should they believe in this context?

In Search of a Clear Signal

Consumers are looking for safety with regard to foodstuffs on offer. The question then arises whether a food brand (which is a term pointing to a set of values) which a foodstuff carries, offers food safety to consumers. Etymologically speaking, the word *brand* derives from the term *to brand* (with a set of values); thus the consumer would be satisfied if some one authority were to brand all food on offer in order to guarantee safety. Since this is not the case, consumers, feel, perhaps, that it is advisable to buy food marked 'organic', or to decide on products that are stated to be '100% Croatian', that is, domestically produced foodstuffs. Visual presentation or labels on food, such as green-coloured packaging or an 'eco' logo, help people to decide to purchase a product, and the eco food products are also easily identifiable as they are often placed on separate shelves in stores. Unlike the brand (100% Croatian) that makes us proud as a nation, home-made products do this on

a regional basis ('*Ajme što je dobra naša domaća paštica!*' ['Oh, the taste of our home-made stew is so good!']; '*Nema ulja do našeg domaćeg*' ['There is no olive oil like our own']).

This paper is primarily concerned with why people choose a food marked as a 'home-made' traditional product, in combination with the label 'organic'. Why do these two labels go hand in hand? Because people who like home-made, traditional products are convinced that they are also organic, it would seem. But it is evident from a case study dealing with the habits of Croatian food consumers that many of them do not consider these labels at all when purchasing food.

This is also the case with foreign tourists visiting Croatia – tourists do not feel overwhelmed by the experience of eating Croatian home-made cuisine according to recent research.¹ The results of a study published in 2005 indicate that: 'None of the tourists said that they purchase organic food, and very few stated that they purchase certified products...'²

Furthermore, many Croatian interviewees stated that they do nothing in particular to allay their fears concerning food quality (23%). For most interviewees, the main method of assuaging their concern about food quality was by remaining loyal to producers (28%) and traders (16%) who had supplied them with good quality food in the past.³ While an awareness of the health benefits deriving from organic food consumption is increasing, Croatia still lags behind Europe in terms of a *new moral code* regarding food⁴

People in Croatia tend to regard price as an important aspect influencing choice when buying groceries, as they are oriented towards an 'ordinary shopping economy', especially in recessionary times. On the positive side is the fact that Croatians traditionally buy a lot of food (60%) in open-air markets, to which farmers come daily with fresh food from their farms.

¹ Judging by differences in human taste it is easy to manipulate it. There are TV shows (especially on German TV), that make random street tests. Candidates on these TV shows blindfoldedly sit at a table and taste two kinds of food: home-made food and an industrial product. Very often candidates are unable to distinguish home-made food and are likely to put a home-made label on an industrial tasting product. Food taste can be manipulated in a variety of ways. Thus Europe is advising consumers to trust 'signals' of excellence such as HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points), ISO (International Organization for Standardization), PDO (Protected Designation of Origin), PGI (Protected Geographical Indication), TSG (Traditional Speciality Guaranteed), and so on.

² Zanolli, R., Jukić, N., *Marketing Study on Organic and Other Selected Special Quality Products from Croatia*. Final Publishable Report, Polytechnic University of Marche-DIIGA, 2005.

³ *Idem*.

⁴ Köstlin, K., 'A New Ascension of Regional Food – Shopping and Eating with a Good Conscience', in Lysaght, P., (ed.), *Food and Meals at Cultural Crossroads*. Proceedings of the 17th Conference of the International Commission for Ethnological Food Research, Oslo 2010, 37.



Fig. 1: Home produced sour cabbage, sour turnip and fresh vegetables on sale, Doalc open-air market, Zagreb, Croatia, 2008. Photo: Tena Mimica.



Fig. 2: Fresh vegetables and homemade brandy products on sale, Omiš open-air market, Dalmatia, 2007. Photo: Tena Mimica.



Fig. 3: Fresh cottage cheese and maize bread on sale, Dolac cheese market, Zagreb, 2008. Photo: Tena Mimica.

Croatian consumers believe that food products, which come from small local farms, have not been treated with pesticides.

The Search for Identity

In recent times ethnologists have recognised that identity concerns form part of modernisation processes, since this aspect is evident in all levels of society en route to modernisation, irrespective of whether they are in a post socialist phase like Croatia or have a different ideological orientation.⁵ Research on identity is concerned with all aspects of life. Thus, for instance, a musicologist named Naila Ceribašić gave the following title to a recent book (in translation): 'Croatian, Rustic, Old-fashioned and Home-made'.⁶ The book is about folklore, therefore about non-material heritage, but the title also accommodates signals that attract those in search of 'authentic' foods.

⁵ Grbić, J., 'Modeli i pristupi istraživanju identiteta' ('Models and Approaches to Research of Identity'), in Rittig-Beljak, N., (ed.), *HEIMATMUSEUM Zavičajni muzej- osnovati ili spaliti* ('Homeland Museum - to found or to burn'), Zagreb 2005, 45.

⁶ Ceribašić, Naila, *Hrvatsko, seljačko, starinsko i domaće. Povijest i etnografija javne prakse narodne glazbe u Hrvatskoj* ('Croatian, Rustic, Old-Fashioned and Homemade. History and Ethnography of the Public Practice of Folk Music in Croatia'), Zagreb 2003.

Marks or labels used to distinguish 'authentic' from conventional foods are seemingly strictly defined, but in reality they are often ambiguous and confusing. This is the case with the label organic, the meaning of which is not always clear, and it is often accompanied by green-coloured packaging for marketing purposes. There is also the often unclear use of the labels 'traditional' and 'home-made'. An example of this from the island of Cres is as follows. Some cake makers on the island chose the term 'traditional' instead of the term 'home-made' for marketing purposes. The label on the packaging says: "CRESKI KACOTINI" ('Cakes from Cres') with nuts. Traditional cookies from the Island of Cres, Hand-made cookies with no artificial flavour or sweeteners'. The essence of local food flavour thus lies in the recipe; and it is advisable not to change the traditional recipe since to do so would constitute an 'invention of tradition'.⁷

Consumers purchasing food in Croatian markets seek for foods produced domestically and without excessive chemical treatment and storage. They rely on the product description given by those who sell the foodstuffs, and they even believe that goods have not been chemically treated if the seller is dressed in a peasant costume. In addition, the product description is often hand written – which makes it more convincing – and gives the place of origin (a domestic region) of the product; for example, the description might read 'home-grown peaches from the village of Škabrnja', and so on. However, it is also the case that some of the goods sold by retailers are purchased cheaply from big wholesalers – rather than being supplied by local farmers – and resold at a profit in the stores. .

'Home-made', – not 'traditional', and almost never 'organic' – is the label agreed on between sellers and buyers to describe produce for sale in open-air markets in Croatia. The term 'home-made' is considered as covering a wider range of activities than those regarded as 'traditional', and it is also regarded as being the more convenient term of the two.

Is Organically Grown Food Similar to or the Same as Traditional Food?

Even before the introduction of mechanisation, traditional agriculture was motivated by the idea of higher yields and a better income; on the other hand 'organic gardening' is concerned principally with health preservation. This is the essential difference between the two food-production modes. In traditional farming, land rotation principles were followed because modern-style fertilisers were not available to farmers. 'We are what we eat' is a motto

⁷ Hobsbawm, Eric, Rangers, Terence, (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1992.

of organic gardening, motivating farmers to grow healthier foods, thus adding to the cost of producing organic products. Higher product prices should, actually, encourage farmers to return to traditional soil treatment in order to increase the cost-effectiveness of growing organic foodstuffs.

Actually, most Croatians are aware of the rationale for organic farming, which are: the avoidance of noxious mineral fertilisers and pesticides, while maintaining farming methods which respect the soil and animal welfare.⁸

It is important to say that organic products are not standard worldwide. IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) is, for the time being, the most popular platform which offers co-operation, exchange of experience, and information about organic products. No one should believe that the farming population is unaware of new trends (and dangers) in agricultural production. They are not above keeping chemically untreated fruit for their own children, while selling on products that have been subject to pesticide treatments, for example; but like everywhere else, there are responsible and irresponsible sellers in every market, it would seem. It is almost a rule that the responsibility of a seller is higher if a product has a declaration of quality. The manufacturer is proud of his products. If it bears a label giving the name and address of the manufacturer, he will not, for example, sell someone else's brandy with a bunch of herbs that were only put into the liquid before going to the market. The problem lies in the dynamics of education. Healthy food guidelines are not reaching consumers and producers at the same time. Both prefer to watch special TV shows about food safety; it is questionable, however, to what extent, if any, they are influenced by them.

Organic food production takes account of traditional agricultural methods but allows modern equipment for tilling the soil. Modern culinary methods, such as the Slow Food Movement, also respect old-fashioned ways of cooking to the extent that if slow cooking is required from the point of view of taste, a pressure cooker should not be used to speed up the cooking process.

Traditional Cuisine and Slow Food

At the present time, many restaurants in urban environments as well as in tourist resorts along the Adriatic coast, offer dishes cooked in the traditional fashion, such as by being baked on the open hearth under a sort of clay or metal cover called a '*peka*'; '*Jela ispod peke*' 'dishes baked under a *peka*' usually

⁸ Field research conducted in 2005 by Prof. R. Zanoli in co-operation with researchers from the Italian university 'Politecnica delle Marche', on two hundred consumers and two hundred tourists in four major Croatian cities – Zagreb, Split, Rijeka and Dubrovnik.

consist of a combination of meat (veal, poultry) or seafood (fish, octopus) and vegetables (potatoes, peppers and similar). The ingredients are put in a tin tray and covered with the aforementioned lid, and the tray is placed on the hearth. The lid should be covered with hot cinders to enable all of the ingredients to be thoroughly cooked. The cooking process takes several hours, resulting in a delicious taste and aroma, approved of by consumers who do not mind waiting until the dish is ready. Of course, the interval is usually spent in enjoying some *hors d'oeuvres* like prosciutto, sheep-cheese and olives, accompanied by wine, all of which proudly bear the epithet 'home-made'.

Croatians are especially fond of octopus baked under the clay cover. In their opinion this is the best way to prepare this mollusc. There was a story about Paul – the renowned oracle octopus from 'Sea World' in Oberhausen, Germany, who was said to have predicted the results of football matches of the German team during the FIFA World Cup in South Africa in 2010, and, as we all know, they were not always in favour of the Germans. Croatian newspapers commented on whether Paul might not end up 'under the *peka*' and be eaten by furious Germans, while foreign newspaper reporters wondered whether the above-named octopus would be fried, boiled or eaten in paella, for the same reason!

Peasant/Urban Ideas about 'Home-made'

For the peasant and urban population of Croatia, the idea of home-made products usually indicates food made at home, with little or no industrial-type ingredients, conserving agents or yeast being involved. Such food is often offered to visitors or given to friends and relatives as a gift. Typical products in this category of food are fruit preserves, liqueurs, cakes, and fresh or smoked meat preserves, such as cracklings and blood sausages.

Peasant producers are often conservative in taste, but at the same time they try to satisfy the demands of the market by selling food which they themselves do not eat, such as wild asparagus or dandelion leaves. And they will even try to get people to buy these by suggesting, untruthfully in many cases, perhaps: 'do buy these dandelion leaves; they taste so good that even I ate some yesterday'. Urban buyers would also sometimes be asked for recipes on how to prepare some of the plants which people from the village sell but do not traditionally consume. Some foods, like corn (maize) bread is baked for and sold in the markets, while, nowadays, it is not usually eaten by the people in the villages anymore. In fact, this bread is a favourite of sections of the urban population, while others despise it as it reminds them of a life of deprivation during and after the Second World War. When it comes

to breads, 'home-made' is thus not a word which always has a positive accent in the villages, as the peasant population usually prefers industrially produced white wheaten bread, to the home-made variety.

'Home-made' is thus a label which can have a very positive accent for urban populations, as it reminds them of village food, especially that from their ancestral villages. For them, it also implies that the fruit and vegetables on sale in the town's open-air market have been produced on organic farms. People usually buy well-known items of produce but they might sometimes choose, for example, vegetables available in the market which they have not consumed before, and then they would tend to ask the seller for a relevant recipe. The exchange of recipes at open-air markets is nowadays a very common element of the communication process between the urban and peasant population in Croatia.

From time to time the milk and meat industries in Croatia evoke the taste of traditionally produced food. For example, in the 1980s, the Croatian milk industry ('Dukat') used the slogan, 'sour milk as from granny's pot', as a popular newspaper advertisement for a new line of milk products. The photograph depicted a smiling child with a 'moustache' of sour milk, grasping firmly a traditional clay milk pot.

Educational suggestions in daily newspapers teach us, *inter alia*, to look at how a meal is prepared, where the fruits are picked, from whom we buy wine and oil, or to check if the chefs (cooks) shorten the cooking process by using microwave ovens.

With regard to meat, even if roasting a lamb on a spit looks cruel (and it was done in the same way even in Homer's time), it guarantees that the meat is freshly roasted. The origin of the meat is a completely different matter, however; therefore frozen meat and fish should not be labelled 'home-made' but only that which is 'freshly roasted' or cooked. However, in the labelling and cooking process, the chain of authenticity with regard to raw food origin as well as to cooking technology is no doubt often broken.

Are Farmers who Make

Home-made Meals 'Born and Raised' Farmers?

A mark of geographical origin (PGI: Protected Geographical Indication) or *terroir* is also a recognisable sign of quality. It denotes specific characteristics linked to the tradition of production in a certain region. In Croatia, both signs, PGI and *terroir*, are used in wine production, although *terroir* is applicable to other products as well.⁹

⁹ See also: Téchoueyres, I., 'Local Food between Nature and Culture: From a Neighbour's Farm to *Terroir*'. Interview with Laurence Bérard. *Anthropology of Food* 4, May 2005. Local Foods. *Produits alimentaires locaux*.

We must be tolerant, however, with regard to the geographical origin of those who make 'home-made' foods. Indeed, in many cases the young brides in charge of traditional kitchens were not always from the same village as their husbands, and they had to learn local cooking methods from older local women. Nowadays, gardening and cooking in the traditional, old, home-made style is not necessarily conducted by farmers whose families have lived in the same village for at least three generations, but rather by hobbyists who perform their new activity with heart and soul.

In Croatia, projects and businesses concerned with traditional foods and cuisine still depend on individual and family initiatives. By way of example, the Sever family, which is recognised by a large number of Croatians as a master producer of fruit and vegetables, can be mentioned in this context. In the past ten years, spouses Ivka and Marijo Sever have become one of the largest producers of organic food in Croatia. The romantic version of the Sever family story goes as follows: a young couple, he, a professional architect, and she, with a degree in agriculture, lost their jobs in the early 2000s. But, as parents of two small children, and instead of seeking social support and a safer job, the Severs decided to make a business out of their hobby – ecological agricultural production – on a few acres of inherited land. And they succeeded.

Their flours, in discretely designed packages, are recognisable on supermarket shelves. When the weather is not too cold, they sell their produce in two of Zagreb's open-air markets, and their 'eco-basket' food, which they deliver to the doors of more than two hundred households daily, can be ordered online.

After another few years the Severs will probably move their business to larger premises and maybe they will build a small food-processing factory. But so far, it is still locally based and depends on very hard work for its success.

The Severs complain that their biggest problem is the finding of good workers. 'No one is required to work as hard as we do, and we know how crazy a working rhythm we have. But the majority of workers find the hours required hard' – says 39-year-old Ivka Sever. The Severs are the largest producers of organic food in Croatia, and the story of the growth of their business since 2000 is a reflection of strengthening trends in the organic food market in Croatia.

This is also evident in information disseminated by the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture. In 2009, there were a total of six hundred and thirty-two eco-manufacturers in Croatia, that is, five times more than in the year 2003.

In 2002 only fifty-one acres of land were used for eco-agricultural purposes in comparison to more than seven and a half thousand acres five years later. However, this is still less than one per cent of total agricultural land in Croatia. Compared to the percentage used for organic production in our neighbouring countries such as Slovenia (5%) and Austria (16%), this is still very small.

Biovega, a Croatian company engaged in the importation, distribution and production of natural and organic products, predicts a somewhat slower growth (20 – 25%) in domestic organic food production. It explains that at the moment only about 35% of bio-producers are Croatian and that 65% are foreign. But the number of domestic organic producers is slowly rising. To the average Croat, organic food is a luxury in the context of the monthly share of income spent on food. From an interview conducted by Orlanda Obad (one of the authors of this paper) with Darko Znaor, a Croatian expert in ecological farming, we learn that organic food producers are still oriented towards specific consumer segments, often rich and trendy people, or towards those who use organic food for their specific healthy diet.

Finally, as the majority of Croats believe that food bought in open-air markets is naturally grown and is, therefore, healthy, it follows that the buying of organic food is considered to be an extravagance. However, Znaor stresses that as time goes on and as systematic food control is introduced, it will be hard to hold on to these convictions. He expects that in the next phase, by entering the social mainstream, eco-products will be more and more accepted as healthier and more environmentally friendly foods by a broader segment of the population.

In terms of the use of mineral fertilisers and pesticides in agricultural production, Croatia ranks second and third, respectively, in this context, in Europe. Only the Netherlands and Portugal have a higher use of these chemicals than Croatia. Znaor concludes that, according to official reports, ninety-two per cent of Croatian arable land is treated with mineral fertilisers at least once a year.¹⁰

Conclusion

In food markets, the taste of food can conjure up the taste of the past, so why cannot the past become the future of our Croatian villages? What can be offered in terms of healthy, old-fashioned foods to citizens and tourists in order to make everyone – farmers, apartment owners, retailers, and so on – satisfied?

¹⁰ Obad, O., 'Pravo lice eko-uspjeha' ('The True Face of Eco-success'), *Forbes* 3 (2009): 44-7.

The interior of Croatia has many abandoned villages – a sad sight often to be seen in the Balkan area after the last war. However, if organic gardening could be become associated with a chain of hotels or a special hotel on the Adriatic littoral, it is possible that this would encourage former inhabitants to return to the villages and to hire young people, who are waiting in vain for city jobs, to take part in organic food production in the countryside. The guaranteed purchase of organic products would be a good bait to encourage farmers to restart farming along organic lines. This is an important moment in which the abandoned land of the Croatian interior could be recovered. We believe that tourists would enjoy the prospect of visiting the village where the kind of healthy food used in their meal was being grown. Perhaps after a day at a sea resort, tourists would like to visit those villages and see 'their' fields which are producing healthy foods, as distances from the coast to the interior are short. A nice vision, isn't it?

Does Anyone Cook Anymore in the United States?

Adelia Hanson

Judging from news stories and official statistics, the state of home cooking, eating, and consequently nutrition and health in the United States, is very poor indeed. Numerous journal articles and books like *Fast Food Nation*,¹ and films like 'Food'² expose the grip that the multinational food industry has had in making us a nation of overweight and unhealthy people. In August of 2009, *The New York Times Magazine* devoted its main article to 'No One Cooks Here Anymore' by food writer Michael Pollan.³

Pollan's article is long and philosophical, and makes several points. To touch on a few main ones, he observes that just as Americans have reduced cooking and eating at home, they are increasingly entertained by food television. Yet this food programming is less about teaching cooking as it is about cooking or baking-contest entertainment and a vehicle for advertising places to eat and for processed foods.⁴

As I read the Pollan article I thought – but *somebody* is still cooking! I shop for fresh, raw produce in grocery stores, and there are others doing the same thing. Compared to when I was first married (in the 1960s) the produce section now carries vegetables that we regarded as exotic and not available locally only a couple of decades ago. Fancy, professional grade cookware is now easy to find. The number of cookbooks published has vastly increased. We now have farmers' markets and artisan cheese makers even in small towns in Oklahoma.

However, I must admit that the number of people like me has steadily declined, while the number of convenience foods and fast food franchises steadily increases, along with the weight of too many people around me. In this paper I will touch on some of the main reasons for this situation and on

¹ Schlosser, Eric, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*, Boston 2001. The film with the same name (2006) is loosely based on the book. The screenplay was written by Eric Schlosser, and the film was directed by HYPERLINK.

² For Jan Svankmajer's Food Trilogy, see http://blog.wfmu.org/freeform/2006/07/jan_svankmajers.html; accessed 28.2. 2011.

³ Pollan, Michael, 'No One Cooks Here Anymore: What Takeout and "Top Chef" are Doing to our Lifestyles, Our Health, and Maybe Our Essence', *The New York Times Magazine*, 2 August 2009, 26-35, 44-7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

some efforts to reintroduce healthy eating ideas to our population, especially to young people.

Pollan's article states that it is often assumed that the decline in cooking has been caused by women working outside the home. But the effect of women working on the decline in cooking is a very small because women who are not in the work force also cook less – though not to the same degree as their working sisters. The total decline in home cooking is 40% since 1965. Both working and non-working women rely much more on industrially-processed food – a trend that began, Pollan says, after World War II turned industrial products designed to feed soldiers in the field into convenience foods marketed to busy families.⁵

One must return to the 1960s to find a time when most people cooked and ate their food at home. This food was largely made from raw agricultural products and involved more preparation time. Gradually at first, but increasingly since the 1980s, mass production of industrially-processed food has changed the kinds of foods we eat, and has reduced by half the amount of time we spend on preparing food. In 2003, processed food, that is non-agricultural products, accounted for 80% of the cost of food eaten at home.⁶

We are becoming an obese nation, and the reason Pollan cites for this is based on a study by Harvard economist David Cutler and two co-authors, in the *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (2003). Titled 'Why have Americans Become More Obese?' and using survey and statistical analysis, it points out that while calories expended by individuals have not changed significantly since 1980, the calories we consume have gone up dramatically.⁷ There are many negative consequences to these developments, psychological and social, but the worst is the impact on physical health, especially the increase in heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.⁸

Processed and fast foods have reduced the importance of set meal times with the result of weight gain since snack and fast food can be consumed anytime and anywhere (often in the car). This trend has occurred across the demographic spectrum irrespective of age, race, income, marital status, or employment, though the rate of increase varies within those groups. Notably low-income and certain ethnic groups seem to be most affected.

Still, as a whole, according to Cutler, demographic factors account for only 10% of the increase in body mass index and obesity.⁹

⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁶ Cutler, David M., Glaeser, Edward L., Shapiro, Jesse M., 'Why Have Americans Become More Obese?', *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17, no. 3, (Summer 2003): 106, 108.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 93-118.

⁸ <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/trends.html#County>; accessed 28.2. 2011.

Buying such processed food has reduced the 'time price or time cost' (as the economists call it) of consumption and has encouraged increased consumption. Cutler takes the potato as an example of time price at work. In the first half of the twentieth century potatoes were a large part of our diet, and were usually eaten boiled, baked, or mashed. French-fried potatoes (*pommes frites*) were a rare treat because preparing and making them took more time. With mass production of pre-cut and frozen French fries, it is easy to consume them often, and now fried potatoes are our favourite vegetable. Their time price was reduced. The reduction allows more frequent consumption not only of French fries but also of more kinds of food in general – the ever-increasing variety of purchased snack foods. Easy availability of high-calorie food that previously was eaten on special occasions means we can eat it every day. That added to the human tendency to lack self-control around food, results in weight gain.¹⁰

Cutler points out that obesity increase is directly correlated with access to new food technology and processed foods. When the eating of high calorie meals or snacks is easily done any time we please, we eat more often. One of the paper's several conclusions is that we are eating more meals, not eating more in any one meal.¹¹

I could argue with that statement, though. When I was younger a hamburger had only one meat patty, sometimes with cheese. Today you can order fast food hamburgers with two and even three meat patties, and bacon and cheese on top of that. The nutrition information on Wendy's triple 'baconator' lists 1360 calories, and 91 fat grams.¹²

And that is just the solid food. Then there is drink. Soft drinks that used to be in 12 oz. bottles are now available in 32 and 64 oz. cups from which some people are continuously sipping. These add many calories from sugar and high fructose corn syrup. A study by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health showed that reduction of liquid calorie intake, especially drinks sweetened with sugar and/or high fructose corn syrup, had the biggest impact on weight loss, stronger than solid calorie intake.¹³

Cutler also makes comparisons to several European countries where there are fewer processed foods, and more regulation of food and agriculture. In

⁹ Cutler, Glaeser, Shapiro, *op cit.*, 2003, 93-4, 98.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 94, 104, 106, 112-13.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 104, 108.

¹² www.wendys.com/food/Nutrition.jsp; accessed 28.2. 2011.

¹³ Chen, Liwei, Appel, Lawrence J., Loria, Catherine, Lin, Pao-Hwa, Champagne, Catherine M., Elmer, Patricia J, Ard, Jany D., Mitchell, Diane, Batch, Bryan C., Svetkey, Laura P., Caballero, Benjamin, 'Reduction in Consumption of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages is Associated with Weight Loss: The PREMIER Trial', *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 1 April, 2009.

places where these conditions exist, and home cooking is common, there is less obesity.¹⁴

Pollan abstracts from the Cutler *et al* data that the way to counteract weight-gain from processed foods is to return to cooking at home. 'The amount of time spent cooking,' he writes, 'predicts obesity rates more reliably than income or female participation in the labor force. Other research supports the idea that cooking is a better predictor of a healthful diet than social class.'¹⁵ He quotes from another of his sources, a food industry researcher named Harry Balzer who said: 'You want Americans to eat less? I have the diet for you. It's short, and it's simple. . . Cook it yourself. That's it. Eat anything you want – just as long as you're willing to cook it yourself.'¹⁶

There is at least one good consequence of the recent world financial recession. People who used to eat out often now have in fact begun to eat more meals at home. The word from cookbook publishing is that home-style cookbooks are more popular than ever.¹⁷

Still the negative effects of thirty years of bad eating behaviour is not easy to turn around – especially in the young who have known no other way. The U.S. Government Center for Disease Control (CDC) has charted the grim progress of obesity levels in each state since 1985. Every year the numbers rise until, at present, one third of adults (72 million) are obese (defined as body mass index over 30). And worse yet, 16 % of children are obese. This is a doubling for adults, and a tripling for children. It is no surprise that cardio-vascular diseases and diabetes rates have gone up drastically and cause a huge expense in medical costs, as well as time lost to employers.¹⁸

In June 2010 the Trust for American's Health issued a report: 'F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future'. The report ranks the states with the highest and lowest obesity rates. My state, Oklahoma ranked sixth highest in obesity, after five states of the deep South where fried food is a cultural norm, and poverty rates are high. In 2010, for the first time, the number of obese adults passed the 30% mark – reaching 30.6%, that is, up from 29.5% last year.¹⁹

¹⁴ Cutler, Glaeser, Shapiro, *op cit.*, 2003, 110-11; Pollan, *op. cit.*, 2009, 47.

¹⁵ Pollan, *op. cit.*, 2009, 47.

¹⁶ *Idem.*

¹⁷ Plushnick-Masti, Ramit, AP news story, 'Cutting Costs at Dinner', in *Stillwater NewsPress*, 24 September 2008, A10.

¹⁸ www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/AAG/obesity.htm; accessed 28.2.2011; Collier-Cool, Lisa, 'Reversing Childhood Obesity: Nationwide Efforts Underway to Save a Generation at Risk', *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 May 2010, D4.

¹⁹ 'F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future', report by Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; Kim Archer, 'Oklahomans 6th Fattest', *Tulsa World*, 30 June 2010, A1.

In another survey, Oklahoma ranks last in the consumption of fruits and vegetables. This is partially the result of eating often at fast food restaurants, and partially cultural, or the result of 'food deserts' in areas of urban poverty. It is a little surprising though because Oklahoma has always been a largely agricultural state. However, the number of family farms (with their kitchen gardens) has greatly reduced in recent years as small producers struggle to compete with large-scale operations to make profits from cash crops – largely wheat. The result is that the state imports 90% of its fresh produce. There is a lot of room for small producers to grow garden produce for new markets supplying local farmers' markets and farm-to-school programmes – the number of which is growing, but still ranks lower than other states.²⁰

Not surprisingly, The United Health Foundation's 2009 report ranked Oklahoma second to last in overall health.²¹ The explanations for our state's obesity and poor health rate are more complex than we can go into here. Among the factors are poverty, the low rate of education, the low number of people medically insured, plus a higher than average number of older people, Native-American, African-American, and Hispanic citizens. The traditional southern, Black, and Hispanic food cultures favour fried meats, high carbohydrate foods, and low vegetable consumption. In addition, cheap calories (i.e. processed snack foods) are the choice of the poor and hungry. The U.S. Department of Agriculture classifies 14.6% in the U.S., and nearly 15% in Oklahoma, as food insecure – that is hungry at least some times.²²

All this alarming information has been noticed by national, state, and local government agencies as well as by non-profit organisations responsible for health and food policies. A wide range of policies and strategies have been launched to attempt to change behaviour towards better eating choices.

Programmes to Help Oklahomans Make Better Food Choices

'2009 Oklahoma' launched the Oklahoma Health Improvement Plan, urging citizens to 'Eat better. Move more. Be tobacco-free'. This plan is more complex than the slogan, however. Among many strategies to achieve improved diet,

²⁰ http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/health_professionals/statereport.htm; accessed 28.2.2011.

²¹ <http://www.americashealthrankings.org/measure/2009/overall.aspx>; accessed 28.2.2011.

²² McGee, Corrie, 'Public Enemy Number One', *Oklahoma Magazine*, October 2009, 78; Archer, Kim, 'A Sickly State: Oklahoma Ranks 49th in Overall Health', *Tulsa World*, 18 November 2009, A3; Humenikova, L., 'Assessing Determinants of Fruit and Vegetable Consumption in Low-Income, Minority Pre-School Age Children in Urban Oklahoma', Oklahoma State University Human Environmental Sciences, at: www.reels.usda.gov/web/crisprojectpages/211160.html; accessed 28.2.2011.

two state nutrition programmes, food stamps and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) programmes, now allow people to use their stamp vouchers at farmers' markets.²³

Oklahoma is one of a few states that have initiated school-based programmes to combat childhood obesity and to teach better eating habits. These require body mass index screenings, and doubling the requirement for physical education for children in the primary grades. It is one of twenty-seven states that have set higher nutritional standards for school lunch programmes and that have eliminated sugary drinks and non-nutritious foods in vending machines.²⁴

Some big city school systems, such as Washington D.C. and Baltimore, have hired trained chefs to redesign their meal programmes to include more nutrition and less fat.²⁵ The school system in my small town, Stillwater, Oklahoma, hired a new Child Nutrition Coordinator, Krista Neal, in 2009. She announced plans to add new menu options and 'lots more fruits and vegetables' to meals. The school superintendent added that 'A lot of people don't think the cafeteria necessarily is part of the learning process, but it truly is.'²⁶

The child nutrition coordinator and the superintendent are in agreement in the university town of Stillwater. This last spring there was a TV series of six programmes in which noted British chef, Jamie Oliver, descended on what was described as the unhealthiest town in America (in West Virginia) to remake their school food programme in a healthier style. He met with determined resistance – the kids, the lunch ladies, and the head of the school food service – were all skeptical about his efforts to reform their way of eating, and it's cost. Jamie worked hard to convince everybody, and by the last episode most of them were at least partially convinced it was for the better.²⁷

²³ Archer, Kim, 'A Sickly State: Oklahoma ranks 49th in overall health', *Tulsa World*, 18 November 2009, A4. See also http://www.ok.gov/health/Organization/Office_of_Communications/News_Releases/2009_News_Releases/Oklahoma_Health_Improvement_Plan_Launched_Today.html; accessed 28. 2. 2011; McGee, Corrie, 'Public Enemy Number One', *Oklahoma Magazine*, October 2009, 78; Thurow, Roger, Martin, Timothy, 'Boost in Food-Stamp Funding Percolates through Economy', *Wall Street Journal* (7 July 2009): A-11; Stockamp, Ashley, 'Food Programs Adding Greens: WIC Opens Gate to Farmers' Market', *Stillwater NewsPress*, 6 July 2009.

²⁴ McGee, Corrie, 'Public Enemy Number One', *Oklahoma Magazine*, October 2009, 76, 78.

²⁵ Jane Black, 'To Fix School Lunch Program, D.C. Turns to Restaurateur', *The Washington Post*, 23 March 2010.

²⁶ Slipke, Darla, 'School Meal Prices Go Up: Healthier Options, More Choices will be Available', *Stillwater NewsPress*, 19 August 2009, 1.

²⁷ Mikles, Natalie, 'British Chef Tackles Unhealthy City', *Tulsa World*, 26 March 2010, D6.

Oklahoma in 2004-2005 began pilot programmes in the Farm-to-School movement that has been implemented in a number of Oklahoma towns. In addition to adding more fresh food to school lunches, it includes a nutrition education component for teachers and students. Beginning with only 144 schools serving local melons, it was officially established in 2006 and now exists in 1,800 schools. This programme seeks to provide new markets for local market garden products in school lunch programmes while increasing availability of fresh fruit and vegetables to school children. In addition to fruits and vegetables, eggs, meat, grains, honey and beans can come from local sources.²⁸

According to the Oklahoma-Farm-to-School survey, only 16% of students eat the recommended 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Schools that have provided hands-on gardening experiences have demonstrated that students will begin to eat more nutritious choices of food. Oklahoma is not the only state with such programmes; 2035 school districts in 39 states have also begun Farm-to-School programmes.²⁹

Then there are Farm-to-University programmes. Oklahoma State University began 110 years ago as an agricultural and mechanical college, and the Agriculture College is still an important part of the university. Yet OSU food service has fallen into the same pattern of buying processed foods from big wholesalers as other school lunch programmes, restaurants, and fast food establishments. In a creativity contest OSU held in 2009, one of the winners was the Director of Dining Services who suggested making room in the various food service outlets on campus for fresh food options from local farm suppliers. The first one open is called 'Roots Cafe'.³⁰

School breakfast and lunches are not only a good place to begin teaching children to eat healthier foods, but in high poverty areas (which exist in Oklahoma) school meals are the most food (and therefore the most quality nutrition) some children receive in a day. The food insecurity problem for children is so great, even in a relatively prosperous town like Stillwater, during the summer school holidays, that two of six elementary schools are open for subsidised breakfast and lunches throughout the summer.

²⁸ Simpson, Chelsey, 'Sowing the Seeds of a Healthy Future: Farm to School Programs Teach Children to Appreciate Healthy Food', *Oklahoma Living*, September 2009, 21-3.

²⁹ Archer, Kim, 'Scaling Down: Oklahoma's Farm-to-School Program is Helping with Healthier Choices', *Tulsa World*, 2 July 2009; 'Oklahoma Profile, Farm to School'; available at: <http://www.farmtoschool.org/ok/> and [http://www.ok.gov/strongandhealthy/documents/Oklahoma_StateIndicatorReportFV2009StateActionGuide%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.ok.gov/strongandhealthy/documents/Oklahoma_StateIndicatorReportFV2009StateActionGuide%20(2).pdf); accessed 28.2.2011.

³⁰ Stephenson, Sara, 'Creativity Challenge Winners Hope to Bring Healthier Food to OSU', *The Daily O'Collegian*, 3 March 2009.

OSU Cooperative Extension, a division of the university formed to extend research knowledge to citizens of Oklahoma, has its own Food, Nutrition, and Health improvement project called 'Healthy Oklahoma'. Their Health Impact Team ran education programmes in numerous places between 2005 and 2008 for 10,313 children with an average age of ten years. Results showed an improvement in their food choices averaging 20%. From this pilot programme they developed six nutrition lessons to be available for teachers statewide beginning in 2009, as well as twelve teacher lessons combining nutrition and physical activity. In addition, they developed an interactive exhibit called 'Farm-to-You', intended to link the relationship between nutritious farm-fresh food and health.³¹

Many of the strategies to improve nutrition in the U.S., including Oklahoma, have to do with gardens. The inner city poor often live in so-called 'food deserts' where full size grocery stores have moved out leaving behind only fast food and smaller convenience stores full of cheap but non-nutritious snack foods. Adding to the problem that already existed has been the economic recession and the high unemployment rate. Gardens have been a part of the answer. Churches, community centres, and individuals, have turned empty city spaces into vegetable gardens to supply food banks and charity kitchens. Even an art museum in Tulsa, faced with a reduced budget last year, decided to save on landscape flowers for one of their formal gardens and planted vegetable seeds instead. Volunteers gardened, and the produce went to the Tulsa food bank.³²

Farmers Markets are also a part of the solution to encourage healthier eating. A national movement called 'Buy Fresh, Buy Local' has worked to develop relationships between farmers and consumers. The Oklahoma 'Buy Fresh, Buy Local' project was aided by a three-year grant from the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture and has produced three multi-page 'Local Food Guides' for free distribution in three big regions of the state. These list the locations of Farmers Markets, and contact information for participating farms and their products.³³

³¹ <http://oces.okstate.edu/healthyok>; accessed 28.2. 2011; Hermann, J., Parker, S., Brown, B., Siewe, Y., Denney, B., Walker, S., 'After School Gardening Improves Children's Reported Vegetable Intake and Physical Activity', *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 38, no. 3, (2006): 201-2; Mdziniso, P., Hinds, J., Bellmer, D.D., Brown, B., Payton, M.E., 'Cooking Classes Increase Fruit and Vegetable Intake and Food Safety Behaviors in Youth and Adults', *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 37 (2005): 104-5.

³² *Stillwater NewsPress*, 18 May 2010, A-3; *ibid.*, 25 June 2010, A-6; *Tulsa World*, 17 May 2010, D-3; *ibid.*, 25 May 2010, A1, A-3.

³³ 'Oklahoma Buy Fresh, Buy Local: Fresh Foods from Oklahoma Family Farms, Green Country' (Free handout); 'Payne Country Region, Buy Fresh, Buy Local, Local Food Guide' (Free handout).

OKLAHOMA

BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL

2008 LOCAL FOOD GUIDE

FRESH FOODS FROM OKLAHOMA FAMILY FARMS
Green Country

FARMERS' MARKETS
Where several farmers (and others) gather on a scheduled basis to sell primarily the crops and farm products they raised and made. Farmers' markets offer shoppers a wide variety of fresh locally-grown fruits, vegetables, herbs and plants straight from the farm. Many markets also have eggs, honey, flowers and hand-crafted items. Some have meats, cheeses, nuts and other tasty foods. Farmers' markets provide family farmers a reliable place to sell the fruits of their labor directly to the public. Visit a farmers' market near your work or home and get to know your local farmers.

<p>ADAIR COUNTY WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY Stillwell Farmers Market 8:00 am - 12:00 pm Wednesday April 30 thru October 22 8:00 am - 12:00 pm Saturday April 26 thru October 25 Stillwell Public Library 5 N 6th St. Stillwell Donna Boecher - 918-696-2329</p>	<p>OKMULGEE COUNTY FRIDAY Okmulgee Farmers Market 8:00 am - 2:00 pm April 25 thru October Creek Council House Square 100 W 6th St. Okmulgee Dena Lindley - 918-756-1958 dena.lindley@okstate.edu www.mvskoketfood.org</p>	<p>TUESDAY Downtown Tulsa Farmers Market 10:30 am - 2:00 pm May 20 thru October Williams Green, 3rd St and Boston Donna Vogelwohl - 918-224-5317 okiedragon@yahoo.com www.localharvest.org/farmersmarkets/MT1407</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY Collinsville Farmers Market 8:00 am - 11:00 am June thru October Downtown Collinsville 12th St and Main, Collinsville Mojinda Marsh - 918-371-4480 marshjams@wm.omecl.com www.localharvest.org/farmersmarkets/MT1764</p>
<p>CHEROKEE COUNTY SATURDAY Tahlequah Farmers Market 8:00 am - 12:00 pm First Lutheran Church (Behind Reasor's) 2111 Mahaney Avenue, Tahlequah Loretta Merritt - 918-456-7590 shortlinefarms@yahoo.com</p>	<p>ROGERS COUNTY WEDNESDAY Claremore Farmers Market 8:00 am - 12:00 pm Wednesday May 7 thru October Rogers County Health Dept parking lot, 2664 N Hwy 88 Meredith Lesley - 918-341-0741 map1@sbcglobal.net</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Brookside Farmers Market 8:00 am - 12:00 pm May 7 thru October 22 ACE Hardware parking lot 81st St and Peoria, Tulsa Lisa Brandborg - 918-789-3661 info@cherrystreetfarmersmarket.com www.cherrystreetfarmersmarket.com</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY Owasso Farmers Market 8:00 am - 12:00 pm May 7 thru TBA YMCA, just off Hwy 169 2300 N Owasso Expwy. Annette Ribord - 918-694-3490 owassofarmersmarket@yahoo.com www.owassofarmersmarket.com</p>
<p>MUSKOGEE COUNTY TUESDAY Haskell Farmers Market 4:00 pm till dark April 1 thru November 1 Haskell Library parking lot 116 N Broadway (Hwy 64), Haskell Naomi Morgan - 918-482-2453 naomi777eziane@aol.com</p>	<p>SATURDAY Claremore Farmers Market 8:00 am - 12:00 pm Saturday May 10 thru October Expo Center - NE Corner of parking lot, 400 Veterans Pkwy Meredith Lesley - 918-341-0741 map1@sbcglobal.net</p>		
<p>WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY Muskogee Farmers Market 8:00 am - 1:00 pm Wednesday mid May thru October 8:00 am - 1:00 pm Saturday April 19 thru October Market Square in front of Civic Center, 5th St and Okmulgee Doug Walton - 918-686-6939 doug.walton@suddenlink.net</p>	<p>TULSA COUNTY MONDAY Pearl Farmers Market 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm April 28 thru September 15 Centennial Park SW corner of 6th St and Peoria, Tulsa, OK Rita Scott - 918-540-5408 rejuvita@olp.net www.pearlfarmersmarket.org</p>	<p>Continued on back page</p>	

Fig. 1: Oklahoma Buy Fresh, Buy Local. 2008 Local Food Guide. Fresh Foods from Oklahoma Family Farms, Green Country. (Free handout.)

Provisioning Everyday Meals: Wholesale Produce Markets and the Ethics of Food Distribution

Helen Tangires

Deeply rooted in universal public market laws is the moral imperative of the State to protect and encourage direct marketing between the producer and consumer. Law and tradition held that food for daily consumption would be traded on specific market days at designated public markets. Vendors were forbidden to trade with middlemen until after individual household purchases had been made. Regulations also made it unlawful to store produce in large quantities, for fear that hoarding would enable dealers to manipulate prices and supply. Thus, the bulk marketing, storage, and distribution of perishable produce were inconceivable business practices not because the technology and facilities were lacking, but because of the State's moral imperative to forbid or severely restrict them. Yet, in 1913 the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) began to design and promote massive wholesale produce markets across the nation. Under the auspices of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (BAE), the programme peaked during the New Deal of the 1930s, and it continued until 1953, when a conservative government abolished the BAE. This essay examines the moral and ethical arguments that were used to justify government involvement in the construction and operation of wholesale produce markets throughout the first half of the twentieth century, as well as the impact of these facilities on shaping daily food and eating habits.

Rise of the Wholesale Produce Industry

Wholesale trade in the United States developed most intensely in large port cities, which offered the market dock facilities, and labour required to receive and distribute bulk products. Building accommodations, if any, varied in elaboration. Some dealers conducted their trade directly on docks and piers or in simple wooden sheds along the waterfronts and levees. More prosperous merchants in large port cities might operate from multi-story brick stores or stone warehouses, such as the neo-classical row of stores that opened in 1826 on the north and south sides of Faneuil Hall Market in Boston, Massachusetts. Regardless of their facilities, wholesale merchants before the mid-nineteenth century primarily handled dry goods – commodities such as lumber, seed, cotton, salt, and sugar. These products were distributed to

local shop merchants and manufacturers or shipped again to other cities, both domestic and abroad.¹

Fresh, perishable foods, such as meat, fish, dairy products, fruits, and vegetables, were traded at city-operated public markets, as well as in licenced shops after the mid-nineteenth century. Vendors were subject to official weights and measures, and they were forbidden to sell certain goods in their own containers. Equitable market laws also protected the food supply by imposing size limits on the sale of butter, fish, and meat. The 1805 markets laws of New York City, for example, were typical, in that butter had to be sold by weight and not in 'rolls, pots, piggins, tubs, pails or firkins'. Likewise, meat in quarters, joints, or small cuts could only be sold in the public markets or in the streets adjoining them, and only by a licenced butcher. The purpose of these restrictions was to ensure that the food supply could meet household needs before bulk sales were permitted.² After mid-century the differences blurred quickly between produce sold for immediate household consumption and produce traded as commodities – that is, goods intended to be converted into other products. Urbanism, new markets for domestic goods, agricultural surpluses, and a liberal political economy were just some of the pressures that forced cities to lift regulations that required produce to be sold only at the mandated public markets or licensed shops. Typical was the Fulton Fish Market in New York City, which opened in 1817 as a local market for live fish. By the mid nineteenth century it received such a variety and abundance of salted and frozen fish arriving in barrels by canal, railroad, and steamboat that the development of intermediaries, or middlemen, was inevitable. New York State issued licences to a new class of dealers, men who specialised in everything from packing and shipping fish to other cities, to filling orders for restaurants, hotels, boarding houses, and ship galleys. In the 1860s New York's municipal government also encouraged the trade by providing dealers with a new market building, and by granting permits to fishermen for the privilege of docking there. Oyster barge owners and their supporters in city hall were particularly successful at securing access to New York's valuable waterfront, on the grounds that the trade was consistent with the needs of the public good. As a result, the oyster, once a workingman's food, became a valued commodity in the city's market exchange and culinary experience,

¹ Moeckel, Bill Reid, *The Development of the Wholesaler in the United States, 1860-1900*, New York and London 1987, 13-27, 152 (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1953); Quincy, Jr., Josiah, *Quincy's Market: A Boston Landmark*, Boston 2003, 99-104.

² Laws and Ordinances: Ordained and Established by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commonality of the City of New York, New-York 1805, 79-82.

and New York maintained its position as the world's largest supplier of the bivalve until the aftermath of the First World War.³

Meat also began to show signs of commodification. In 1843 the New York city council, pressured by a rising opposition to government-protected trades, legalised meat sales in private stores – much to the dismay of master butchers privileged to sell meat at the public markets.⁴ By 1867 New York had over five thousand meat shops, most of which were operated not by butchers but by dealers of already dressed meat. The average member of a working-class family in antebellum New York consumed approximately sixty-six kilos of meat per year. Dressed meats were prepared in assembly-line fashion by packers in Cincinnati, Ohio, or in Chicago, Illinois, and delivered in refrigerated rail cars to the New York market. America's meat industry also exported canned, chilled, and later frozen, meat to the United Kingdom, where in the 1860s it was cheaper to buy American bacon, although it had to be fried rather than boiled.⁵ Meat consumption *per capita* in the U.K. rose by thirty-three percent between 1880 and 1909, by which time forty-one percent of the meat handled at London's Smithfield Market was imported from the United States.⁶

Dealers in fruits and vegetables, like their counterparts in meat and fish, began to treat produce as a commodity, especially after refrigerated rail service made it possible to offer fresh produce year round, regardless of its origin. California farmers growing cash crops such as wheat found it more profitable to raise fruits and vegetables for commission merchants who specialised in California produce.⁷ Likewise, a new class of middlemen

³ Graddy, Kathryn, 'Markets: The Fulton Fish Market', *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 207-20; Slanetz, Priscilla Jennings, 'A History of the Fulton Fish Market', *The Log of Mystic Seaport* 38, no. 1 (1986): 14-25; Chiarappa, Michael J, 'New York City's Oyster Barges: Architecture's Threshold Role along the Urban Waterfront', *Buildings & Landscape: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* 14 (Fall 2007): 96.

⁴ Tangires, Helen, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, Baltimore and London 2003, 83-4.

⁵ 'The Meat Trade of This City', *New York Times* (16 April 1871); Horowitz, Roger, Pilcher, Jeffrey M., Watts, Sydney, 'Meat for the Multitudes: Market Culture in Paris, New York City, and Mexico City over the Long Nineteenth Century', *American Historical Review* 109, no. 4 (October 2004): 1066, 1073. By contrast, *per capita* consumption of meat and other fats for a semi-skilled worker in England in 1864 was 44.8 kilos per year – see Schmeichen, James, Carls, Kenneth, *The British Market Hall: A Social and Architectural History*, New Haven and London 1999, 126.

⁶ Report of the Mayor's Market Commission of New York City, New York 1913, 85.

⁷ Whole towns were transformed in the process, such as Watsonville, California, located in the rich and fertile Pajaro Valley. The Southern Pacific Railroad opened a station near Watsonville in 1871, connecting the town of a few thousand residents to the rest of the country by rail. By the 1890s, local farmers and fruit packing houses in Watsonville sold strawberries,

specialised in Southern produce after the Civil War, when many planters converted from cotton to edible crops, such as beans, melons, and corn. Cities across the United States responded to a year-round national market for fresh produce from California and the Southern states by passing greengrocery ordinances that permitted dealers of fresh food to sell under licence anywhere in the city limits, not only at the public markets.⁸ Wholesale dealers voluntarily clustered in commercial buildings along principal streets with direct access to wharves and public markets. Streets well known for their wholesale commercial activity in the late nineteenth century included Washington Street in New York; Third Street in St. Louis, Missouri; Pratt Street in Baltimore, Maryland; South Water Street in Chicago, Illinois; Walnut Street in Cincinnati, Ohio; Dock Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Liberty Street in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.⁹

The development of a wholesale produce trade also was enabled by the cold storage industry, whose buildings and technology extended food's 'shelf life', namely, the length of time between storage and consumption. The Quincy Market Cold Storage Company, established in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1882, offered temperature-controlled storage to wholesale dealers strategically located downtown near their customers. Cold storage firms expanded their hold on the local food economy in the late 1890s, when cities granted them permits to access public streets for underground pipes that distributed cold brine to food markets and processing plants. The Chicago Exposition of 1893 hailed the cold storage industry as a 'beneficent undertaking', a public utility of sorts, whose buildings and equipment were integral components of the urban infrastructure, and whose food reserves could temper fluctuations in supply and price.¹⁰

Demand for Market Reform

A liberal economy, coupled with improvements in rail transportation and cold storage, encouraged an explosive wholesale trade in produce, but efficiencies in food marketing, storage, and distribution did not come without apples, and other fruits and vegetables for the California market, and shipped them by rail and sea to San Francisco and beyond. See in this connection Davidson, Janet F., Sweeney, Michael S., *On the Move: Transportation and the American Story*, Washington, D.C. 2003.

⁸ In 1867, for example, greengrocery ordinances were passed in Houston, Texas, and Mobile, Alabama – see Tangires, *op. cit.*, 2003, 170-1.

⁹ For a graphic description of the wholesale stores that extended for six city blocks on Liberty Street in Pittsburgh, see Thurston, George H., *Pittsburgh and Allegheny in the Centennial Year*, Pittsburgh 1876, 248-9.

¹⁰ Osman, Michael, 'Regulation, Architecture and Modernism in the United States, 1890-1920', Ph.D. dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2008, 55-102.

a price. The *Report of the Mayor's Market Commission of New York City*, published in 1913, summarised the negative consequences of separating production from consumption, based not only on the experience in New York, but also on that of other American cities. Surrounding farmland was being consumed by suburban development at a rapid rate and was unable to sustain a metropolis of any size. Existing food terminals along the waterfronts were outdated, inefficient, and inconveniently located to suburban markets. Food passed through many hands and traffic congestion delayed its movement – conditions which often resulted in spoilage and waste. Proper inspection was difficult, and there was no municipal supervision of this highly dispersed form of trade (Fig. 1).¹¹

More serious, however, commission merchants were often justly accused of falsely reporting goods as received in bad condition or holding them in storage and freight yards in order to keep prices high. They also charged



Fig. 1: Wholesale Row, South Water Street, Chicago, Illinois, 1915. National Archives, RG83-G, neg. 3716.

¹¹ Report of the Mayor's Market Commission of New York City, 1913, 10-11.



Fig. 2: 'A Double Hold-Up - Good Guns in Bad Hands', 1909. Udo J. Keppler, artist. Library of Congress, Art Wood Collection of Caricature and Cartoon, PR 13 CN 2001:055-4 [item].

farmers more to ship goods to their final destination than they had actually paid the trucker. These malpractices put the nation's small farmers and the consumers at the mercy of food speculators, whom critics accused of disturbing the natural law of supply and demand – a sentiment frequently captured in contemporary political cartoons (Fig. 2).¹²

The marketing crisis was an *American* problem according to the 1913 *Report*. In contrast were the wholesale markets in Europe, which commission members admired for their abundant supply of affordable produce, as well as for their superior architecture, form of ownership, and administration. Les Halles, the chief food distribution centre for three million people living in Paris, was considered the most skilfully organised municipal market in Europe. The complex covered 87,790 square metres in the heart of the city and served both the wholesale and retail trade. A complicated and severe code of regulations governed Les Halles – ordinances designed to create and

¹² Remele, Larry, "Things as They Should Be." Jeffersonian Idealism and Rural Rebellion in Minnesota and North Dakota, 1910-1920', *Minnesota History* (Spring 1988): 15-22; Macleod, David I., 'Food Prices, Politics, and Policy in the Progressive Era', *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 8, no. 3 (July 2009): 365-406; Rauchway, Eric, 'The High Cost of Living in the Progressives' Economy', *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 3 (December 2001): 898-924; 'A Double hold-Up', *Puck* (6 October 1910): 8-9.

safeguard it as a central clearinghouse for an abundant food supply, where inspection was rigorous and quick sales were guaranteed.¹³

Market conditions and practices were equally favourable in other European cities, such as London, Vienna, Budapest, Brussels, Berlin, and Munich. These were the findings of Mrs. Elmer Black, a recent widow of a New York Banker who used her wealth, time, and education to tour the markets of Europe for the New York market commission in 1912. Upon her return to the United States, she called for market reform in her publications and lectures. New York's markets and those in other American cities, she argued, no longer served the public good. She praised Munich's new terminal market, in particular, as the best equipped in the world. Its well-stocked facilities stimulated demand for fresh produce, which had the added benefit of aiding rural prosperity and enhancing the value of agricultural land. Mrs. Black and other progressives promoted terminal produce markets under municipal control based on the ones in Europe, which paid profits to their cities, provided a convenience to the community, and had a powerful influence on keeping down food prices.¹⁴

Model Wholesale Markets

In 1917, amidst cost-of-living protests, the City of New York followed the recommendations of the Mayor's Market Commission and established its first Department of Markets. Working-class housewives were fed up eating rice instead of their accustomed potatoes, whose retail price had increased tenfold (from two to twenty cents per pound) in 1916. Among its goals the Department planned to build a wholesale market and cold storage warehouse in each of the five boroughs, beginning with The Bronx. The plan was criticised, especially after the war, by sceptics who considered it socialistic. Food wholesalers in particular complained that government was now in direct competition with private enterprise. The Department dismissed these objections, arguing that markets were just another type of public service, along with water supply, roads, docks, and bridges. It strongly believed that construction and operation of markets was the moral duty of the state, and proving its point was a citywide railroad strike in the winter of 1922, which left thousands of carloads of food to rot on the sidetracks, while consumers paid the highest price on record for butter, eggs, and fresh vegetables.¹⁵

¹³ Report of the Mayor's Market Commission of New York City, 2003, 85-94.

¹⁴ Black, Mrs. Elmer, *A Terminal Market System. New York's Most Urgent Need. Some Observations, Comments and Comparisons of European Markets*, New York 1912, 21-3.

¹⁵ Frank, Dana, 'Housewives, Socialists, and the Politics of Food: The 1917 New York Cost-of-Living Protests', *Feminist Studies* 11, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 255-85; New York City,

On 25 October 1924, New York's Mayor Hylan laid the cornerstone of the Bronx Terminal Market and delivered a blunt speech in which he declared that municipal wholesale markets would eliminate the middleman.¹⁶ The first and only building constructed for some time on the site was a market and cold storage warehouse, whose fortified, minimalist exterior reflected the building's practical function as a solid container for the long-term storage of food. The Market Department claimed that the entire warehouse would increase New York City's food reserve from about two weeks to twelve-to-eighteen months.¹⁷

Putting food marketing on the federal agenda was the USDA Office of Markets, established in 1913. The Office was elevated to Bureau status in 1917, and renamed the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (BAE) in 1922. Headquartered at Centre Market in Washington, D.C., the BAE studied every aspect of the produce trade from its excellent vantage point. Centre Market was the largest and oldest market in the nation's capital, and USDA inspectors did not have to venture far to observe and gather information and statistics on the wholesale and retail trades.¹⁸

BAE marketing staff included agricultural economists, architects, building and mechanical engineers, land use planners, statisticians, and transportation specialists. Not confined to the Washington office, they travelled widely and established temporary offices across the country where they could study produce marketing on a national scale, from coast to coast, in cities large and small. They held the conviction that improvements could not be made until current food marketing and distribution systems were thoroughly understood. New York City still commanded much of the agency's resources and attention, since BAE staff believed that if they could chart the flow of produce in and out of the nation's largest city, they could chart the same process anywhere.¹⁹

Department of Markets, Annual Report, 1923. Similar protests against high food prices and profiteering by farmers and shopkeepers occurred in England in 1916-17 – see Coles, Anthony James, 'The Moral Economy of the Crowd: Some Twentieth Century Food Riots', *The Journal of British Studies* 18, no. 1 (Fall 1978): 157-76.

¹⁶ 'Mayor and Borough President Lay Cornerstone of Bronx Terminal Market', *Bronxboro* 2, no. 5, November 1924.

¹⁷ 'Material Received Direct from the Department of Public Markets, Giving its History, Organization and Functions, with Data on the Volume of Foodstuffs Received in the City of New York', typescript, 1923, City Hall Library, New York.

¹⁸ Tangires, Helen, 'Contested Space: The Life and Death of Center Market', *Washington History* 7, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 1995): 46-67.

¹⁹ Tangires, Helen, 'Feeding the Cities: Markets and Municipal Reform in the Progressive Era', *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives and Records Administration* 29, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 16-26.



Fig. 3: Chicago Wholesale Produce Market, Chicago, Illinois, 1941. Library of Congress. LC-USF34-063118.

By the 1930s Agricultural Economics was the most powerful and influential bureau in the USDA. New York City expanded the Bronx Terminal Market with BAE guidance and with federal funds for public works projects. Added to the site were two parallel rows of reinforced concrete wholesale stores with loading docks, as well as steel sheds for an open-air farmers market. The Chicago Wholesale Produce Market, built in the 1920s by a consortium of merchants, was also expanded in the 1930s and promoted by the BAE as a model facility for all American cities with a population over 100,000 (Fig. 3).

The Northern Ohio Food Terminal in Cleveland, Ohio, featured the basic layout of the BAE model wholesale market, namely a series of open-air sheds for a farmers market, railroad spurs for receiving produce, a fruit auction facility, a cold storage warehouse, and a series of long, parallel buildings with stores for wholesale dealers. Buyers from the city and region could obtain in one area a complete line of fruits and vegetables as well as meat, butter,

eggs, and poultry. Promoters of the new terminal also praised the facility's location, which avoided public streets and the downtown business district.²⁰

Agricultural economists in the BAE took full advantage of didactic materials, such as aerial photographs and architectural models, to demonstrate the benefits of modern wholesale markets to planning officials, trade representatives, farm organisations, and consumer groups. They took their exhibition materials across the United States in an effort to convince cities to invest in new market facilities. They promoted not only a radical physical redesign of traditional marketing practices but also a new form of ownership – a market authority appointed by a government agency that would operate the market as a public utility designed to protect both the trade and the consumer. The BAE stressed the importance of government sponsorship and the right to operate the market for the public good which, it noted, was common practice in foreign countries.²¹

After World War II American cities resumed construction of new markets in earnest.²² In 1946 officials in San Antonio, Texas, and Cincinnati, Ohio, requested assistance from the BAE, and both cities implemented the plans of BAE agricultural economist Wendell Calhoun. Complementing the plans were final reports prepared by the BAE that emphasised the social and economic benefits derived from unified marketing facilities under municipal ownership. By concentrating sales in a single place, and by setting fixed hours of trading, dealers and buyers could evaluate supply and demand and arrive at fair prices. By enclosing the market with a substantial fence and a control gate, management could easily enforce hours of access, record receipts, and minimise opportunities for pilferage. And, most important, the BAE insisted that the wholesale market be operated for the common good – and not for the benefit of a particular trade or a railroad company.²³

²⁰ Horr, George E., 'The Bronx Terminal Market: A Series of Merchant Stores for New York City', *Architectural Concrete* 2, no. 1 (1936): 36-9; Conley, Charles E., 'New Market District and Food Terminal Will Reduce Congestion and Facilitate Handling Perishable Foods', *The American City* 41 (July 1929): 93-4 (Northern Ohio Food Terminal); Sherman, Wells A., 'The Wholesale Produce Market', *Architectural Record* 9 (September 1934): 198-203.

²¹ Crow, William C., *Wholesale Markets for Fruits and Vegetables in 40 Cities*, United States Department of Agriculture, Circular No. 463, Washington, D.C. 1938.

²² For more on the activities of the Department of Markets in New York City during World War II, see La Guardia, Fiorello Henry, *New York City at War; Emergency Services*, New York 1943, and LaGuardia, Fiorello, *New York Advancing. Victory Edition. Seven More Years of Progressive Administration in the City of New York*, New York 1945, 208-13.

²³ Calhoun, Wendell, Drought, Frank T., *The Wholesale Produce Market of San Antonio, Motortruck Concentration Market for the Fruit and Vegetables of South Texas* Washington, D.C. 1946; Calhoun, Wendell (agricultural economist, and the staff of the Master Planning Division), *The Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market of Cincinnati, Present Operations and Future Needs*. Joint Report by the

Demise of the Model Market Programme

Ultimately such talk about the common good got the BAE in trouble. In 1953, dawn of the conservative administration of President Eisenhower, the BAE was abolished by order of Ezra Benson, the first Republican Secretary of Agriculture in twenty years. Benson supported the opinion that the agency had gone too far with work that the United States Congress considered socialistic, especially the bureau's research on land-use planning and its studies of the negative social consequences of agribusiness on small communities in California. The BAE was also criticised for promoting projects that were in direct competition with the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company supermarket chain and other large buyers of produce that had their own warehouses and bought direct from the source. The abolishment of the BAE in 1953 put an end to research on agricultural economics within the USDA.²⁴ Oversight of wholesale produce markets, however, was transferred to the Agricultural Marketing Service, or AMS, which exists under the same name today. Its activities were, and still are, technical in nature, providing sample market designs and layouts, criteria for site selection, and other marketing advice to industry and developers. The AMS backed the relocation of wholesale markets to the outskirts of cities. A major post-World War II relocation project was implemented in Houston, Texas, whose new food terminal opened in 1954 as a joint venture of the Houston produce industry, the Fort Worth and Denver Railway, and the Santa Fe Railway.²⁵

After World War II the USDA and the American Society of Planning Officials encouraged cities to locate their wholesale marketing facilities to industrial parks in order to relieve the downtown of food marketing. This policy also paved the way for cities to develop old marketplaces into more profitable commercial spaces.²⁶ This philosophy guided new wholesale market projects for the rest of the twentieth century, resulting in the near

Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Dept. of Agriculture, and the Master Planning Division, City Planning Commission of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 1946.

²⁴ Larson, Olaf F., Zimmerman, Julie N., Moe, Edward O., *Sociology in Government: The Galpin-Taylor Years in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1919-1953*, University Park, Pennsylvania 2003, 29-42. In 1938, William Crow reported that chain stores were buying direct and by-passing the existing terminal markets, to the detriment of established wholesale dealers – see Crow, William C., *Wholesale Markets for Fruits and Vegetables in 40 Cities*, USDA Circular 463, Washington, D.C. 1938, 3.

²⁵ 'No Nostalgia When Packers Abandon "Row": Decaying Section of Town Left for Clean, Functional Terminal' and 'Produce Steps Into Role of Big Business: \$3.5 Million Terminal Dedication Scheduled for Saturday at 2PM', *Houston Post*, 5 November 1954.

²⁶ American Society of Planning Officials, *Wholesale Produce Markets*, Information Report No. 70, Chicago 1955, 2, 9.



Fig. 4: New York City Terminal Market, Hunts Point, The Bronx, 1966. Architectural Rendering. New York City Department of Markets. Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-12700.

disappearance of food marketing as part of the everyday urban experience in American cities. In New York City, for example, the landmark Washington Market in lower Manhattan became a victim of urban renewal in 1958, when the neighbourhood was redeveloped as the site of the World Trade Center. Dealers were relocated to the Hunt's Point terminal market in The Bronx, which opened in 1964. Praising the new market was Orville Freeman, Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, who claimed that it would bring better and cheaper food to the people of metropolitan New York than farm subsidies could. Designed primarily with truck traffic in mind, the Hunts Point Market promised to be the breadbasket for the nation's largest metropolitan area, and today it is one of the largest wholesale produce markets in the world (Fig. 4).²⁷

Conclusion

How exactly does the wholesale produce market transform everyday foods and eating habits today? Some might argue that these facilities promote tasteless tomatoes that are shipped to distant markets before they could ripen on the vine. They are also the source of green bananas that are stored in

²⁷ Tangires, Helen, *Public Markets*, Norton/Library of Congress Visual Sourcebooks in Architecture, Design, and Engineering, New York and London 2008, 30-1, 280-4.



Fig. 5: Brooklyn Terminal Market, New York, New York, 1962. Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-12760.

refrigerators until treated with ripening gas (Fig. 5), as well as a limited variety of apples that are selected for their uniformity of colour and size. A more sympathetic view holds that wholesale produce markets handle large quantities of imported foods in demand by ethnic restaurants and by consumers looking for specialty products from their native countries. Regardless of one's view, wholesale produce markets combine architectural design, technology, and the regulatory powers of the state to satisfy the common good. Driving their building campaigns, promoters promise that modern, centralised, and regulated facilities have the potential to lower food prices, improve food safety, and encourage direct marketing between the

producer and consumer. According to the website of the World Union of Wholesale Markets (www.wuwm.org) these factors are still relevant today. In light of the current worldwide recession, many cities are looking for ways to make their wholesale markets better serve the community, by improving access for the average consumer who buys retail and by strengthening ties with local producers. Moral and ethical arguments continue to inform methods of food marketing and distribution and to guide everyday food and eating habits in subtle ways.

Organic Food in the Canteen:
Perceptions of Organic Food
among Cadets in Norwegian Defence

Ann Ruge

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of organic food among cadets in the Norwegian Defence. The study is based on a survey of 100 cadets in the Norwegian Defence. The results show that organic food is perceived as being healthier and more environmentally friendly than conventional food. However, the price of organic food was perceived as being too high. The study also found that the majority of cadets do not buy organic food. The reasons for this are that organic food is too expensive and that it is not available in the canteen.

Part IV: Organic Choices, Well-being and Future Food Consumption

The purpose of this part is to explore the relationship between organic food consumption and well-being. The study is based on a survey of 100 organic food consumers. The results show that organic food consumption is associated with higher levels of well-being. This is true for both physical and mental well-being. The study also found that organic food consumption is associated with higher levels of environmental awareness. The reasons for this are that organic food is perceived as being healthier and more environmentally friendly than conventional food. The study also found that the majority of organic food consumers do not buy organic food. The reasons for this are that organic food is too expensive and that it is not available in the canteen.

Food and well-being: A study of the relationship between organic food consumption and well-being. The study is based on a survey of 100 organic food consumers. The results show that organic food consumption is associated with higher levels of well-being. This is true for both physical and mental well-being. The study also found that organic food consumption is associated with higher levels of environmental awareness. The reasons for this are that organic food is perceived as being healthier and more environmentally friendly than conventional food. The study also found that the majority of organic food consumers do not buy organic food. The reasons for this are that organic food is too expensive and that it is not available in the canteen.

Organic food consumption and well-being: A study of the relationship between organic food consumption and well-being. The study is based on a survey of 100 organic food consumers. The results show that organic food consumption is associated with higher levels of well-being. This is true for both physical and mental well-being. The study also found that organic food consumption is associated with higher levels of environmental awareness. The reasons for this are that organic food is perceived as being healthier and more environmentally friendly than conventional food. The study also found that the majority of organic food consumers do not buy organic food. The reasons for this are that organic food is too expensive and that it is not available in the canteen.

Organic Food in the Canteen: Perceptions of Organic Food among Cadets in Norwegian Defence

Gun Roos

Introduction

This paper, based on qualitative focus group data, explores perceptions of organic food among cadets in Norwegian Defence after organic food was introduced by the army food services in 2007.

In Norway, everyday meals are normally consumed at home, but lunch is an exception to this as many Norwegians eat lunch at work or in school.¹ Traditionally, a Norwegian lunch consists of 'cold food', such as sandwiches, accompanied by some vegetables and fruit, and a beverage, often brought from home and eaten in the company of colleagues or schoolmates.² Although collectively organised food provisioning has become more common in workplaces and sometimes also in schools, the eating of lunch in out-of-home contexts is still less widespread in Norway today than in Finland and Sweden, for example.³ However, some institutions in Norway, such as the military and hospitals, have had experience of the provision of publically subsidised and organised food services, over a long period of time. Norwegian Defence serves food to approximately ten thousand personnel every day and has over fifty kitchen units for the preparation of meals. In recent years, Norwegian Defence has focused on increasing the use of fruit, vegetables, and organic food, in its canteens/mess halls.⁴

Food and sustainability, as well as local and organic food, are matters which are gaining increasing attention among both food producers and consumers, and several political measures have been taken as a response to the ongoing global environmental crisis. The public food and procurement service has been seen as a promising arena in which an increase in organic agriculture and organic food consumption could be encouraged.⁵ The

¹ Holm, L., 'The Social Context of Eating', in Kjærnes, U., (ed.), *Eating Patterns. A Day in the Lives of Nordic Peoples. SIFO Report 7* (2001): 159-98.

² Mäkelä, J., 'The Meal Format', in Kjærnes, *op. cit.*, 2001, 125-58. Bugge, A.B., *Ungdommens Skolematvaner – Refleksjon, Reaksjon eller Interaksjon* ('Young People's School Lunch Habits – Reflection, Reaction or Interaction'), *SIFO Report 4*, 2007.

³ Kjærnes, *op. cit.*, 2001.

⁴ Stenberg, P., 'Økologisk mat i Forsvaret' ('Organic Food in Defence'), Presentation at 'God Mat - økologi, ernæring, bærekraft' ('Good Food – Organic, Nutrition, Sustainability'), Luftkrigsskolen, Trondheim, 15-16.9. 2009.

⁵ Morgan, K., Sonnino, R., *The School Food Revolution. Public Food and the Challenge of Sustainable Development*, London 2008.

Norwegian government is aiming to increase the scale of organic output, and the rate of organic food consumption, to fifteen per cent by 2020. This is an ambitious goal which requires targeted initiatives and measures, because in 2008, only five per cent of total agricultural land in Norway was used for the purposes of organic production, and sales of organic food accounted for only one percent of total food sales.⁶ However, studies show that this situation is changing as sales of organic food increased by twenty-five per cent between 2007 and 2008.⁷

The Norwegian Agricultural Authority has funded various projects in order to support the conversion of agricultural output to organic production and to raise an awareness of organic food among consumers. One of the projects which received funding from the Authority was a pilot scheme aimed at the inclusion of organic food in military provisioning. Norwegian Defence introduced the project in certain divisions and, by 2007, organic food was being served in six of its mess halls. Its aim was to increase the provision of organic food in its canteens to fifteen per cent by 2010 – a goal which was achieved. The military also set out to increase knowledge about organic food among cadets and employees, and to reduce meat intake. In addition, courses and study tours concerning organic food were arranged for the canteen employees, and information about organic food was provided on TV screens and food trays in the mess halls.⁸ A small-scale survey carried out in 2008 among the soldiers suggested that attitudes to the serving of organic food in the mess halls varied, with fifty per cent signalling a positive attitude towards it, while thirty per cent were neutral, and twenty per cent had a negative attitude towards organic food.⁹

In order to successfully implement changes in food services, it is necessary to take account of consumers' views and to listen to users' opinions and perceptions concerning the proposed changes. Thus, in exploring perceptions of organic food among a group of Norwegian cadets, this paper takes account of the dominant discourses used by the cadets when they talk about organic food. In order to do this it was necessary to consider the following questions: What discourses do cadets utilise when they talk about organic food? Do the

⁶ FiBL, *Organic-world.net. Global Organic Farming Statistics and News* (2010); available at URL <http://www.organic-world.net>; accessed 10.6. 2010.

⁷ Terragni, L., Torjusen, H., Vittersø, G., 'The dynamics of Alternative Food Consumption: Contexts, Opportunities and Transformations', *Anthropology of Food* S5 (2009); available at URL <http://aof.revues.org/index6400.html>; accessed 10.6. 2010.

⁸ Stenberg, *op. cit.*, 2009.

⁹ Sorum, H., *Økologisk mat i Forsvaret – soldatenes holdninger til økologisk mat og landbruk* ('Organic Food in Norwegian Defence – The Soldiers' Attitudes to Organic Food and Agriculture'), Bachelor thesis, Akershus University College 2008.

cadets' perceptions reflect the fact that organic food has been introduced into the mess halls? What justifications for use or non-use of organic food do cadets give when discussing organic food?

Material and Methods

As part of the European project 'Innovative Public Organic Food Procurement for Youth' (iPOPY) consumer perceptions were explored by conducting focus groups with young people who used public food services. The main aim of the iPOPY project was to study how an increased consumption of organic products might be achieved by the implementation of relevant strategies and instruments linked to public food-serving outlets for young people in the participating European countries – Denmark, Finland, Italy and Norway.¹⁰ The iPOPY project focused on conducting and analysing the outcomes of case studies concerning the public serving of organic food to young people, and Norwegian Defence was selected for one of the Norwegian cases studies.

The author contacted Norwegian Defence, which recruited cadets for two focus groups, in the fall of 2008. One focus group was based at the Air Force Academy in Trondheim, which served organic food in its mess halls. It was involved in the pilot project which was funded by the Norwegian Agricultural Authority. The second focus group was based at the Military Academy in Oslo, which did not serve organic food. The focus group participants in Trondheim, which consisted of one female and four male participants, were aged between twenty-one and thirty-two years of age. The group in Oslo was comprised of six males, aged between twenty-four and twenty-seven years. The interview guide for use with the focus groups included the following main themes: the meaning of food for the focus group participants, food in the military, organic food, and sustainable development. When introducing the themes of organic food and sustainable development to the groups, the participants were first asked to write down what they themselves understood by these terms before they were discussed by the whole group. The opinions of the focus groups were digitally audio-recorded and the resulting recordings were later transcribed verbatim.

This paper relies on discourse analysis¹¹ in its approach to analysing the transcripts of discussions with the focus groups in order to explore the dominant discourses utilised by the cadets in talking about organic food and food served in the military canteens. Discourses are explanatory theories,

¹⁰ Løes, A.-K., and Volting, B., 'Increasing Organic Consumption through School Meals – Lessons Learned in the iPOPY Project', *Organic Agriculture* (2011): 1, 647-53.

¹¹ Gee, J.P., *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis, Theory and Method*, London 2005.

often difficult to articulate, that people rely on when they communicate about different matters with each other.

Food in the Mess Hall

Many of the cadets who formed part of the focus groups lived on campus and were served breakfast, lunch and dinner in the mess hall, but a few of the cadets lived off campus and brought their own lunch with them each day. The cadets who took their meals in the mess hall stated that they tend to eat what is served and seemed to trust that the food provided meets their dietary needs ('we get our needs met, needs of nutrients and minerals and vitamins'). There was some discussion about personal preferences for dinner dishes, but it was concluded that within the context of the public food procurement services it was not relevant because it was not possible to fulfil individual food preferences in a mess hall context. Variation and choice (lunch served as a buffet, for example) were seen as especially positive aspects of the food service, and the food was, according to the cadets, reasonably priced.

The Air Force Academy in Trondheim has a reputation for serving very good food and this was also mentioned in the focus group discussion. Several aspects of the Trondheim Academy food service were especially mentioned, such as the wide choice of dishes available, the hotel-like buffet which was served, the positively motivated kitchen staff, the organic food provided, the small mess hall, and a long lunch break. One of the cadets, who rarely ate lunch in the mess hall, did not find it easy to justify why he did not do so, but he did draw on the Norwegian tradition of bringing your own packed lunch and on an efficient use of time:

I think it's quite all right to bring a packed lunch; it takes a lot of time off your lunch break to go to the mess hall and to eat a meal. It's all right to just sit and read or to be on the computer while you're eating.

Organic Food

Although the cadets had been informed when they were recruited to the focus group that the topic of discussion would be organic food, this was not mentioned much by them when they talked generally about the food served in the mess hall. Just a few mentioned organic food, but without much elaboration:

The food is known to be very good at the Air Force Academy with more focus on organic food lately, and a varied diet; meals have an inspiring variation. I am very satisfied.

When they were asked if they thought that the goal of having organic food reach fifteen per cent of the total food served in the mess hall, had had any effect on them, vis-à-vis their attitude to organic food, they replied that they were not aware of any such effect. They also stated that, generally speaking, they did not buy organic food:

... at best [if we eat organic food] we get maybe a tiny, tiny, tiny bit less of substances that are not very good for us. That may happen at best. But of course you notice that people eat organic [food] because it says organic everywhere when the food is organic. But whether it tastes differently, I don't know; anyway if it does, it is only to a tiny degree.

On the basis of the written assignment undertaken by the focus groups which requested that they 'write down what you understand by organic', we can conclude that there was no common simple definition of organic products to be found among them. Their understanding of organic food includes the following ideas (see also Table 1):

- that it was cultivated without the use of artificial substances (for example, fertilisers)
- that vegetables were not sprayed with 'poisons' (to prevent insects etc.)
- that organic food cultivation requires a larger acreage for cultivation than conventional food cultivation
- that it was more expensive to buy
- that it was better for the environment?

The participants in the focus group tended to view organic food as being different from conventional food, and their descriptions reflected an expectation that organic food is better – for themselves, for animals, and for

Table 1. Cadets' perceptions of organic food based on the written assignment: 'Write down what you understand by organic'. N = Number of cadets who have included different perceptions of organic food in their responses.

Perceptions of organic food	Air Force Academy (N=5)	Military Academy (N=6)
Production without pesticides, fertilisers, etc.	3	4
Healthy	3	4
Environmentally friendly, linked to nature	3	3
Good for animal welfare		4
High price	5	2
Fashion, trend	2	1
Limited choices and availability	1	1
Different taste	2	2
Small size	1	

the environment, and/or that it tastes better. Earlier research on reasons for buying or consuming organic food, and barriers against doing so, had produced similar opinions and issues, that is, that organic food is healthier, that it tastes better, and that it is better for the environment and animal welfare; conversely, the high prices charged for it has been found to be the main barrier against a wider degree of consumption of it.¹²

Justifications and Discourses Used when Talking about Organic Food

Different types of ambivalence concerning organic food emerged during the discussions with the focus groups. The excerpt below shows that organic food, like food in general, was often linked to health, but some of the cadets expressed doubt about that and wondered if it was in fact healthier to eat than conventional food. Organic food was also viewed as being more natural and environmentally friendly. However, questions were raised about whether there was evidence to support these claims, and also about price and a willingness to pay the higher cost of organic food:

I think we are now in a period in which, if something new appears, then the focus is on that. It is exactly the same, with spelt, for example. It is just b-----t and all the chefs say that it is not healthier at all. Thus, it is in focus, and what is in fashion now is to eat organic food, and, in addition, it is very expensive. You can go to the shop and check, should I take this or that, and compare the price. It wouldn't occur to me to pay so much to buy organic food because it is too expensive.

Question: It is expensive?

Yes it is.

Question: What do the rest of you think about price?

I totally agree; I don't pay anything extra ... to get organic. If I buy a litre of milk, conventional or organic, I don't taste the difference. I don't think I get less sick or live longer by drinking the organic [milk]. So I don't really see a reason to do it.

¹² Torjusen, H., Sangstad, L., Jensen, K.O., Kjærnes, U., *European Consumers' Conception of Organic Food: A Review of Available Research*, SIFO Professional Report No. 4, 2004. Hughner, R.S., McDonagh, P., Prothero, A., Shultz, C.J., Stanton, J., 'Who are the Organic Food Consumers? A Compilation and Review of Why People Purchase Organic Food,' *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* (2007): 6, 94-110.

If someone were to bring you factual information about how much it saves the environment, would it make any difference to your opinion?

Yes. If they could prove [that eating organic food has] really significant effects on the environment, I would have done it. But I don't think anybody has done that?

Yes there is a limit...

Yes of course if it is...

How much more expensive does it have to be for you to bother?

If it's a couple of crowns per litre of milk, then it's okay. If it's double the price then I don't think I would buy it.

It also has to be in proportion to how much it saves the environment, huh.

The cadets' descriptions of organic food also relied on discourses of food as identity, stating: 'you have a belief in what is right for you and then you do that. That is fair enough', and 'if you believe that it is good for the environment, then I think it's really tight when a customer is in the shop, and buys a basket-full of food, but only the milk is organic. You should go to the shop and buy all organic commodities, that's the way I see it. You cannot go halfway'. The aspects of value and thrift also figured in their discourse ('I don't pay anything extra so as to get organic [food]'), which they often used as justifications for why they had not changed the kind of food they eat and why they do not buy organic food.

Seeking Balance

Two dominant discourses relating to organic food were identified in the interviews: healthism and moral virtue. Healthism is a socio-cultural phenomenon typical for Western middle class societies and characterised by strong health awareness and healthy lifestyle choices.¹³ Healthism was the dominant consideration when the cadets talked about (organic) food, as they desire to be healthy, and organic food is associated with a healthy diet. Thus, in order to justify why they did not choose to buy organic food, the cadets questioned whether organic food really is healthier and safer, or whether this claim was just part of a marketing strategy. In addition to health matters, organic food is also linked to other moral virtues, such as environmental

¹³ Greenhalgh, T., Wessely, S., "'Health for Me": A Sociocultural Analysis of Healthism in the Middle Classes', *British Medical Bulletin* (2004): 69, 197-213.

issues that have gained high moral status in recent times. In the discussions, cadets were asked directly about organic food and sustainable development – which made it hard for them not to respond. The discussions reflected their need to justify and to explain why they had not started doing the ‘right thing’ by favouring organic food. Some of the cadets raised questions concerning evidence purporting to show that organic food was the healthier option, while others referred to price or taste, and still others defended conventional food, by stating: ‘I think that there is too much focus on organic food, I feel that normal food has almost become taboo and that organic [food] is seen as the only right thing [to eat]’.

The cadets’ justifications seem to reflect an underlying structuring idea of balance and balancing. The following excerpt illustrates balance as an underlying structure and how it is related to context. When asked if they talk about organic food with friends, the immediate response was ‘no’, but one of the cadets stated:

It happens sometimes in the shop with my girlfriend. We may have a quick discussion to see if we will buy organic or conventional milk... The discussion is a little bit about price and a little bit about environmental friendliness, and what we think about these issues... But we have figured out that it really makes no difference. What counts against organic food is price and what counts for it is environmental friendliness.

Balancing has been related to universal exchange rules and the fundamental human need for social belonging.¹⁴ Rick Wilk¹⁵ has suggested that people seek balance in different ways and along different time-scales. He describes moral balancing using a see-saw metaphor, and points out the paradoxical effect of the see-saw metaphor by using organic food as an example: ‘When the price of organic fruit suddenly goes up, we might maintain our consumption and seek balance (by actually consuming more hamburgers, or other ‘sinful’ products). Or we might decide that organic food is really not much better for you, so eating it should not count as a virtue, or we might even redefine it as luxury that should be counted as a sinful indulgence. Note the paradoxical effect of the see-saw metaphor. When we are convinced that organic food is really “good” and then buy it, we also consume more “sinful” food; then when we consume less virtue, we also can consume less “sin”’.

¹⁴ Borch, A., ‘Balancing Rules. Gambling Consumption at Home’, in Kingma, S.F., (ed.), *Global Gambling: Cultural Perspectives on Gambling Organizations*. New York 2010, 195-210.

¹⁵ Wilk, R., ‘Consumption Embedded in Culture and Language: Implications for Finding Sustainability’, A Paper Presented at the Seminar ‘Energy is a Social Good: New Perspectives on Sustainable Consumption’, University of Oslo, 2010.

This study demonstrates that by asking cadets to talk about organic food, insights can be gained into discourses that serve to shape and constrain their perceptions of organic food. Despite being a small-scale study with mainly male participants, it does offer insights into how people might position themselves in relation to organic food in everyday eating situations. The seeking of balance is drawn upon when talking about issues related to organic food and eating.

Consumer Strategies for Coping with Dilemmas in Food Choices¹: Perspectives on Food Choices and Meals

Maria Frostling-Henningsson

Introduction

The importance of social and cultural contexts in determining food choice has been highlighted in a number of studies. Food choice is considered to be influenced by people, culture, media debate, and political values. There are studies which stress that food choices often reflect compromises in everyday life rather than individual consumer preferences.² Compromises are especially evident in households consisting of many individuals in which meeting the demands of providing different food choices have to be dealt with.³ In contemporary households, children and adolescents influence household food choices to a greater extent than formerly⁴ – a phenomenon referred to in a study carried out in 1994 as parental yielding.⁵ A 2006 study shows that nowadays adolescents are especially influential concerning choices with regard to the eating of organic food because of an awareness of environmental issues and recognised animal welfare standards.⁶

When proceeding from an understanding that food choices are made in a social setting involving a variety of preferences, it is not surprising that the measuring of individual consumer intentions is of relatively little value in predicting actual consumer practices. As household food choices often involve negotiation among several people, depending on so-called

¹ This study was carried out with financial support from HUR, (The Swedish Retail and Wholesale Development Council which funds research), Vinnova – Research and Innovation for Sustainable Growth, the retail chain Axfood, and four food producers: Atria Scandinavia, Findus AB, Lantmännen Cerealia, and Santa Maria AB.

² Holm, L., Kildevang, H., 'Consumers Views on Food Quality. A Qualitative Interview Study', *Appetite* 27 (1996): 1-14.

³ Miller, D., *The Dialectics of Shopping*, Chicago 2001.

⁴ Wilson, G., Wood, K., 'The Influence of Children on Parental Purchases during Supermarket Shopping', *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 28 (2004): 329-36; Bassett, R., Chapman, G., Beagan, B., 'Autonomy and Control: The Co-construction of Adolescent Food Choice', *Appetite* 50 (2008): 325-32.

⁵ Carlson, L., Walsh, A., Laczniak, R., Grossbart, S., 'Family Communication Patterns and Marketplace Motivations, Attitudes and Behaviors of Children and Mothers', *Journal of Consumer Affairs* 28 (1994): 23-53.

⁶ Stobbelaar, D. J., Casimir, G., Borghuis, J., Marks, I., Meijer L., Zabeda, S., 'Adolescents' Attitudes towards Organic Food: A Survey of 15- to 16-Year Old School Children', *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 31 (2006): 349-56.

intergenerational influence between household members, it is of the utmost importance to understand the context in which these decisions are made, that is, the everyday life context in which food is planned for, prepared and eaten.⁷ As a consequence, it should not come as a surprise that traditional attitude models⁸ used in food studies when measuring determinants of food choices, have had a rather low rate of predictability success,⁹ and that, consequently, a gap often exists between intentions and practices in relation to food choices.

Not only are food choices often studied as an individual form of consumer activity, food is often also studied in isolation as a single product. Hence, the wider social framework and the cultural system in which food products are consumed, is often neglected.¹⁰ Therefore, the overall aim of this research project is to understand the processes that occur between intentions and practices concerning food choices and the contexts in which consumers' views on foods are formed. In this study, food is treated in a generic sense with the aim of understanding the context in which food is planned for, bought, prepared, and eaten.

According to Daniel Miller, the meal is a social act that occurs in a familiar setting with 'people that matter'.¹¹ He, therefore, considers shopping for groceries as an act of love. Shopping for groceries 'is about the activity you undertake nearly every day in order to obtain goods for those people for whom you are responsible'¹² and, as such, it can be understood as a devotional rite. Not every grocery shopping practice is about love, however; sometimes such an event is motivated by selfishness, hedonism, tradition or habit, but Miller's claim is that love is the dominant motivation for the bulk of actual grocery shopping practice.¹³

Shopping offers meaningful insights into contemporary social relations. By studying grocery shopping Miller has shed light on the complicated social

⁷ Fürst, E., 'The Cultural Significance of Food', in Otnes, P., (ed.), *The Sociology of Consumption*, Oslo 1988, 89-100; deVault, M., *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work*, Chicago 1991; Corrigan, P., *The Sociology of Consumption: An Introduction*, London 1997; Miller, D., *A Theory of Shopping*, Ithaca, NY 1998; Miller, D., *The Dialectics of Shopping*, Chicago 2001; Östberg, J., *What's Eating the Eater?: Perspectives on the Everyday Anxiety of Food Consumption in Late Modernity*, Lund 2003.

⁸ Fishbein, M., 'An Investigation of the Relationships between Beliefs about an Object and the Attitude Toward that Object', *Human Relations* 16 (1983): 233-40.

⁹ Gollwitzer, P., Brandstätter, V., 'Implementation Intentions and Effective Goal Pursuit', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73, (1997): 186-99; Gollwitzer, P., 'Implementation Intentions', *American Psychologist* 54, no. 7 (1999), 493-503.

¹⁰ Holm and Kildevang, *op. cit.*, (1996): 1-14.

¹¹ Miller, D., *op. cit.*, 1998, 15-72.

¹² *Ibid.*, 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 23.

relationships that exist in contemporary households. The selecting of groceries becomes the means by which relationships are defined and redefined and by which conflicts within a household context are negotiated. Hence, shopping can serve as a means by which to mediate conflicts between household members, such as between children and parents, and shopping, from the point of view of the origin of food, can mediate between spouses coming from different cultures, thus overcoming a longing for traditional, local food.

In our study, Miller's framework has provided us with a tool which makes it possible for us to understand how a positive attitude towards a certain food can be achieved through a process of negotiation involving family members, thus giving rise to a practice, in relation to that food, other than the one originally intended. Children's demands also affect the choice of what food to cook; children who are allergic, vegetarians, or 'picky' eaters¹⁴ have to be considered in this context. And there are spouses who suffer from diabetes or high cholesterol levels whose diets have also to be taken into consideration. In addition, obesity is a growing phenomenon. Thus, the negotiations which have to take place in order to cater for these different dietary situations, are among the reasons why a positive intention to buy, for example, healthy food, is often superseded by the need to buy something else which is in accordance with the demands of children, spouses, or a limited household budget.

The Dilemma between Intentions and Practices

The theoretical framework guiding the project is Alan Warde's antinomies of structural oppositions about cultural values mobilised to make decisions about what food to choose.¹⁵

The theory of cognitive dissonance practice¹⁶ also needs to be mentioned. It is based on the premise that consumers require consistency in their everyday lives. When intentions and practices are in conflict, consumers tend to resolve the conflict by a process of cognitive dissonance reduction, thereby eliminating the unpleasant tension. The strategies used by consumers who choose between products which possess both good and bad qualities imply that the person gets the bad qualities of the chosen product and loses out on the good qualities of the product not chosen. This loss creates an unpleasant feeling that the consumer wishes to reduce. Therefore, a common strategy

¹⁴ Wilk, R., 'Serving or Helping Yourself at the Table', *Food, Culture and Society. An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 9 (2006): 7-12.

¹⁵ Warde, A., *Consumption, Food, and Taste: Culinary Antinomies and Commodity Culture*, London 1997.

¹⁶ Festinger, L., *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, Stanford, CA 1957.

among consumers is to try to convince themselves that the choice which they made was the right one. This is achieved by finding additional reasons in support of the alternative which they had chosen or by finding flaws with the option they had rejected. In this study, Miller's theory and terminology have been used in order to develop and nuance the theory of cognitive dissonance. Miller discusses dissonance in terms of the negotiations that occur within households and he also discusses the complexity that is part of family life. As his work is, therefore, more theoretically encompassing, it has been used in this study.

Some Contemporary Consumer Dilemmas Identified

The results from the first round of interviews and shop-along study events with the consumer panel, identified some consumer dilemmas concerning food choices. This article argues, in line with another study,¹⁷ that contradictions are an inseparable part of the human condition and also of contemporary consumption. With regard to food choices, these contradictions are explicit. This study points to various dilemmas recognised by consumers concerning conflicting expectations when choosing which groceries to consume. The dilemmas are not antinomies in a strict sense; they are rather paradoxical situations which the consumers recognise as being problematic.

The dilemmas concern the following antinomies:

- Price and Quality
- Time and Ambition
- Health and Taste
- Originality and Children's Expectations
- Organic and Eco-friendly Food

The dilemmas identified differed as between various household types. Not surprisingly, in all groups of households, a dilemma existed as regards price and quality. Besides that, some major dilemmas that households in each category experienced, were identified. Households with small children experienced a dilemma concerning the demands of time and ambition. Many households with small children had the intention to cook 'real food', but due to time constraints they had to serve ready-made food. In households with teenagers, the dilemma that stood out was that between originality in terms of meal content and children's expectations. In 'empty-nest' households

¹⁷ Leipämaa-Leskinen, H., 'Contradictions in Food Consumption', *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 31 (2007): 597-602.

(where children had left the home), the dilemma experienced was that between tasty and healthy food. Finally, the most advanced consumers experienced a dilemma between the wish to eat organically-produced food and the desire to be eco-friendly at the same time. These two requirements were hard to reconcile, especially if the organic food had been transported over long distances.

Aim

This paper aims at identifying consumer dilemmas, and discusses the strategies that consumers employ in order to mediate between these dilemmas, so that cognitive dissonance is reduced.

Methods

Different qualitative methods were applied in analysing the data. The data were derived from a consumer panel of 33 Swedish households, which were 'followed' over one and a half years, and which consisted of:

- 9 households with small children
- 14 households with teenagers
- 10 'empty-nest' households (children having recently moved out)

The reason for choosing families with children/teenagers was that it was expected that dilemmas would occur more often in households where there were a lot of conflicting expectations to consider. The 'empty-nest' households were of interest also since the children had recently moved out and hence meal habits were in a transitional state.

The study was undertaken during the period from January 2008 to August 2009. In order to shed light on intentions towards food and the meal, the decision was taken to use interviews, a projective method called Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET), and poems written by the participants. In order to be able to describe participants' actual shopping practices, shop-along studies were conducted and shopping receipts were collected. In the shop-along studies, the researchers followed the informants on an ordinary weekly shopping trip, and asked questions about the participants' choice of groceries as they were purchased. In order to probe the discrepancy between what people said and what they actually did concerning food choices, a follow-up interview was undertaken, in which each individual household was probed concerning the gap between intention

and practice in their food choices. The interviews and shop-along studies were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

In order to reveal associations with and to bring up emotional responses towards food and the meal, a pictorial representations (ZMET) technique was used in which pictures of various foods and food situations were given to the interviewees. This method helps to reveal consumers' deep, latent, and emerging thoughts and feelings through the use of metaphors.¹⁸ The design of the ZMET technique was inspired by the use of the pictorial approach as a visual trigger complementing more traditional in-depth interviews.¹⁹ In our study, the method was shown to have brought forward unconscious, non-verbal thoughts and feelings concerning the meal and food choices. In the majority of the interviews, the pictures chosen supported the results in the interviews, but in a few cases the pictures revealed paradoxical dilemmas that the consumers recognised. The pictures that were chosen by the informants were those of fresh water, a glass of wine, vegetables, a pair of intertwined carrots (because 'they looked organic'), sushi, and a picture in which a group of men were eating pizza and drinking beer together (Fig. 1a-f). In order to reveal associations to food we also instructed the informants to write poems about food and the meal. The instructions in this regard were deliberately broadly defined in order to inspire the informants to interpret the assignment freely. Poetry as a method has, in line with other methods such as ZMET, the advantage of bringing up latent meaning by the use of metaphors.²⁰ However, poetry as a method can also be problematic for informants to use since some might consider it to be difficult. On the other hand, this method can encourage informants to be more forthcoming and creative than might otherwise be the case.

The results from the poems were expressive and in line with the results from the interviews. They gave emotional insights into the meaning of food and the meal by focusing on the aspects that were crucial for the informants. A majority of the poems highlighted the discrepancies between intentions and practices in a very explicit way. The following is an example of a 'food poem' written by an interviewee:

¹⁸ Zaltman, G., 'Metaphorically Speaking, New Technique Uses Multidisciplinary Ideas to Improve Qualitative Research', *Marketing Research Forum* (1996):13-20.

¹⁹ Kniazeva, M., 'How Many Wings Does a Butterfly Have? Or Stimuli as an Elicitation Technique for In-depth Interviews', *Advances in Consumer Research* 32 (2005): 540-4.

²⁰ Sherry, J., 'Trivium Siam', *CMC, Consumption, Markets and Culture* 1 (1997): 91-5; Sherry, J., Schouten, J., 'A Role for Poetry in Consumer Research', *Journal of Consumer Research* 29 (2002), 218-34; Stern, B., 'Poetry and Representation in Consumer Research: The Art of Science', in Stern, B., (ed.), *Representing Consumers in Voices, Views and Visions*, New York 2002, 1-23.

An Ode to Food

Food, food, food,
What does it mean to you?
Something quick to hit the spot?
Something you can cook in a pot?
Something small to take along?
Something spicy that smells very strong?
Something simple you can cook real fast?
Something big you make to last?
Something you cook with lots of care?
Something you would like to share?
For me the answer is very clear:
Food is something to be enjoyed,
and rushing and stress one should avoid.

(Eira, a 39 year-old post-doctoral researcher from Canada, two small children).



Fig. 1: (a) a glass of fresh water; (b) a glass of wine; (c) vegetables; (d) a pair of intertwined carrots; (e) sushi (f) men are eating pizza and drinking beer.

Results

The consumer dilemmas identified by virtue of the study resulted in the development of some consumer strategies that were applied among consumers in order to overcome situations in which intentions and practices were not aligned. The most important consumer strategies for dealing with this situation which our study revealed were: 1) Justification of non-choices 2) Compensatory food habits 3) Individualised food habits, and 4) Agony-reducing strategies. These strategies are not mutually exclusive as they overlap to a certain degree. The strategies differed in action-level, ranging from passive to active, and they also differed concerning where the consumers thought responsibility for food choices should be placed, that is, at societal or individual level.

Society	Justification of non-choices	Agony reducing strategies
Individual	Compensatory food habits	Individualized food habits
	Passive	Active

Fig. 2: Consumer strategies in food choices.

Finding 1: Justification of Non-Choices

In line with the results in Miller's study,²¹ the most frequent strategy we encountered for negotiating between incompatible demands was a type of behaviour which we have called 'justification of non-choices'. This implied

²¹ Miller, *op. cit.*, 2001, 111-48.

that consumers were actively defending their choices, when not choosing specific food items, in order to align intentions and practices that did not match. The justification of non-choices was a passive strategy, whereby consumers placed responsibility for their food choices at a societal level. The justifications of non-choices were evident in many areas, but for most consumers, price was an aspect to be considered when deciding on what food to buy. This could lead to a situation where non-choices had to be justified. Birgitta²² [an interviewee] gave one example of this. She was conscious of the food that she served to her family and had watched a programme called 'you are what you eat', which had influenced her. It was of crucial importance for Birgitta that good, healthy, nutritious food should be served to her children. However, when the household's financial situation was sometimes difficult, she had to justify the unhealthy food choices that she was forced to make. She stated:

If I have the opportunity to buy in bulk, if I have that much money, then I prefer to do so. In that case I shop so that I have one chicken dish each week, and maybe cod. Semi-manufactured food I try to avoid completely, because there is so much garbage in it. But if you are poor, the sausage is damned cheap (Birgitta, 41 years old, assistant nurse, five teenagers still at home).

Price is an important consideration for many consumers irrespective of whether or not organic food is going to be purchased. Our study also revealed that this was the case. It was evident that price was often the dimension which justified the choice of buying non-organic food. This is illustrated in the quotation below. Organic eggs and milk were products which consumers were often prepared to purchase despite their price, but when it came to meat, the decision was more complex and reflected the higher price of organic meat:

If you are going to have high morals, you must be able to afford having high morals. If the household budget is good, then I prefer the Swedish meat. But at the end of the month I probably choose the meat from New Zealand. I prefer organic food but it is always more expensive; I buy organic eggs and milk, but the meat is often too expensive (Claes, 50 years old, owner of a bookstore, two teenagers at home).

But there are also other reasons why organic products are avoided. The following is one of the more radical justifications:

You find more bugs in the organic food; it doesn't look that fresh when you take a look at it, and then I think: how fresh can it be if

²² The names used for interviewees in this article are fictitious.

the vegetables are cultivated in Järna where the anthroposophists have fertilised it with their own excrement (Eva, 63 years old, nurse, one child who has left home).

What our study showed was, that the reasoning behind consumers' decisions not to buy organic food, varied – for some it was simply too expensive, while for others organic food was seen as implying lower quality. For the 'empty-nesters' it was as if the traditional way of cultivating crops implied more control and less risk, while organically-cultivated products would seem to imply less control and more risk, as shown in the example above.

Finding 2: Agony Reducing Strategies

An agony-reducing strategy serves to neutralise tension. Many consumers stated that they feel anxious about their food choices. Agony-reducing strategies help consumers to make this situation less complex and thus easier to handle. The strategy is relatively close to justification of non-choices; the difference lies in the more active choice that consumers make in this strategy as a means of handling the anxiety of the situation. The making of the choice serves in itself as an agony-reducing strategy, while in the justification of non-choices strategy, it is the reasoning involved that neutralises the agony.

During the period when the interviews were being conducted, there was a vivid discussion in the Swedish media about food additives. Several of the households who took part in our study had, by virtue of the TV programme, become aware of the large amount of additives in some foods, something which had made them anxious. An agony-reducing strategy which they developed was to cook the meals from primary produce instead of serving semi-manufactured dishes. This applied especially to households with small children. The intention in the following household is to cook from scratch; however time-constraints and convenience perspectives make it difficult to turn that intention into practice:

These food additives are addictive. Asian food has flavour enhancers, like sodium glutamate, which is not so good. It is the same for ready-made food, so we try to use more primary produce and to cook from scratch. But, it is not so easy; we eat a lot of meat-sauce and we buy the ready-made tomato sauce instead of cooking our own (Lotta, 37 years old, engineer, two small children).

Some consumers deliberately decided to filter out unwanted information as an agony-reducing strategy – as one such consumer explained:

... the more you know, the more observant you become. The best would be if you knew nothing. Then you could eat everything (Michael, 57 years old, engineer, two children who have left home).

Another reviewee, Anna-Carin, gave us one example of how easy it can be to find an agony-reducing strategy in order to address problematic food issues. During a discussion about red-listed [at risk] fish she explained how she thinks about the matter, as follows:

It is sensitive with cod. You can't buy cod that is fished everywhere since they are almost eradicated. On the other hand, when the fish is lying here dead I might as well buy it. Because it will never get back into the ocean anyway (Anna-Karin, 47 years old, teacher, one teenager at home).

Finding 3: Compensatory Food Habits

Engaging in compensatory food habits was a common strategy among the informants in order to obtain consistency in their choices of what to eat. When intentions and practices concerning food choices were in conflict, consumers experienced an unpleasant tension. One strategy for resolving this situation was to convince themselves that the choice they had made was the right one for them. This was achieved by finding additional reasons which supported the alternative they had chosen or by discovering shortcomings in the option they had rejected.

One strategy for compensating for unhealthy eating habits which emerged from the study was to include healthy food in the diet at other times of the week. The following example of this strategy comes from a woman who, during the weekdays, included grated raw vegetables in her diet in order to compensate for otherwise unhealthy food habits:

Sometimes we eat junk food, but then I feel that the next day has to be nutritious. So the next day I concentrate on food that is predominantly healthy, and just a little unhealthy. So I try to keep a balance. However, you have to eat French fries and béarnaise sauce, otherwise life is over! (Laila, 55 years old, office employee, one teenager at home).

According to Laila, the perceived shortcomings associated with the changing of food habits, is that life is then metaphorically 'over'. Therefore, she can 'treat'²³ her family to whatever unhealthy food that she chooses to serve them. By adding some grated carrot or beet to the dishes she feels that, in this way, she can make up for the negative effects of the junk food that has been eaten.

²³ Miller, *op. cit.*, 1998, 40-9.

Another strategy for 'making up' for unhealthy food habits was to include more physical activity in the everyday routine. The strategy does not necessarily mean that physical activity increases; for some, just talking about healthier habits can be deemed by them to be sufficient:

I don't care. I altered my food habits for a short while, but have neglected it since the beginning of the summer. One day I might discover that I have to start jogging or whatever you have to do to reduce that fat. You are kind of careless during the summer. Then it is barbecue and beer (Robert, sales person, 61 years old, one teenager at home).

Robert suffers from diabetes, and is aware that he should be eating healthy food. He has undertaken a programme provided at the hospital in order to learn how to become healthier. However, his view of food seems to be rather traditional. During the second interview Robert was bragging about how little vegetables he ate, since, according to him, vegetables were not food meant for men.

Finding 4: Individualised Food Habits

The individualisation of food habits was an active consumer strategy for those households who considered that the food choices of the individual members were 'their own concern'. Households which applied this strategy found that food choices and the meal were matters in which all of the household members actively participated. This study showed, in line with other recent studies, that children influenced the decisions as to what kinds of food were bought and cooked, to a significant extent.²⁴

This was common especially in households with small children. Katja, who has two small children, explains that the most important thing for her is that the children should eat their food. If that means serving something else other than what she had planned, then that is what has to happen:

The children are influencing the food choices. Leon, our oldest son, is picky. If I plan to make something which Leon does not like, I must reconsider, and decide to cook something else, because I want him to eat (Katja, 39 years old, real estate administrator, two small children).

Even though Katja is more-or-less content with the food situation concerning her children, her ambition for the future is to cook a greater variety of food. She chooses to cook without using a lot of seasoning so that the children will

²⁴ Wilson and Wood, *op. cit.*, 2004; Basset, *op. cit.*, 2008.

like the food, and eat it, even though, according to her own taste, she finds the food the family eats rather tasteless.

Maybe more adult food, we eat a lot of sausage and fish-balls at the moment. More taste, more flavouring. We hardly use those now – spices (Katja, 39 years old, real estate administrator, two small children).

It is not only families with small children who have to negotiate between different claims about what kind of food to serve. The following household has one fastidious teenager, which the rest of the family has to consider in terms of food choices:

We have solved it by letting Marcus get the kind of food he likes. We make the other kind of dishes for ourselves because he basically only likes meatballs, sausage and spaghetti... But now that he is sixteen he is daring to taste something else. I mean, I want to eat my salmon, which is something only I like. Then I make other dishes for the children (Petra, 45 years old, shoe store salesperson, two teenagers at home).

At the time of the second interview, the tone of the woman in the above family was harsher, indicating that she was getting really tired of preparing food according to the specific taste of the different family members. Still, the taste of the sixteen-year old adolescent continued to set the standard concerning the choice of food served at the various meals in that family.

Several households had to prepare different dinners in order to suit all family members. This was a very time-consuming practice. Also the children's different activities made it difficult for all family members to eat meals at the same time. But children do not only influence the kind of dishes that will be eaten, they also influence primary food choices. The choice of organic food was often influenced by the teenagers as the following quotation shows:

If there are both organic and conventional tomatoes, and the organic variety costs two dollars more, then I choose the conventional. But if she is with me (the daughter) I buy the organic [tomatoes] because she says: 'But mummy!' (Carina, 40 years old, nurse, two teenagers still at home).

Discussion and Conclusions

A common aspect of meal provision for the various households in the study was the difficulty of combining all the varied expectations of the meal which the different household members had. The demands were potentially

limitless and could concern such aspects as the avoidance of food additives, expectations as to the provision of certain dishes, non-adherence to specific meal-times, alternative food production, nutrition, taste, and so on.

Households with small children wanted, essentially, to serve quick, convenient, nutritious dishes without additives. Due to sensitivity of taste among small children, food should not be spicy. In the households with teenagers, variation of dishes, as well as the provision of food that suits all family members, was important. Many teenagers are, for example, vegetarians, or eat only wholegrain products; they thus refuse to accept the family's ordinary meal repertoire. These households have problems in arranging meals in order to take account of the different activities in which the teenagers are engaged. Thus, individualised food habits put a lot of pressure on the person cooking the meals. For 'empty-nest' households neither time, nor economy, are perceived as being problematic. Neither is variation in the dishes served since these householders often have a profound knowledge of cooking. The meal is seen as a social event, a pleasure, a form of relaxation and an occasion on which to 'treat' oneself²⁵ – even on weekdays. But they have to compromise with regard to health. To be able to create a tasty meal without the use of sweetening agents and including 'light' products is something which this group demands.

²⁵ Miller, *op. cit.*, 1998, 40-9.

Four Scenarios for Future Food Consumption in Finland: Focus on the Role of Ecological Food

Anna Kirveennummi, Riikka Saarimaa, Leena Jokinen and Johanna Mäkelä

Introduction

What are the consequences which global and local environmental changes will have on our food production systems, food consumption, and eating, in the future? In the most dystopian of scenarios, the world, in the future, will be in the grip of severe crises due to climate change, population growth, and the loss of natural resources. In this article, we would like to question the rather one-sided negative visions of the world in terms of food provision, in order to see if there are other more positive alternative scenarios which can be envisaged in this context. We are focusing especially on ecological food and eating and we are asking if such an approach would lead to a more sustainable future in terms of food production. And we are also asking how the different interpretations and views of the future of ecological food and eating are linked to our food traditions in Finland.

Changes of the Past and Images of the Future

Scenarios are mental maps or models reflecting different alternative futures in contemporary discussions. The alternative possible situation is partly artificial, and, as with models in general, even the scenarios are abstractions, that is, ideal types and intensified perspectives on past, present, and future development. In the project entitled 'What's for dinner tomorrow?' (MIRHAMI), coordinated by Finland Futures Research Centre, the aim was to analyse the future of food and eating in Finland. As members of the project, we tried to develop research tools and a research strategy that could be used to approach and outline the dynamic complexity of everyday life. This article is based on data from six consumer workshops and a survey conducted by researchers at the Finland Futures Research Centre and the National Consumer Research Centre, in 2007. The process, which we are discussing here in detail, is the creation of scenarios for food and eating in the everyday life of Finland in 2030. The focus is on the role of ecological food in the scenarios put forward and how the different interpretations and views of the future of ecological food and eating are linked to our Finnish traditions.

Here the images of past, present and future were based on an analysis of the empirical data arising from the workshops. The scenarios developed represented the temporal combinations of these images constructed as narratives. We started the project by doing expert interviews and surveys, and continued with consumer workshops that were, from a methodological point of view, a mixture of future workshops and focus-group interviews. But, as the project was designed to be a multi-actors project with many kinds of materials, there were and are different or even partly conflicting outcomes, and the process of interpretation is still ongoing.

As with the other 'experts' involved in this project, we, too, are consumers of food and we also make interpretations of the world of which we are a part. The constructions are difficult to make when we are challenged by the multiplicity of perspectives, features, and discussions surrounding the topic. There is no such thing as a 'one future for us all'. As the function of the scenarios is to promote discussion of some interpretations already put forward, they are thus not to be regarded as objective truths or our own opinions on the matter. Especially when we tried to describe the future of phenomena as complex as 'food', 'eating' and 'everyday life' we had to face the limits of scenario thinking.

Scenarios – Star Ways to the Future?

In our research team, we used multidisciplinary theoretical and methodological perspectives in order to analyse the complex field of food consumption and everyday life. Past development and the vast changes in consumption structure were described, using expert interviews and statistics. Statistical data, and people's personal experiences of changes in food and eating habits, were used as a starting point, in order to facilitate discussion in consumer workshops, about the possibility of change in the future and the time-frame involved. The main focus in this regard concerned the situation in Finland, but global changes and threats concerning food also featured in the discussions. The major development in the food consumption structure in Finland reflects the situation that pertains in other Western countries, that is, that household expenditure on food has, as a percentage of total household expenditure, decreased in Finland in the course of the twentieth century (see Fig. 1).

Experts representing the fields of social, cultural, political, economic, technical, environmental and ethical matters were asked to identify the major changes, trends and megatrends that could be expected to intersect, interact, and influence the future of food consumption. Some of the main challenges

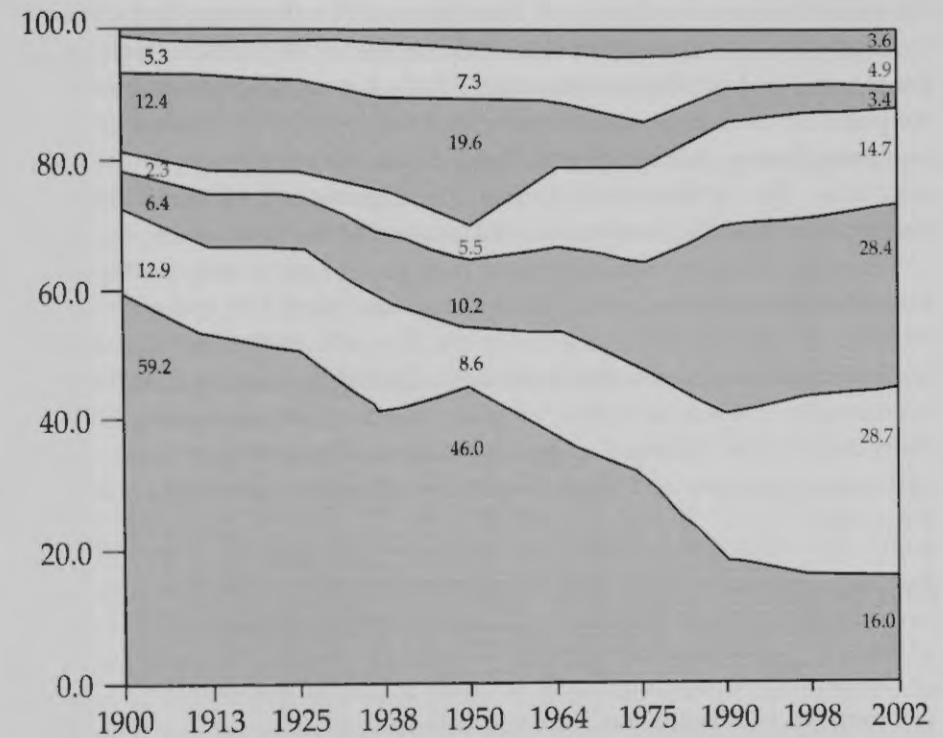


Fig. 1: Food expenses, as a percentage of total household expenses, have decreased rapidly over the last one hundred years in Finland. The lowest field illustrates the percentage of household income spent on food (16.0 %); the next fields from below indicate, respectively, the percentage of household income spent on energy (28.7%), miscellaneous utensils and services (28.4%), travel (14.7%), furniture and utensils (3.4%), clothes and shoes (4.9%), and health (3.6%).

concerning food production and consumption in the future were seen to be the following:

- Climate change and environmental decline
- Demographic factors: the growth and ageing of the population
- The lack of food, energy, clean water, and farming land
- Globalisation – multiculturalism and transnationalism in a global world
- Regional inequality and threats of an unequal availability of food
- Technological innovations in food production and in the development of food substitutes
- Genetically modified food becoming a part of everyday food consumption
- Loss of biodiversity

The same themes were discussed, from many different perspectives, in both the expert and consumer workshops. The people in both groups spoke about the changes and challenges concerning daily food consumption both from the point of consumers and from the perspective of their various fields of expertise. From a cultural perspective, it was not considered necessary to emphasise the differences between the experts representing different stakeholders, and the consumers – the 'experts of their own everyday life'.

Temporal changes were discussed in several ways – from past, present and future perspectives, and by comparing time, place and space, as well as different people and different ways of life. The paths to the future and to the scenarios envisioned have thus been marked both by change and by tradition or continuity. The scenarios that we constructed were in accordance with the main themes that emerged in the discussions. These themes have a long tradition in academic and societal debates – as well as in the food culture of the people.

Four Scenarios

- Scenario 1 - Cornucopian Future of Food Consumption
- Scenario 2 – Ecological Practices Guiding Food Consumption
- Scenario 3 - Scarcity and Shortage of Food
- Scenario 4 – Techno-Life and Food

We combined the alternative views of the future that were narrated by the consumers and other experts in order to form logical or coherent wholes, that is, four scenarios. Each scenario places emphasis on some themes more than others. The constructions could even be compared with the concept of discourse – a concept that operates with the interpretation of similarities and differences in various contexts of speech. We tried to include both the temporal, social and cultural heterogeneity evident in everyday life and the dynamics of change, that is, the new and emerging issues, in our construction of the scenarios. One way of illustrating both the diversity and the overlapping of themes was to use the metaphor of a star-map. The individual stars in different constellations illustrate the changing perspectives and forms that some of the elements were taking, thus showing the multiplicity of possible alternatives and mixtures around this complex theme of food and eating.

In this paper, our purpose is to discuss the changes that occur in the form and content of ecological food, in the context of the different scenarios or visions for the future mentioned above.

Scenario 1. Cornucopian Future of Food Consumption

Major features – normal paradigms that will rule Finnish society in 2030

- an absence of a strong political will or ability to solve ecological problems
- Ecological food is mostly linked to health, quality, and surplus, and is available at extra cost
- Increasing individualism and freedom of choice in food matters lead to complexity and chaos
- Growing polarities and controversy among consumers in Finland and worldwide
- Obesity, waste problems, and the overuse of resources
- Unsustainability

The cornucopia scenario describes the food situation in the Western world in 2030, in which a plentiful supply of food determines whether our eating habits and food consumption will remain the same as they have been in recent decades. The concept of Cornucopia has been well described by Warren Belasco (2006) who sees cornucopian utopias as a continuing feature of visions of the future. A very common interpretation of the cornucopia scenario is also the idea about the probable future where modernisation and economic growth, as well as the processes of individualisation, will have led to an even more complex and heterogeneous world than the one in which we live today.

Convenience food plays a major role in consumers' eating habits, and everyday life is dominated by constant choices that need to be made among a great variety of rival industrial products. While the promotion of welfare and health are important values which direct food consumption, it is, nevertheless, taste and pleasure which people desire most of all in relation to food. The main aspects which concern people in terms of food are health and wellness, naturalness and nostalgia. Organic vegetables are popular and Finnish people enjoy growing them themselves when possible. Some people are willing to put more effort and money into the consumption of good food than ever before. Products from small-scale food manufacturers which fulfill the ideals of social and local responsibility often supplement the more industrial kind of food choices. On the other hand, the needs of consumers are difficult to predict as the markets are very fragmented and in a state of constant change.

But not everyone can afford, or is willing to pay, for natural or organic food. Serious food scandals, and the bad nutritional reputation of convenience

food, have made consumers suspicious of food bearing the label 'organic'. Food that has been produced in an anonymous food chain has lost its popularity. On the other hand, the multinational food producers have developed their own ecological and 'local' trademarks as the ecological trend in food consumption has become stronger.

Changes in food-consumption environments, climate change, and population growth, have not been sufficient to bring very strong political pressure to bear on politicians in order to develop eco-friendly legislation or sustainable food production systems. The ecological situation has not affected people's behaviour at a deeper level – the main cultural models still derive from a world in which resources are unlimited. From the point of view of ecology and sustainability, the multiplicity and abundance of food choice produces several problems. People eat constantly, and their food intake greatly exceeds their calorie requirements. A large amount of food is ending up as waste and causing some of the most severe negative environmental effects of the food sector. The amount of food waste that is being recycled for the production of energy is insufficient in order to deal with the negative effects of food waste, and the production of 'unnecessary food' leads to a waste of energy resources as well. In this scenario, an unsustainable attitude towards food production, consumption and recycling, and the promotion of pleasure at any cost, negatively affects the environment, and, in this scenario, cornucopia becomes a Pandora's box.

Scenario 2. Ecological Practices Guiding Food Consumption

The trends and megatrends which affect food culture in 2030, according to this scenario, are:

- Sustainability and ecological thinking as the main cultural drivers in society
- More political governance, ecological guidelines, and restrictions in every part of the food system
- Responsibility and 'Climate Anorexia'

Widespread environmental consciousness and an attitude of responsibility are the main principles which direct operations in this scenario. In the expert interviews and consumer workshops which were conducted on these issues, people described in a variety of ways a world in which ecological practices could guide food consumption in a more efficient and effective way than is the case today. According to this scenario, different regulations and legislation of different kinds determine the whole production cycle of food from the primary production phase to the finished products and their

Scenario 2 – Ecological Food Consumption

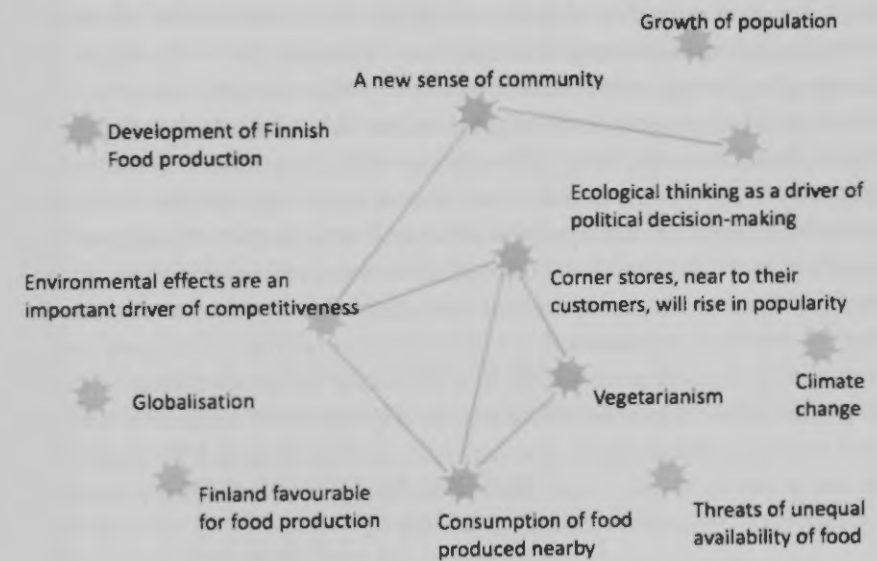


Fig. 2: The certainties, megatrends, and sociocultural developments, are visualised as a star-map. The stars and the lines in the centre illustrate the sociocultural trends in the everyday life of the people. They are constantly changing priorities in interaction with the people, market, and other actors in the food chain.

distribution. The path to a more ecological eating culture was taken in the public sector – in schools, hospitals, and so on, especially after 2015. The consumers' attitudes towards the material culture of everyday life and food have also changed in general terms, and the changes have affected society and cultural traditions at many different levels. Environmental impacts are counted as carefully as 'money' in the consumer society of the year 2030. Demands for ecological products have increased and the norms regulating societal behaviour have been adjusted and have become part of normal, everyday life for most people.

In a world of ecological practices, consciousness of the effects of food and eating on land regulates its use. Where food is to be cultivated, and how, and through which kinds of processes the products are to be brought to the consumer, are carefully planned. New production methods and logistics are constantly being sought, in order to produce food, but also to preserve the environment and natural resources, since society and technology are in a process of dynamic change. The challenges are complex, but the

environmental choices are not left just to the consumer. When production is sustainable in the whole production chain, the number of choices has been limited. It has required resilience and difficult choices in the whole food system. For example 'climate anorexia' may threaten the wellbeing of some of the people who are most concerned about environmental issues.

Food is often prepared at home. On the other hand, the ecologically efficient systems in the food industry are able to produce food in more ecologically friendly conditions than those which prevail in the average household. People have joined networks and have become food producers themselves, and many kinds of collective systems are created in order to make household logistics economical and ecological – and more social, too. The eating of meat is considered to be more unnatural than ever before. Sustainability in food production, and demands for proper animal welfare have caused meat to become more expensive and more difficult to obtain. It is used during major celebrations such as those occurring at Christmas, when meat has great symbolic value. Meat is no longer used for daily meals and the majority of consumers no longer eat meat:

It could be an alternative in some phase. I don't say this will be in 2030; but in some phase, [it could be] that meat-eating is considered as something totally brutal and primitive (Helsinki 25.9.2007; female).

Scenario 3. Scarcity and Shortage of Food

Trends and megatrends which affect food culture in 2030 according to this scenario are:

- Adaptation to changes in a globalising world
- Limited world resources have implications even in Western countries – the shortage and the high price of food are leading to limited choices all over the world
- Defence of national borders and food safety govern food politics
- Property rights and especially individual rights are questioned
- Food production in close networks is popular and an exchange an economy rules

In the scenario of scarcity and shortage of food, food production is in crisis. Huge population pressure and climate change are causing difficult situations all over the world. Large areas of the world have become unsuitable for food production because of drought, soil erosion, storms, and natural disasters. Shortages of energy and water causes food production to become very challenging, and the consumption of food has to be regulated by the

authorities. For most people, food choices are more limited than ever before. Diets become simpler and food-production networks become closer.

In an atmosphere of shortage, different networking models are created and a new sense of community emerges. An appreciation of food, land, and the countryside, increases, and diet is often based on very basic foodstuffs – such as grains, potatoes, beans and cabbage. Some people can still remember stories from the 'old times', the wartime diets, and the black markets. Land ownership is again the main guarantee of better resources, security, and reproduction. A shortage of food has also spread mistrust and created conflicts between landowners and the landless people of the countryside, and between urban and rural folk.

Scenario 4. Techno-Life and Artificial Food

The major societal features that have an impact on food culture in 2030 according to this scenario are:

- The introduction of new food substitutes
- Genetically modified food forms part of daily life
- People are separated from food production
- Diversity is limited – nevertheless, new kinds of foods are discovered
- Individual control and health are important criteria influencing food choices
- The boundary between natural and unnatural food has changed
- 'Real' natural food has become a luxury

This scenario is based on the fact that the solutions to the problems brought about by the dynamics of change concerning food are approached in a traditional way by new technological inventions and applications. As a consequence, both food substitutes and new forms of industrial production have largely been developed. The greatest consequences of the new technologies are to be felt in the food market and in the everyday life of the people, when food shortage became intolerable after the year 2015. In 2030, an efficient industrial food-production sector is co-operating widely with chemists, nutritionists, and medical researchers, so that tastes and nutrient components can be added to food according to individual needs and preferences. A majority of people can afford to buy the 'healthy line' products, developed in order to prevent anticipated diseases. Traditional raw materials have become a luxury. Numerous certificates to guarantee the authenticity of products verify the taste and genuineness of pure raw materials. The markets are saturated with substitutes and copies of these products and it is a demanding task to trace the origins of food.

In a world pierced by technology, conflicts arise between attitudes to natural and artificial foods. The eating of genuine meat is regarded as a barbaric act when there is sufficient painlessly-produced in-vitro meat available from the laboratories. At the same time, changes in the culinary art are occurring very quickly and food issues divide people into different political camps more effectively than any other matters. The art of home cooking is challenged when technological knowledge systems have become too complex for consumers to handle in the home context. The technological solutions and the food substitutes have, on the other hand, succeeded in reducing the suffering of undernourished people.

The majority of consumers believed that society, in 2030, will depend more on industrially produced and convenience foods than ever before, and that home-made food as we understand it today is, in fact, fast disappearing. Even the very concept of home-made food is changing. It often refers to the home making of food from basic and only lightly pre-processed ingredients, but the 'right' degree of processing, and the 'right' practices that include the process, are in dynamic change and reflect the cultural values of society. Scenario 4 shows how negotiable the line between 'natural' and 'unnatural' can be.

Conclusions

Scenarios are often used as tools for strategic thinking and decision-making. They are also used as tools for reflection and for interactive and participatory planning.

In our project, the scenarios functioned:

- 1) as starting points for strategies in product development and in national food programmes. They contributed to the implementation of the food industry's quality strategy and to the development of competitive products.
- 2) as common ground for discussion between different stakeholders in the food chain (in production, processing, retailing and consuming).
- 3) to create perspectives and multidimensional visionary overviews about the alternatives for the future of food consumption.

We would also emphasise the power of scenarios, to raise questions about peoples' dreams and fears concerning food, for further discussion. They also help to shed light on present-day values and routines – including our own – that might otherwise escape attention.

All of these 'futures' are already happening in some places even at the present moment. In a wider perspective, the scenarios dealt with above may

raise some new questions about alternative ways of coping with the challenges of food consumption. It is obvious that there are different political agendas to lead people towards new and more sustainable modes of food consumption, but the solutions are quite predictable and emerge very slowly, sometimes, even frustratingly-slowly, according to many consumers.

As Warren Belasco has stated in his book *Meals to Come, History of the Future of Food* (2006), experts have a tendency to generalise and universalise their own worldview, and they rarely venture much 'beyond their own values, paradigms and experiences'. Even the most ecological dimension put forward by them contains a diversity of ideological assumptions about progress and development, and about the correct means by which a more sustainable future can be reached.

The future is an invention of the present. It is thus always in a process of change as it is connected to various contexts, perspectives, and the interests of people. It is thus, also, a very contentious matter.

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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR ETHNOLOGICAL FOOD RESEARCH: CONFERENCES, THEMES AND PUBLICATIONS (1970-2012)

Year	Place	Theme/Publication
1970	Lund, Sweden	<i>Theme: 'Ethnological Food Research: Development, Methods and Future Tasks'.</i> <i>Publication: Ethnological Food Research in Europe and USA.</i> <i>Editors: Nils-Arvid Bringéus & Günter Wiegelmann.</i> <i>Publisher: Otto Schwartz & Co., Göttingen, 1971, 213 pp. See also: Ethnologia Scandinavica 1971, 1-187 and Ethnologia Europaea 5 (1971), 1-213.</i>
1973	Helsinki, Finland	<i>Theme: 'Dominant Traits in Regional Food Systems in the Twentieth Century'.</i> <i>Publication: Ethnologische Nahrungsforschung. Ethnological Food Research.</i> <i>Editors: Niilo Valonen & Juhani U. E. Lehtonen.</i> <i>Publisher: Sonderdruck aus/Offprint from: Kansatieteellinen Arkisto 26. Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistys, Helsinki 1975, 340pp.</i>
1977	Cardiff, Wales	<i>Theme: 'National Food'.</i> <i>Publication: Food in Perspective.</i> <i>Editors: Alexander Fenton & Trefor M. Owen.</i> <i>Publishers: John Donald Publishers Ltd., Edinburgh 1981, 425pp.</i>
1980	Stainz, Austria	<i>Theme: 'Nahrung als Kommunikation'.</i> <i>Publication: Proceedings Unpublished.</i> <i>Review of conference in: Österreichisches Zeitschrift für Volkskunde 1980, 252-63.</i>

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- 1989 Philadelphia, USA
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- 1994 Freising, Germany
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- 2004 Dubrovnik, Croatia *Theme: 'Mediterranean Food and Its Influences Abroad'.*
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Publisher: Novus Press, Oslo 2010, 341pp.
- 2010 Åbo-Turku, Finland *Theme: 'Time for Food. Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits'.*
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The papers included in this volume deal with historical and ongoing cultural processes concerned with food and meals in local, regional, national and transnational contexts. They also focus on issues such as food production, organic agriculture, ecological food, ethical consumption, and food marketing, and on the food choices and practices involved in the daily organisation of food intake in the home, restaurant or public institution. How global trends affect, or even re-invent, the notion of traditional food is also discussed, as is the subject of future food consumption and the role of ecological food in that context.

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