



Meal Cultures in Europe

CHANGES & EXCHANGES

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DIVISION: GENDER & GLOBALIZATION
FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE
HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN



EU GRUNDTVIG-
WORKSHOP



Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme

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Meals under a tree



A WORKSHOP ABOUT OUR EATING HABITS IN CHANGE

Meal Cultures in Europe – Changes and Exchanges

PARTO TEHERANI-KRÖNNER

The division of Gender & Globalization has organized an informative, exciting and colourful workshop with participants from more than ten EU countries which was funded by the EU GRUNDTVIG Programme from the 20th to the 27th of February, 2011. The aim of this programme is to promote lifelong learning for EU citizens. We have taken the idea of lifelong learning and combined it with the changing eating habits in Europe as the subject of our meeting and exchange. We wanted to give special emphasis on the importance of our everyday meals and changes in meal habits. This in fact is of relevance at our Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture and has to be taken even more into account.

The life of the people is determined by their everyday meals. Meals are symbols of our identity: “You are what you eat!” – Hence, this topic is - within the scope of the EU integration - an exciting subject for the future.

A change of the eating habits can be assessed not only by the quality of the food, but also by our social behaviour, which has a strong influence on our communication system, like participation and interaction of the people in a society. Besides this, we can observe ambivalent processes: On the one hand, the isolation of the single households. Here our leading question was: “Who likes to eat alone?” On the other hand there are new forms of meetings and gatherings evolving around the preparation and enjoyment of a common meal. Like the many cooking studios that are offering such meal preparation programmes to singles or couples and sometimes even groups of friends in cities like Berlin.

25 people from different EU countries arrived with their samples of local products as well as pictures and prescriptions and recipes, including stories around their experiences with meals and memories around eating

habits. They presented these at the market-place which was organised on the 22nd of February at the gallery of the building in Invalidenstraße 42. The event was opened by the Dean, Prof. Dr. Franz Ellmer who presented some background information about the Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture at Humboldt-University of Berlin. The many offers from different EU countries were enriched by regional products from Brandenburg, as well as from the Asian and African kitchens. The Market Place got a special atmosphere by the piano music from different European countries played by Uwe Streibel and received a very positive echo within and beyond the faculty.

Berlin is certainly a very suitable place for such a conference about eating cultures in the change, because we can eat and taste the regional products as well as the extensive offers of more than 160 culinary regional kitchens in the numerous restaurants of the town. These

cultural impulses are to be considered and esteemed as a big enrichment of our everyday culinary culture. We would like to pursue the suggestion from our Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture to invite some of the participants to join the summer party event of the faculty with pleasure. We hope that this becomes possible.

Beside the invited guests from Europe also interested participants from Berlin and Brandenburg contributed significantly to the workshop. We discussed the history of cooking, the meaning of the women's investigation and gender contribution in agriculture, the horticulture and the food preparation as well as with the division of labour in that 'care economy'. From our participants from Italy we learnt more about the development of 'Slow Food' movement. It was also interesting to get information about the marketing strategies for local products with a critical view on regionalism and identity in touristic sights of Italy.

There were short contributions to meal politics concerning the preparation of meals with elderly people, as well as with children and youngsters in schools and kindergartens. By our excursions we visited the Berliner Tafel (Sabine Werth), Laib und Seele (Gabi Bormann), the children's village SOS (Gabriele Annen) and the "Prinzessinnengärten". We were lucky to have lunch with the star cook Sarah Wiener and discussed with her about environmental as well as ethical issues concerning our eating habits. We had organized this meeting with a star cook, as she is the founder of a charity that offers cooking programmes to children.

The practical side of the meal preparation should as well be touched shortly. We experienced the Thai kitchen in an Asia-cooking studio with Sabine Küchler. Own recipes of the participants were prepared in a cooking studio 'Kochmal!'. There Roya Vahedi-Stolp gave us an introduction to the preparation of Persian meals and how to produce a rice with crust (Tahdig).

Finally, we also visited a weekly farmers' market and enquired about the origin of the offered products on

the Winterfeldtmarkt in the district of Schöneberg. With a German "Kaffeekränzchen" and a brunch on Sunday, February 27th, we bid farewell to our guests. The participants contributed with enthusiasm to provide a common work with regional recipes that we present here. Our participants from Italy and England are already working – inspired by the workshop – in cooperation with us and other scientists on some common research projects and joint programmes.

With this Workshop we could hit a bridge between the agrarian products that stand in the centre of the Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture and what and how people eat. This includes the preparation and serving of meals, that are far more than raw products like wheat, maize and rice. Meal cultures maintain an important issue to understand people's interaction and communication system.

THE PROGRAMME

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin / LGF - Meal Cultures in Europe - Changes and Exchanges - Grundtvig Workshop 2011 - 2010-1-DE2-GRU13-05192

20.02. - Sunday	21.02. - Monday	22.02. - Tuesday	23.02.- Wednesday	24.02. - Thursday	25.02. - Friday	26.02. - Saturday	27.02. - Sunday
	09:15 At Guest House reception 10:00 Invalidenstr.42 Registration Welcoming speech (Prof.Chr.Bauhardt) Introduction (Teherani-Krönner)	9:15-10:45 Slow Food Movement in Italy (Harcourt / Cappello) Regionality and Identity (Michela Zucca) Input and discussion	9:15-11:00 Introduction Meal Cultures - Cultural Ecology of Nutrition (Teherani-Krönner) Lecture and discussion	9:15-11:00 Setting the table for a common and delicious menu (Teherani / Harcourt) Preparing digital collection of recipes	10:00 Presentations <i>Ally de Vries (NL)</i> <i>Ursula Hudson (UK)</i> <i>B.Cappellini (UK)</i> <i>Melanie Bittner (DE)</i> Reports, Review Evaluation	10:00 Farmer's Market at Winterfeldtplatz Excursion to "Prinzessinnengärten"	10:00 Brunch Departure
	11:00 Coffee Break	11:00 Coffee Break	11:00 Coffee Break	11:00 Coffee Break	11:00 Coffee Break	Farmer's Markets	
	11:30 Hestia in the black kitchen (Elisabeth Meyer- Renschhausen) Lecture and discussion	Market Square with regional products Albrecht Thaer Saal Gallery (all participants)	11:30-12:30 Input and Discussion <i>Sarah Moore (UK)</i> <i>Katerina Nussdorfer (AU)</i> and all participants	Preparing digital col- lection of recipes	Food and Meals in Context What can we plan for the future? (all participants)	Farmer's Markets	
	13:00 Nord-Mensa	Market Square	13:00-15:00 Lunch: Sarah Wiener Speisezim- mer	11:20 Excursion 1: Laib und Seele	Free Time		
Arrival at the Guest House	14:00 Working Groups (all participants)	Market Square until 15:30	Sarah Wiener Foundation (cooking with children) Presentation and discussion	12:00 Excursions: 2. SOS Kinderdorf 3. Berliner Tafel (Beusselstraße / Berliner Großmarkt)	Free Time (or individual meal cultures sightseeing)		
	15:30 Kaffeepause		Free Time	Excursions	Free Time	Free Time	
18:00 Welcoming at the Guest House Reception	16:00 - 17:30 Working groups - presentations and suggestions	17:00 Departure to Asia Kochstudio (Katzbachstraße 12) Cooking together	Free Time	Preparations for Friday	17:00 KochMal! (Rönnebergstr.14) Cooking together (all participants and Roya Vahedi-Stolp)	Review and Certificates	
19:00 Dinner: Cum Laude	19:00 Dinner: DaDa Falafel	Dinner ASIA-Kochstudio	Free Time	Free Time	Dinner KochMal!	Free Time	

MEALS – OLD WAYS AND NEW HORIZONS

A personal review

ALLY DE VRIES

In our everyday life we don't think about the traditions or cultural habits of our meals very often. We may look at prices and recipes, paying attention to backgrounds and circumstances is quite a different matter. But very interesting, so the Grundtvig Workshop on 'Meal cultures in Europe' taught us. This short report of the workshop at the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin not only shows that much has changed, but also that despite the changes some values are as true as ever....

The start of the course on a cold Monday in February was at the same time inspiring and rewarding: the discussions in different groups resulted in a very useful list with cultural and historical facts and circumstances. It proved its value more than once in later activities during the course. What made the results so interesting?

1. First of all the discovery that the changes which took place in the way we handle food had much in common. In each culture present food is no longer just a daily necessity in order to stay healthy and fit, meals have got more meanings, like pleasure, feeling good, creating an inspiring or quieting atmosphere... Not just on special days or occasions as in former times, but whenever we want to.
2. A second shared observation points to the shift in roles between women and men when it comes to cooking and food. In former days our grandmother was the queen in the kitchen, men were only allowed for slaughter activities or to keep the stoves burning. Even our fathers often had a hard time if they wanted access, but nowadays men can be found cooking very often too.

3. Both changes are connected with technical developments, economical transformations and social or political circumstances. The introduction of machines in the household and the kitchen made the tasks of the women not only lighter, they also brought new possibilities for preparation and preservation into our homes. And they made it easier for women to work outside the house as well. Although these processes differed in Europe and Turkey for instance, the overall pattern of women taking part in outside activities and men being more involved in the care for home and kitchen exists everywhere.

4. Another well recognized development in all our countries is the abundant availability of foreign and non seasonable products. Were our grandmothers and even our mothers highly dependent on home grown or locally produced food products, we can buy whatever we want and whenever we feel like it. Even ready made meals are no exception. This means that cooking and eating habits have undergone big changes. And they are here to stay.

5. So we can conclude that eating and drinking have lost their former weight of basic necessity. This brings about less pressure on women as providers of food and guardians of health. However, there are dark clouds on this sunny sky as well. Our grandmothers and mothers knew their business and kept their eyes open when it came to matters of health. Much of this knowledge is disappearing or is lost already. In many cases market driven businesses have taken over. This raises questions about trustworthiness in the first place: we could believe our grandmothers and their daughters, but in how far can we rely on the information given by producers whose main goal is profit?
6. This question is not just a matter of production or preparation of food, it stretches much further: to storage, preservation, transport, presentation in shops. 'Believing' and 'trust' have become complicated issues in many cases, demanding special knowledge and juridical know how. Not just in connection to ready made food, but also when it comes to basic ingredients, bread or vegetables which we buy on the weekly market or in local stores. Even if we grow our

own food we are not always sure that the seeds we use are not manipulated in some way.

7. Authenticity and diversity have lost some feathers during this process, but this doesn't mean that we cannot enjoy traditional meals or dishes any more. Of course we can, maybe even better than in former days, when we were much more dependent on the weather and other circumstances like diseases, droughts, wars, etcetera. And probably our taste has undergone changes too, in the meantime, due to the changes in our lifestyle.
8. Our conclusion towards the end of the session, when it came to the next generation and their taste for (traditional) food, was: let them enjoy the dishes in their own way, but let us also make sure that they are aware of the possible dangers that may accompany the products. Just as in former days, but in their case the dangers are of quite a different nature.

Old ways, new markets, regional authenticity and modern identity

The discussion about new ways of cooking in combination with traditional preparation continued during the whole course, though in different ways. The second day for instance centered around the relationship between food and cultural identity. The start was in Italian hands with lectures on this topic (Wendy Harcourt and Sonja Cappello), but the subject was familiar to everybody; it exists in every region where we try to safeguard specific values and ways of life and at the same time adjusting ourselves to modern times and means of existence. In many agricultural areas these new ways often mean the loss of small farming and young people leaving the villages and their social networks for an existence in towns. Original food, traditional methods of growing and preparation, festive harvesting occasions or special

rituals often disappear as well. They seem old fashioned or, at best, serve as 'authentic' features or events to attract visitors or tourists.

How regrettable is this and why? The lectures offered some interesting answers. The first pointed to awareness: paying attention to the growth and preparation processes of food products, like our grandmothers and mothers did, not only makes us more aware of their characteristics, it also enables us to handle them with the right care. By doing so, cooking becomes a kind of 'nature bound experience' instead of a pure technical process. It directs our attention towards production methods, seasonable availability and sustainability. The so called 'Slow Food' movements are active in many countries.

A second answer had to do with beliefs and values. Food may have changed from necessity and means of care and health to matters of well being or even luxury, it also was – and still is! – related to expressions of cultural identity and social values. Especially when it comes to dishes, which are connected with regional circumstances, festive days or times of the year. Food always played a role in distinctions between work and pleasure. And between 'them' and 'us'... Therefore cooking and serving (more or less) traditional dishes may tell us something on features and customs or characteristics which made the region, town or village, a special place to be, distinct to others. At least in the eyes of the inhabitants. Interesting too is that they confront us with our own beliefs and values as well: How do we feel about them?

The third approach to an answer was a historical one. Apart from the expression of cultural and social values, special or traditional dishes often contain information on former circumstances too, for instance in relation to wealth and poverty, or about home grown ingredients and imported ones, and certainly about tastes and views on health and well being.

The most important lesson however was this: meals were often meant for sharing, communication, participation. And they still are, though differently!

Meals: means with new horizons

The first proof of this statement was our own 'market square' with regional products and recipes we brought from home. The exchange stimulated our discussions about authenticity and identity as well. We asked ourselves for instance: is a traditional dish, prepared in modern ways, or produced industrially, still authentic? Does authenticity mean that there is just one right way of growing, cooking and serving? Or: how authentic are marketing driven tourist attractions or projects, even if they are handled carefully? What does authenticity mean, properly speaking? Or cultural identity?

Anthropologists have answers to these questions, showing that traditions are part of it but also disclosing that 'original' features change in time and facts can be interpreted in many different ways. Clever marketing people take advantage of this situation and create attractive images of former times, letting us believe that they were happy and wonderful. (Michela Zucca). Of course they weren't just that! Therefore we looked for more real answers and practical examples. Because, so we reasoned, if meals are really means to interaction, communication and understanding, how did they bring people together? And how can they be used for these purposes in modern times? As mentioned already, the answers to the first question disclosed that beliefs and values were important keys. Celebrating special occasions also offer possibilities. Our next question therefore was whether we could find current examples. And if so, what were the results?

We indeed found examples, from our own experience, from observation or otherwise. And we visited a

few projects and sites in Berlin, which provided us with answers to our questions as well.

Our own contributions varied from projects with children to activities with elderly people or with special groups. And we used results from recent research.

■ Activities with children are often linked with school projects: gardening, cooking, learning from each other, getting acquainted with other tastes and values. The ‘awareness’ factor in these projects is strong. They focus on growing and preparing processes for instance, so that children learn where food comes from and how to handle it with care and attention. Apples don’t grow in the supermarket, neither do milk or bread. Projects may also underline the importance of sustainability and environmental issues. Whatever the goals, results are highly dependable on possibilities for ‘learning by doing’. Discussing ingredients and taste while cooking together, is a powerful means to create healthier eating habits. The same goes for gardening experiences. Very important too: local support and continuation over time (Ursula Hudson).)

■ Elderly people have problems of a different nature, especially when they are too poor to buy seeds or to cook, because they cannot pay their electricity bills. A Caribbean project showed however that by working together and with a little financial support (to rent a meeting place), they were stimulated to help themselves: cooking in groups, cleaning and washing, gardening, writing letters, repairing. ‘Moving from despair to self esteem’: that is how they described the success themselves (Ally de Vries).

■ The same can be said about a British project with young offenders. Preparing meals as a group, paying attention during the process, serving the food by laying the table and eating together: it opened hearts and minds and stimulated conversations between the youngsters, who were, in most cases, not used to this kind of communication and attention (Sarah Moore).

■ The quieting effect of meals, served in nice,

friendly surroundings is also known from Dutch research on dementia. Other recent Dutch research on the health of inhabitants of old peoples homes proves that these surroundings and eating in (small) groups are beneficial for the digestion as well. The elderly ‘get more’ from food, dining in the company of others. Getting attention, feelings of belonging and being respected have positive physical effect in relation to their health as well (Ally de Vries).)

Projects in Berlin

The visits to different projects in Berlin underlined our findings. We all went to Sarah Wieners Speisezimmer and heard about her foundation. But we split when visiting three other projects:

1) SOS Kinderdorf in Moabit, 2) Laib und Seele and 3) Berliner Tafel. All four visits showed us the power of food when it comes to self esteem and cultural values. Sarah Wiener, a famous German cook, told us how she became more and more critical on industrial food and the abundance of waste we are producing. Promoting ‘real food’ and reducing waste has become a major issue for her own business and for her teaching and cooking activities with children through her foundation.

Some of her lessons are also realized in the SOS Kinderdorf in the Moabit area. It is rather poor district of Berlin with a multicultural population. Many activities of this SOS Kinderdorf are directed towards interaction between the many cultural groups in the area. The center is meant for orphans or abandoned children, but in this case it has broadened its goals and activities. It offers localities for different purposes, a garden and an open restaurant, where about 80 people enjoy a cheap but proper daily meal. Even more drop in for a cup of tea or coffee, a soda or ice-cream. The center also houses a Kindergarten, organizes after school activities for young children, helps with home work and (language) courses. A big success are the weekly ‘table groups’ of 10 families with different cultural backgrounds, which cook in turn for the group, exchanging information and playing

games. Also very much in demand are the cooking classes for mothers during the day. In all cases where food is concerned the accent lies on sustainability and healthy, affordable ingredients.

The activities of ‘Laib und Seele’ (‘Body and Soul’) are directed towards people who don’t have much money to spend either. It is a church-bound initiative, offering food for some days for 1 Euro. People have a choice, also in the case of biological food. The Berliner Tafel (‘Berliner Table’) is an initiative, supported by around 1600 members, offering food supplies, help with church-distributions and organizing kitchen activities for children. Here too, people have to pay a small amount.

In all projects, human dignity and environmental care are highly respected values. The handling of food serves as a powerful means to express both, notwithstanding needy circumstances. People are not just ‘getting food’, they have to get organized, travel, pay for the food, make choices, sit together with other people, giving a hand with the distribution and cleaning up....

The field experiences were very instructive, not in the least because they taught us the importance of food for bonding: between people and related to environmental circumstances. They also led us to the core of authenticity and identity, as ‘being real’ and ‘being us’ or ‘me’. At the same time they underlined the role of food as means for both emotional and physical well being.

Conclusions

Food and meals can be looked upon in different ways. In our society technological possibilities for production, storing and preparation have developed to the extent that we are able to eat whatever we want and whenever we feel like it. This luxury has its price, becoming alienated from natural sources as well as from cultural values is just a part of it. During our course we paid attention to both concepts, which, in former times, often belonged together. Becoming aware of this connection between nature and culture was one of our first lessons.

We also took good notice of the fact that formerly both were handled with attentive care and respect. In all cultures.

Food functioned as an important medium for sharing too, in everyday life and certainly with festive events or when saddening times occurred. Meals were means to express feelings of belonging, of sharing and acceptance. By doing so, they were at the same time expressions of both social and cultural values as well. Traditional dishes and recipes reflect these meanings. They also offer us knowledge on former growing and preparation processes, seasonal circumstances and the use of ingredients, for instance.

By looking back and around we arrived to the conclusion that, even though times have changed tremendously, the core values of food are as strong as ever: meals can bring about awareness, communication, sharing, feelings of belonging, self esteem, respect. Maybe this was easier when families lived closer together and communities were rather self supportive. We probably have to organize ourselves more in order to create togetherness. But efforts certainly do pay off, so we learned too: whether directed towards children, elderly people, immigrants or patients.

And if our generation also takes enough care of environmental circumstances, next generations can still experience these 'traditional' values of meals as well as our grandparents did, in their times.

Zeist, April 2011

FOOTNOTES

1) Ursula Hudson mentioned different examples of successful 'urban gardening', 'school gardening' and Slow Food projects and activities in Europe and Africa, all trying to keep the relationship between nature and human behavior towards food alive or bringing it back again. She also stressed the importance of support by surrounding groups like families, communities and authorities when it comes to long(er) lasting results.

2) Research of the University of Maastricht (2010) by H. Verbeek, S. Zwakhalen, E. van Rossum, T. Amsbergen, G. Kempen and J. Hamers: Dementia Care Redesigned: Effects of Small-Scale Living Facilities on Residents, Their Family Caregivers and Staff, in: Journal of American Medical Directors Association, November 2010, p. 662-670.

3) SOS Kinderdörfer (Childrens Villages) is a worldwide organization which offers family care to orphans, abandoned children or children whose parents cannot take care of them. There are around 500 villages in some 130 countries. The children are brought together in families consisting of around 10 children and a mother, which are meant to function like 'normal' families. Each family has its own family mother; the director of the 'village' is the father of all the children. Ten to fifteen families make a 'village'. The children go to local schools and get further education and/or professional training afterwards. The villages are funded by subscriptions and donations. The SOS Kinderdorf Moabit in Berlin also is a 'regular' SOS village, but there are only six families. It explicitly reaches out to a wider area with its activities, the restaurant and courses; it therefore functions more or less as a community center.

WELCOME DINNER

20.02.

On Sunday evening we came together at „Cum Laude“ in Humboldt University for our opening dinner. Parto Teherani-Krönner welcomed the guests and gave a short introduction to the programme. The singer Irina Urusova and the pianist Uwe Streibel presented some international pieces of music.



LECTURES

21.02.

During Monday's lectures and working groups many aspects of meal cultures and policies were introduced and discussed. Prof. Christine Bauhardt gave the opening speech and emphasized gender aspects. Parto Teherani-Krönner highlighted the topic of meal security and Elisabeth Meyer-Renschhausen gave a presentation on "Hestia in the black kitchen". In the afternoon the participants could choose one of the working groups.



MARKET PLACE

22.02.

On the gallery off the faculty building the participants presented local specialties – food and beverages.

Prof. Dr. Frank Ellmer, the dean of the faculty, welcomed the guest with information about the Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture. The participants, members of the faculty and external guests appreciated the great variety of information and degustation as well as the piano pieces presented by Uwe Streibel.



MARKET PLACE

22.02.

On the market stands specialities were offered from ... Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Iran, Latvia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Spain, Turkey and United Kingdom.



ASIAN COOKING STUDIO

22.02.

In an Asian cooking studio the participants prepared a wide range of dishes from the south-east Asian cuisine.



ASIAN COOKING STUDIO

22.02.



Setting the table and enjoying the meal together was an important part of our meal cultures experience.



SARAH WIENER

23.02.



Cooking with children, food policies, food and health and the ethics of keeping animals were some of the topics that we vividly discussed with Sarah Wiener – star cook and founder of the Sarah-Wiener-Foundation.



EXCURSIONS

24.02.

Our excursions led us to Berliner Tafel (Berliner Großmarkt), Laib und Seele (Pensionskirche at Marheineckeplatz), the SOS children's village (Moabit), to Winterfeldtmarkt (Schöneberg) and the "Prinzessinnengärten" project (Kreuzberg).



KOCHMAL!-STUDIO

25.02.



A delicious meal with contributions from more than ten countries was on our table tonight – starters from UK, Finland, Iran and Bulgaria – soups from Poland and the Netherlands – salads from Greece and Italy – main dishes from Iran, Turkey, Italy and United Kingdom – desserts from Latvia and the Netherlands and a cake from Spain.



KAFFEEKRÄNZCHEN

26.02.

A little café and the “Kaffeekränzchen” tradition – with coffee, milk and sugar, cakes and tortes – gave us a nice background for the participants’ short reviews in their mother tongues. This was the occasion when the certificates were passed to the participants.



BRUNCH AND FAREWELL

26.02.

We had a wonderful goodbye brunch at “Zimt und Zucker” (cinnamon and sugar), a cosy locality overlooking the river Spree.



MEALS ARE THE TIES THAT BIND*

PARTO TEHERANI-KRÖNNER
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Faculty of Agriculture and Horticulture
Division of Gender & Globalization

1 Meal Security? A new Approach

The food crisis of the years 2007/2008 made it obvious that basic need of human beings is yet unsolved in the 21st century. Despite enough food production and an international commitment in the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals of the year 2000) to reduce hunger by 50 % by the year 2015, the situation has proven worse and more complicated in the last decade. Meanwhile the number of hungry people in the world is figured with 1 Billion, which means that out of 6 people one is suffering from hunger.

A new and more courageous international policy with concrete steps is needed to eliminate hunger in the world. We need some new perspectives – new concept in dealing with food security. One of them is the concept of meal security and meal policy.

Despite the political and economic orientation in food security approaches, the perception remains too

narrow. As a complex sociocultural issue, food security should not be reduced solely to political strategy that is based on economic data of calculated averages and differences among social groups and actors. Sustainable food security cannot be feasible, if the people's nutritional habits, and cultural attitudes towards food in the context of the socially ordered power structures and gender relations are not appropriately recognised. In a recently published book Safran Foer tells us, that less than 1% of that what is eatable is in use by human beings. This could mean that culturally we only accept a very small range of that what theoretically can be eaten. How many cultural taboos are we confronted with? (Safran Foer 2010)

The quantity of food available or supplied is not a sufficient indicator for food security; rather, it is the average purchasing power of the people that has become more significant factor. The capacity to buy and provide sufficient food - in quantity and quality – regularly and

to all the household members regardless of gender and age, is central to dealing with the problem of food security. Hence the thesis formulated by Amartya Sen focusing on the 'household' level with the entitlement concept has become increasingly relevant in the food security debate.

"Household entitlement" supported by engendered food policy is a new concept that promised effective attainment of sustainable food security. Men and women play a role in food provision at the household level, but women and children have often been declared as the disadvantaged groups in accessibility to food in this context. Women's vital role for the household economy and livelihood of the family as well as their share in food production and processing are the underpinning issues to the ongoing discussion on women and gender in development (WID and GAD). Although this has been on the agenda since the 1970s, it has neither been integrated in the general mainstream of agricul-

tural policy and sciences, nor into the debates on the international agricultural markets.

Generally, women are less recognised as significant stakeholders for attaining food security. They are often positioned as vulnerable or deprived, and marginalized group. Hence, the visible and the invisible contributions of women have not yet been fully recognized and appreciated in the mainstream of food security debate - neither in the countries of the global south nor in the industrialized countries.

In most societies cooking and eating takes place at home, where women are in charge of a whole set of processing activities. But their active role in food security in the sense of a culture bound and a gender specific form of human maintenance is generally overlooked. Cooking is a female task as long as there is no financial compensation for it. Food preparation is too ordinary an activity to be registered as a scientific problem worthy of investigation and research. This may be one reason why it has been neglected for so long. Cooking and preparing meals are part of everyday life that belongs to the sphere of women's activities at home. Normally it is not a part of the man's world, even though men love to eat. Food preparation and the rituals that accompany the whole process of nutrition continue to be important links in the chain of social interaction and gender relations in the household, and in the system of communication.

There are of course many differences in the meal preparation processes and meal policies in every society that need special attention. But we will certainly find interesting similarities in gender arrangements on the household level that can be underlined as well. The whole process of meal preparation can be an interesting

entry point in understanding the food security debate. An agricultural approach alone can not help because agricultural products must be transformed, converted, changed—they must be turned into a meal before they are served and eaten. Various activities in numerous steps must be coordinated in order to transfer food into a meal. The way we select, taste, prepare, and organize all this is a complicated procedure of social interaction and gender relations. Human nutrition is deeply rooted in customs and beliefs present in everyday life. This should be reflected in the perception of food security as part of human maintenance.

2 Respecting the socio-cultural dimension-of nutrition

Much more attention should be given to the fact that human nutrition is culturally bound. All living species need food for survival, but human beings are governed by cultural norms and taboos regulating this process of incorporation of natural products. Even under difficult circumstances, human beings will not accept and eat anything just to supply their need for calories, vitamins, proteins and minerals, even if they are hungry (Teherani-Krönner 1999).

Thus food security and safety include more than just production, marketing, food supply, distribution, and consumption. If a safe household and family nutrition is the aim, the process of food preparation cannot stop at a household's "front door". Food and meals are indeed the materialized symbols of social networks. Because they are so vital to the maintenance of human beings, the "behind-the-door" processes are as important as the marketing and distribution of commodities. Cook-

ing customs as well as changes in food and nutritional habits must also be considered in terms of the reciprocal impacts between symbolic items and social interaction, stratification and gender relations. Household constellations in terms of age, gender, the distribution of goods, workload, and time allocation are important elements in the equation.

If the food security debate and the agricultural policy and economy would focus more on food culture and not just on some particular market-oriented food or cash crop, then the whole socio-cultural process of food preparation, sharing and eating could become an important part of scientific reflection on nourishment. Not raw products, but meals people eat should be at the centre of food security and safety discussion. These processes are highly gendered. It is time to engender the debate on food and meal security in order to develop a more down to ground approach, closer to every day life. It will definitely help to find better solutions that will contribute to social and gender justice.

3 Ethical and Political Aspects of Nourishment

THE ETHIC OF SHARING

Food is essential in the construction of social order – Social relationships are unthinkable without all the various types of meals and festivities which are still organized and prepared mostly by women – if not taken out to the restaurants. An ethic of sharing is closely related to meals given and offered. Nearly all social interactions and relations all over the world start with inviting someone to a drink or even to share a meal.

Singles, people who live and eat alone, are often seen as tragic. According to cultural norms (in Iran and probably in many other places as well), these individuals are considered the real poor: having no one to share meals with means poverty.

These aspects should be included in an approach oriented towards the future of a new culinary culture with respect to the social and natural environment within our global system.

HUMAN HEALTH - CONSUMERS PROTECTION

Even in the ethical debate on food and nutrition the health aspect of the products will be most prominent. Most standard settings are legitimized with a strong moral claim on human health and consumers' protection. Everyone who deals with food and nutrition has a key to human health and well-being and is obviously asked for taking responsibility for the quality of the products offered. Everyone is looking for healthy food, though the criteria and perception of "health" and "quality" standards vary. These expectations have to be taken into consideration – especially with respect to GMOs (Genetically Manipulated Organisms) that are partly seen as hazardous not only to health but to the environment. The fear of consumers is about the unintended effects of these developments and safeguarding livelihood on earth as an ethical principle

RIGHT TO FOOD AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Especially in countries of the South this debate has an essential relevance. Other aspects that have to be taken into consideration are the campaign on fair trade and the international relationship between industrialized countries and developing countries and the debate on right to food as a human right.

The highly subsidized EU agricultural products still receive export grants for the competition on the world market. One of the consequences is the dumping prices that have enormous effects on the agricultural productive systems and rural development in a number of countries in the global south. Poor countries cannot cope with the system of the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) in the EU. The women and men farmers are not able to protect their food security and sovereignty against the trade liberalization and dumped commodities entering their markets. The campaigns on fair trades are part of the ethic of sharing mentioned before. We have to listen to the argumentation about trade, globalization and the fight against hunger – the way it has been put forward by Oxfam, criticizing the double standards that exist following the interests of the wealthy countries (Oxfam 2002).

Specifically during the last decade the processes that had negative effects on food security and the environment of many countries of the south are the production of bio-fuels or agro-fuels and the recent processes of 'land grabbing' without respecting the interests of the people who live in those areas.

4 Engendering the Food and Meal Security Concept

After the UN conference on women in Beijing in 95 it became obvious that the internationally accepted gender justice cannot be reached by means of single projects, measurements and isolated steps in favour of women. It became obvious that gender issues need to be embedded into the general policy concept and decision making processes. Internationally based experi-

ences have shown the necessity of integrating a new perspective into the concept of food and nutrition (FAO conferences in 1992 and 1996 and the IAASTD 2008). A people centred sustainable development needs to be engendered. This means we have to look for concepts, strategies and actions to recognize processes of "engendering meal policy" that includes all steps from production and processing to all kind of meal preparation, distribution and consumption. It will include the politics and policies that deal with our nutrition, the institutional settings as well as the ethical and cultural dimension of our everyday life. In the field of food and nutrition special attention should be given to customs and believes.

As "gender mainstreaming" is accepted at the international as well as the EU levels as a strategy to balance unequal gender relations at all levels and in all policy areas. It is a specific task of the community not only to eliminate inequalities, but to promote gender equality. The integration of the gender concept in research and development as well as in the scientific approaches will be an important step in this process. Issues of food production and nutrition are highly gender sensitive, but the scientific researches in these fields have a strong gender bias so far. Thus one aim is a better understanding of the historical and socio-economic-cultural dimensions of the meal preparation in the everyday arrangements in urban and rural societies as well as in the scientific discourses. This will offer a new opportunity to conceptualize meal habits and culinary culture from a gender perspective.

If gender is accepted as a structuring dimension of socio-cultural life – it has to be an integral part of all concepts and activities on the micro, meso, and macro levels. Thus it will be part of a new approach. The gender

concept has to take into consideration: a) the resource allocation, b) the production process c) the technology needed and the know how d) the institutional setting and decision making processes, and c) the historical background to the socio-cultural dimension of gender relation as well as the symbolic value of food and nutrition. All these aspects are relevant for the everyday life decisions and preferences on food preparation and consumption.

The meal security concept can help to bring into light the hidden and underestimated gender dimension in

everyday life, in the institutional setting as well as in the policy and decision making processes. Recognizing the vital contribution of women in the meal security process will definitely help to overcome hunger and malnutrition, which are indicators of food insecurity, worldwide. It will contribute to improve social and cultural interactions among human kind. This is because meals – not food – are the ties that bind.

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* Parts of this article have been written quite some time before the workshop – it is partly oriented towards countries of the global south and the development debate on food security. It is a challenge to see how much of it is relevant for the discussions that we made concerning: Meal Cultures in Europe – Changes and Exchanges. Where do we find similarities and where should we look for different approaches?



**Meal Cultures
in Europe**

CHANGES & EXCHANGES

20. - 27.02.2011
Grundtvig-Workshop /
EU-Lifelong Learning Programme

organized by
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WILL TOO MANY COOKS SPOIL THE BROTH?

BRIGITTE WÖRTELER

This is one of the questions that we had before we went to a cooking studio to prepare a meal with the recipes of 20 guests from 10 countries. It turned out to be wonderful experience and a delicious and varied meal. So the well-known proverb

DE Viele Köche verderben den Brei.

GB Too many cooks spoil the broth.

ES Muchos cocineros dañan la comida.

IT Troppi cuochi in cucina rovinano il brodo.

IT Troppi cuochi guastano la cucina.

was shown as an only “partially valid maxim”. While too many persons in the kitchen may usually cause confusion and misunderstandings, our group succeeded very well in cooperation and benefitting one from another.

Some weeks before our Grundtvig Workshop „Meal Cultures in Europe – Changes and Exchanges“ the participants were asked to send us recipes, photographs, stories and proverbs around food, meals, their regional traditions and new influences. Soon the answers came – numerous and very interesting. About 70 proverbs and nearly as much recipes were sent to our workshop mail account. Many of them were commented and or sent with anecdotes and little stories.

Proverbs, mainly the object of research in linguistics and literature are also of considerable interest for other sciences: cultural science, sociology, anthropology, psychology and others. And they influence the metaphors used in politics, public debates and commer-

cials.

Among the proverbs and saying we identified seven main topics: love, hunger, moderation and greed, drinking, health, sociality, envy and jealousy. For each of them we will give some examples.

1 LOVE AND LUCKINESS

Love and food are closely connected in many proverbs. Either love finds its way through the kitchen or the way to the heart, the love, the man and the husband leads through the belly:

ES El amor entra por la cocina.

Love comes through the kitchen.

DE Die Liebe geht durch den Magen.

GB The way to a man's heart is through his belly.

BG Любовта на мъжа минава през стомаха.

The husband's love comes from his belly.

PL Przez żołądek do serca.

The way to the heart is through the belly

And with a strong moral connotation:

PL Dobra żona tym się chlubi, że gotuje co mąż lubi.

A good wife takes pride in cooking that which her husband likes.



(1) in the cooking studio

The same metaphor for the turbulences of falling in love was found in Latvia and Germany:

LV Sālīts ēdiens rāda, ka saimniece iemīlējusies.

DE Wenn die Suppe versalzen ist, ist der Koch / die Köchin verliebt.

If the dish is too much salted, then the cook is in love.

And even the topic of faithfulness of a couple is touched in the German saying:

DE Appetit kannst Du Dir woanders holen: gegessen wird zuhause.

You can whet your appetite somewhere else, but eating is for home.

2 HUNGER

Although being hungry – in the sense of not having enough food – doesn't seem to be an important topic

in Europe today it is quite often mentioned in proverbs. Are these proverbs remains of former times? Or are they used for other forms of “hunger”, desire, eagerness? Here are some of them:

BG Гладна мечка, хоро не играе.

GR Nistikós arkúdos den chorévi.

GB A hungry bear won't dance.

BG Никой не е по-голям от хляба.

Nobody is bigger than the bread.

FR La faim chasse le loup du bois.

ES Cuando el hambre es de calor, el pan viejo es fresco.

If you are very hungry, you will even like old bread.

TR Açlık ilaçların padişahıdır. Açlığı canla gönülle benimse onu hor görme. (Hz. Mevlana)

Hunger is the king of all drugs. Don't look down on it, but embrace it.

3 MODERATION AND GREED

When there is plenty of food there are other questions: What is enough? How can one find the right moment to stop? What happens when we eat or drink too much?

IT Ne uccide più la gola che la spade.

DE Die Freßlust bringt mehr Leute um als das Schwert.

Greed kills more people than the sword does. (free transl.)

IS Sheep know when to stop grazing – some people don't know when they have had enough.

(from the sagas – told by a tourist guide in Iceland 2010)

GB Once through the lips, for ever on the hips.

DE Eine Sekunde auf der Zunge, ein Leben lang auf den Hüften.

Sometimes the connection with other contexts in human life are quite obvious. The one who „bites his own finger“ is a person who hurries and is not well aware of how she or he is acting.

GM Wer zu schnell isst, beißt sich selbst in den Finger.

He/she who eats too fast bites his own finger.

And the well known proverb Appetite comes with eating is used in many other contexts such as politics, corruption, money or power.

4 DRINKING

Among the many proverbs on wine and other alcoholic drinks there some positive ones such as:

FR Buon vino fa buon sangue.

GB Good wine makes good blood.

FR Qui bon vin boit Dieu voit.

The one who drinks good wine sees God.

But more often the focus is on the dangerous aspects of drinking:

FR Plus on boit, plus on a soif.

The more you drink the more thirsty you get.

DE Da hörst Du die Engel singen – und den Teufel lachen.

You hear the angels sing – and the devil laugh.

(Komarek, Polt muss weinen (Film) Austrian – proverbial phrase on drinking)

FR Qui est maître de sa soif est maître de sa santé.

DE Wer Herr über seinen Durst ist, ist auch Herr über seine Gesundheit.

The one who is master of her/his thirst, is master of her/his health.

5 HEALTH

The proverbs on health seem to be much more concrete than those on many other topics. They are often combined with practical advice.

LV Ja katru vakaru dzer pienu ar medu, tad naktīs labi sapņi rādās.

If you drink milk with honey every night, you will dream good dreams.

GB Breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, dine like a beggar (pauper).

DE Iss am Morgen wie ein Kaiser, mittags wie ein König und abends wie ein Bettler.

BG Кратка вечеря, дълъг живот.

Short dinner, long life.

GB An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

GB Eat an apple going to bed, make the doctor beg his bread.

IT Una mela al giorno toglie il medico di turno.

FI Syö juustoa se kasvattaa luustoa.

Eat cheese it keeps your bones strong.

The following saying on oranges was sent to us by one of the Italian participants and commented like that: “I learnt (it) from my mother in law ... who would not allow us to eat oranges in the evening saying it would give us indigestion and bad dreams. Her cure for indigestion was to boil for 5 minutes a lemon rind and sip it from a spoon with a little sugar.”

IT Oranges in the morning are golden, in the afternoon silver and in the evening bronze.

6 SOCIALITY / COMMUNITY / EXCHANGE

The social aspects of meals and nutrition are obvious and well known by most people. Families, friends and

colleagues eat together to have a good time and for the benefit of their health and social relations. In business and in politics having a meal together is an important part of communication and of policies. And on the other hand having to eat alone may lead a feeling of isolation and loneliness. Many proverbs reflect these aspects of social exchange:

IT A tavola non si invecchia.
Time spent at the table together is not time that is lost.

DE Fünf sind geladen, zehn sind gekommen – Gieß' Wasser zur Suppe, heiß' alle willkommen.
Five were invited, ten came. Add water to the soup and welcome to all!

DE Arm ist, wer alleine essen muss.
Poor is the person who has no one to share his/her meal with.

NG A jooje n ii dun.
Meal is sweeter when eating together. (free translation)

7 ENVY, JEALOUSY AND OTHER PROBLEMS

Envy, jealousy and misfortune are also the topic of a number of proverbs:

GM Im Mund des Nachbarn scheinen alle Kola-Nüsse süß.
All cola nuts seem sweet in the mouths of neighbours.

DE Die Kirschen in Nachbars Garten sind immer ein bisschen süßer.
The cherries in the neighbour's garden are always a bit sweeter.

DE Die dümmsten Bauern haben die dicksten Kartoffeln.
The stupidest farmers have the biggest potatoes.

BG Ни лук ял, ни лук мирисал.
When somebody pretends to be innocent, he hasn't eaten onions, he hasn't smelt onions.

IN Thakur ghorey ke ami to kola khaini.
Who is in the temple? I have not eaten the banana... (meaning even in the temple the thief would always think of stealing)

IT La frittata e' fatta!
The fat is in the fire! / The damage has been/is done.

These proverbs and sayings are mostly used in a metaphoric way. The “cherries” and the “biggest potatoes” stand for other things or successes. This can be addressed by using a proverb without directly naming it.

8 MODERNIZATION OF PROVERBS

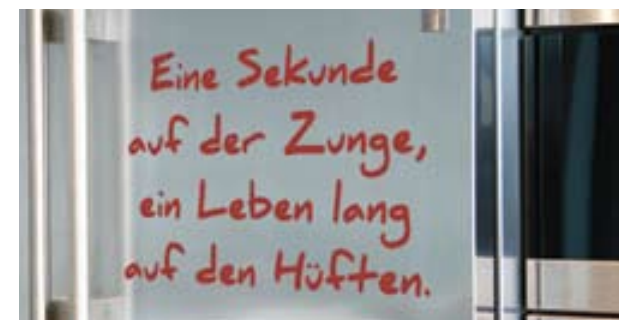
Proverbs are often regarded as old-fashioned and out-of-date. But – to say it with a proverb “There`s life in the old dog yet” – and more than that! In modern societies all over the globe, metaphors and signs play important roles in politics, commercials and marketing and many other fields. Communication is for the most part non-verbal and non-intellectual and pictures that we use are crucial for the messages that we send. Proverbs can easily be quoted or alienated and can be made suitable for nearly every situation.

Of course there is constant change and modernization and the use of proverbs and sayings - as mirrors of society – also change. For a long time German housewives were stitching mottoes on wall hangings to decorate their kitchens or living rooms.



(2) stitched wall hanging

Nowadays, there are no stitching lessons in most school and modern multi-tasking women hardly have time to spend on handicrafts in the evenings. But new questions have come up, such as having a well-shaped body and a slender waist. So now people can buy (or order online) so-called “wall tattoos” with modern motives.



(3) wall tattoo on a fridge

“Once through the lips, forever on the hips” reminds men and women of the unwelcome effects of eating too much. So proverbs - metamorphosing experiences into mottoes – have come from the past and will surely be modified, remade and frequently used the future.

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ILLUSTRATION:

- (1) Photo Pavlina Chakarova
- (2) Stille, Pfistermeister 1979: 53
- (3) <http://www.wandtattoos.de/products/Sprichwoerter/Essen/Eine-Sekunde.html?XTCsid=d08155ea2e079f9ed95de4cc26ec9fd1>

PROVERBS ON FOOD AND MEALS

A Glossary

APPETITE

DE Der Appetit kommt beim Essen.

GB Appetite comes with eating.

FR L'appétit vient en mangeant.

BG Апетитът идва с яденето.

GR Τρώγοντας έρχεται η όρεξη.

IT L'Appetito vien mangiando.

PL Apetyt rośnie w miarę jedzenia.

DE Appetit kannst Du Dir woanders holen: gegessen wird zuhause.

You can whet your appetite somewhere else, but eating is for home. (free translation)

APPLE

GB An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

GB Eat an apple going to bed, Make the doctor beg his bread.

IT Una mela al giorno toglie il medico di turno.

GB There's no making apples of plums.

BREAD

FIN Leipä miehen tiellä pitää.

Bread keeps man on the road. (free translation)

DE Des Brot Du isst, des Lied Du singst.

From the bread you eat, the song you sing. (free translation)

BG Никой не е по-голям от хляба.

Nobody is bigger than bread. (free translation)

IT Dire pane al pane e vino al vino.

ES Al pan pan, al vino vino.

GB To call a spade a spade.

DE Das Kind beim Namen nennen.



(1)

PL Bez mąki chleba nie upieczesz.

There is no bread without flour. (free translation)

DE In der Not, in der Not, schmeckt die Wurst auch ohne Brot.

When times are hard sausage tastes good even without bread. (free translation)

LV Ja maizīte nokrīt zemē, tad uzceļot tā jānobučo.

If you drop the bread on the floor, you must pick it up and kiss it. (free translation)

BEGGAR

GB Breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, dine like a beggar (pauper).

DE Iss am Morgen wie ein Kaiser, mittags wie ein König und abends wie ein Bettler.

CAMEL

IN Oont ke Muh mein Jeera.

*Small cumin seed in a camel's mouth. (free translation)
(too small an amount for a very large need)*

CHEESE

FI Syö juustoa se kasvattaa luustoa.

Eat cheese, it keeps your bones strong. (free translation)

CHERRIES

DE Die Kirschen in Nachbars Garten sind immer ein bisschen süßer.

The cherries in the neighbour's garden are always a bit sweeter. (free translation)

COLA NUTS

GM Im Mund des Nachbarn scheinen alle Kola-Nüsse süß.

All cola nuts seem sweet in the neighbours' mouths. (free translation)

COOK

IT Troppi cuochi in cucina rovinano il brodo.

IT Troppi cuochi guastano la cucina.

ES Muchos cocineros dañan la comida.

DE Viele Köche verderben den Brei.

GB Too many cooks spoil the broth.

PL Gdzie kucharek 6 tam nie ma co jeść.

With six cooks in the kitchen, there is nothing to eat. (free translation)

DINNER

BG Кратка вечеря, дълъг живот.

Short dinner, long life. (free translation)

EAT

GB Eat at pleasure, drink by measure.

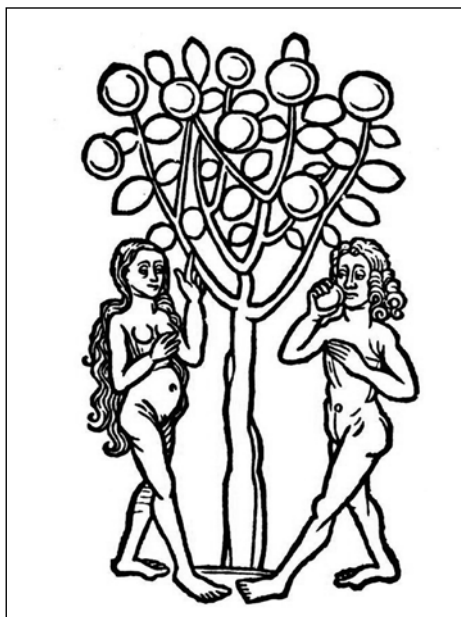
FR Pain tant qu'il dure, vin à mesure.

NG A jeun kehin n ii fo abo.
He who eats last, washes the plates. (free translation)

NG Omo mi ti jeun ni mo mo, ng o mo omo mi tiyo.
Parents are only concerned about whether their child has eating, and not about whether their child is satisfied with the food. (free translation)

EVE

DE Wenn Eva nascht, kostet auch Adam.
When Eve pinches a bit Adam will also taste.



(2)

(free translation)

EYES

DE Das Auge isst mit.
Food is also for the eyes. (free translation)

GB Somebody's eyes are bigger than his/her belly.

DE ... wenn die Augen größer sind als der Magen.

FARMER

DE Was der Bauer nicht kennt, das (fr)isst er nicht.
The farmer does not eat what he does not know. (free translation)

DE Die dümmsten Bauern haben die dicksten Kartoffeln.
The stupidest farmers have the biggest potatoes. (free translation)

FIRE

IT La frittata e' fatta! (Italian)
The fat is in the fire! / The damage has been done. (free translation)

DE Die Dummheit ist gemacht.

IT Cadere dalla padella nella brace.
To jump out of the frying pan and into the fire (free translation)

DE Vom Regen in die Traufe kommen.

FINGER

IT avere le mani in pasta.
DE seine Finger im Spiel haben.
to have a finger in the pie (free translation)

GM Wer zu schnell isst, beißt sich selbst in den Finger.
He/she who eats too fast bites his own finger. (free translation)

FLOUR

FR D'un sac à charbon, il ne saurait sortir blanche farine.

DE Aus einem Kohlsack wird kein weißes Mehl kommen.
White flour cannot come from a sack of coal. (free translation)

IT Non e' farina del tuo sacco.
This flour does not come from your own bag. (free transl.)

FRUIT

GB He that would eat the fruit, must climb the tree.

IN Gachhe katthal goffe tel.
The jack fruit on the tree is yet to be and one has already put oil on the mustache. (free translation)

GLASS

DE Es ist ein Brauch von alters her: Wer Sorgen hat, hat auch Likör!
As we know from times gone past: You'll always find trouble at the bottom of a glass! (free translation; proverbial phrase: Wilhelm Busch, Die fromme Helene)

GREED

IT Ne uccide più la gola che la spade.
DE Die Freßlust bringt mehr Leute um als das Schwert.
Greed kills more people than the sword does. (free translation)

GUEST

TR Toku ağırlamak güçtür. (Turkish)
It is difficult to receive a guest with a full stomach. (free translation)

TR Misafir 10 kismetle gelir. 1ini yer 10nunu bırakır.
A guest arrives with ten fortunes, eats only one of it and leaves nine behind. (free translation)

HEART

DE Die Liebe geht durch den Magen.
GB The way to a man's heart is through his stomach.
PL Przez żołądek do serca.
The way to the heart is through the belly. (free translation)

HERRING

FR La caque sent toujours le hareng.

DE Die Heringstonne riecht immer nach Hering.
The keg that stores herring always smells of herring.
(free translation)

HONEY

IT Si prendono più mosche con una goccia di miele che con un barile d'aceto.
DE Mit einem Tropfen Honig fängt man mehr Fliegen als mit einem Fass Essig.
A spoonful of honey will catch more flies than a gallon of vinegar.

HOUSEWIFE

GR Το καρπούζι και τη γυναίκα η τύχη τα διαλέγει. (Greek)
Pure luck will decide if a watermelon or a housewife prove to be good (or not). (free translation)

NG Ounje ti Baba-Ue kiiye Iyawo-Ue kii see.
The housewife must not prepare the meal that the male household head does not like to eat. (free translation)

HUNGER / HUNGRY

BG Гладна мечка, хоро не играе.
GR Nistikós arkúdos den chorévi.
TR Aç ayı oynamaz.
MK Gladna Mecka oro ne igra.
GB A hungry bear won't dance.

TR Komşusu açkan tok yatan bizden değildir.
We need people who do not sleep if his/her neighbour is hungry. The one whose neighbour is hungry is not one of us. (free translations)

TR Aç tavuk kendini buğday ambarında görür.
A hungry hen sees herself in a wheat silo. (free translation)

TR Tok olan, cümle cihanı tok sanır, aç olan alemde ekmek yok sanır. (Sabayi)
The one who is full thinks everybody is full. The one who is hungry thinks there is no bread in the world. (free transl.)

ES Cuando el hambre es de calor, el pan viejo es fresco.
If you are very hungry, even old bread tastes fresh.
(free translation)

FR La faim chasse le loup du bois.
DE Der Hunger jagt den Wolf aus dem Wald.
Hunger chases the wolf from the forest. (free translation)

TR Açlık ilaçların padişahıdır. Açlığı canla gönülle benimse onu hor görme. (Hz. Mevlana)
Hunger is the king of all drugs. Don't look down on it, but embrace it. (free translation)

FI Niin on nälkä, että näköä haittaa.
I'm so hungry that I can't see. (free translation)

HUSBAND

BG Любавта на мъжа минава през стомаха.
A husband's love comes from his belly. (free translation)

INVITED

DE Fünf sind geladen, zehn sind gekommen – Gieß' Wasser zur Suppe, heiß' alle willkommen.
Five were invited, ten came. Add water to the soup and welcome all! (free translation; proverb & kitchen saying)

KITCHEN

GB All that is said in the kitchen, should not be heard in the hall.

LANDLADY

FR Où l'hôtesse est belle, le vin est bon.
DE Wo die Wirtin schön ist, ist der Wein gut.
Where the landlady is beautiful, the wine is good.

LIFE

TR Can bogazdan gelir.
Life comes out of the throat. (free translation)

LIPS

GB Once through the lips, for ever on the hips.
DE Eine Sekunde auf der Zunge, ein Leben lang auf den Hüfte.
DE 10 Sekunden im Mund und 10 Jahre auf den Hüften.

LOVE

ES El amor entra por la cocina.
Love comes in through the kitchen. (free translation)

MAIZE

GM Wer seinen Mais allein lässt muss auch die Vögel dulden.
He who leaves his maize untended must also tolerate birds. (free translation)

MEAL

GR Το νόστιμο φαγητό από τη μυρωδιά φαίνεται.
One can tell if a meal has been well cooked from its smell. (free translation)

TR Midenin 3 de 1 ini yemeğe, 3de 1 ini nefese, 3 de 1 ini ise suya bırakın.
When eating, leave one percent of the third for the meal, one percent for the water and one percent for the air. (free translation)

NG Ounje ni ore awo.
Meal directly influences the quality of the skin. (free translation)

MEAT

DE S'Gras vom Stoa und's Fleisch vom Boa ...
The meat from the bone is as good as the grass from the stone. (free translation; Bavaria)

MILK

- LV Ja katru vakaru dzer pienu ar medu, tad naktīs labi sapņi rādās.
If you drink milk with honey every night, you will dream good dreams. (free translation)

ONIONS

- BG Ни лук ял, ни лук мирисал.
When somebody pretends to be innocent, he hasn't eaten onions, he hasn't smelt onions. (free translation)

ORANGE

- IT Oranges in the morning are golden, in the afternoon silver and in the evening bronze.

PAID

- PL Co zapłacone, musi być zjedzone.
That which is paid for must be consumed. (free translation)

PEACE

- DE Lieber ein Ei im Frieden als eine Henne (ein Ochse) im Krieg.
CH Lieber as Ei im Frieda as a Henna im Chrieg.
GB Better an egg in peace, than a hen (an ox) in war.

POOR

- IR Arm ist, wer alleine essen muss.
Poor is the person who has no one to share his/her meal with. (free translation)
- IT Quando il poveretto mangia la gallina, o è malato lui o è malata la gallina.
IT Quando ol poerèt al maia la poia, o l'è malat lu o l'è malada la poia.
- As an óreman eġst a hun, is oder er krank oder di hun.
(Yiddish)
- DE Wenn ein Armer ein Huhn isst, so ist entweder er oder das Huhn krank.

- GB When a poor man eats a chicken, one of them is sick.

SALT

- LV Sālīts ēdiens rāda, ka saimniece iemīļējusies. (Latvian)
DE Wenn die Suppe versalzen ist, ist der Koch / die Köchin verliebt.
If the dish is too salty, then the cook is in love. (free transl.)

SHEEP

- IS Sheep know when to stop grazing – some people don't know when they have had enough.
(from the sagas – told by a tourist guide in Iceland 2010)

SOUP

- LV Ja vakarā zupu neizēd, tad otrā dienā būs slikts laiks.
If soup is left over in the evening, then next day the weather will be bad. (free translation)
- IT La zuppa senza formaggio è come una carrozza senza cavalla.
IT La sopa senza formai l'è come ona carosa senza caai.
Soup without cheese is like a horseless carriage (free translation)
- NG Itowo ni a f ii mo didun obe.
The deliciousness / sweetness of the soup / stew is in the taste. (free translation; Yoruba)

SPOON

- LV Ja zemē nokrīt dakša, tad gaidāms ciemiņš – sievietei, bet ja nazis – tad ciemiņš būs vīrietis.
If a spoon or fork falls to the ground, a female visitor will arrive. If a knife falls, the visitor will be male. (free translation)

STOMACH

- FR Qui a la pense pleine, il lui semble que les autres sont soûls.

- DE Wer einen vollen Bauch hat, dem scheinen die anderen auch satt zu sein.
To the man with a full stomach, everyone seems to have his /her fill. (free translation)

- CO Barriga llena, corazón contento.
Full stomach, happy heart. (free translation)

SWEETS

- FI Ei makeaa mahantäydeltä.
Too much sweet makes you feel bad. (free translation)

- NG Ajooje n ii dun.
Meal is sweeter when eating together. (free translation)

- NG Obe t'odun owo lo pa a.
The amount of money you have determines the sweetness of you soup / stew. (free translation)

TABLE

- IT A tavola non si invecchia.
Time spent together at the table is not time that is lost. (free translation)
- DE Es wird gegessen, was auf den Tisch kommt.
You'll eat what you are given. (free translation)

TASTE

- IN Kukure ki ar ghee er mormo bojhey.
The dog would never know the taste of ghee. (free translation; Bengali)
- IN Bandar kya jaane adark ka swaad
What does a monkey know of the taste of ginger? (free translation; Hindi)

TEA

- DE Das ist nicht mein Bier!
GB That is not my cup of tea.

THIEF

- IN Thakur ghorey ke ami to kola khaini.
Who is in the temple? I have not eaten the banana...
(meaning even in the temple the thief would always think of stealing)

THIRST

- FR Qui est maître de sa soif est maître de sa santé.
DE Wer Herr über seinen Durst ist, ist auch Herr über seine Gesundheit.
He who is master of his thirst is master of his health.
(free translation)
- DE Durst macht aus Wasser Wein.
Thirst turns water into wine. (free translation)

WATER

- BG Бистра водица, мирна главица.
Pure water, crystal mind. (free translation)
- TR Pişmiş aşı su katılmaz.
Do not add water to the boiled meal. (free translation)
- MK Zaba bez roda ne kreka. (Macedonian)
Ein Frosch ohne Wasser quakt nicht. (free translation)

WIFE

- PL Dobra żona tym się chlubi, że gotuje co mąż lubi.
A good wife takes pride in cooking what her husband likes.
(free translation)

WINE

- F Toujours le vin sent son terroir.
DE Der Wein schmeckt immer nach dem Weinberg.
Wine always tastes of the vineyard. (free translation)
- F Qui bon vin boit Dieu voit.
DE Wer einen guten Wein trinkt, sieht Gott.
The person who drinks good wine sees God.
(free translation)



(3)

- IT Buon vino fa buon sangue.
Good wine makes good blood. (free translation)
- AU Da hörst Du die Engel singen – und den Teufel lachen.
(about wine)
You hear the angels sing – and the devil laugh.
(free translation; Komarek, Polt muss weinen (Film))
- GB Take a vine of a good soil and the daughter of a good mother.
- IT Di buona terra to' la vigna, di buona madre to' la figlia.

WOMAN

- TR Bir kadın, pişirdiği yemekle beraber pişmedikçe, o yemekte lezzet olmaz.
If a woman doesn't feel what she is cooking, there is no taste in it. (free translation; Atasözü)

YOGHURT

- TR Zemheride yoğurt isteyen, cebinde bir inek taşır.
If you want yoghurt in winter, carry a cow in your pocket.
(free translation)

ILLUSTRATIONS:

- (1) Photo: Maryam Karimi
(2) Hortus sanitatis, Mainz 1491, in: Beyer, Horst und Annelies 1984: Sprichwörterlexikon. Sprichwörter und sprichwörtliche Ausdrücke aus deutschen Sammlungen vom 16. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart, VEB Bibliographisches Institut, Leipzig, p.25.
(3) Petrus des Crescentis; Ruralia commoda, Speyer 1493, in: Beyer 1984, p.665.



ROASTED CARROT CANAPÉS

500g carrots
 Olive oil
 Fennel seeds
 2 handfuls of dill, tarragon, coriander, or any herbs of your choice
 Juice of 2 lemons
 150g hazelnuts, lightly roasted and finely chopped
 Salt & pepper
 Toast

Recipe from England prepared by Sarah Moore



I developed this idea by taking simple ingredients and making them the star of the show - I take a single ingredient as the main focus and use other ingredients to enhance it. I know that people are always surprised by the simplicity of what is basically the humble carrot. In this case, the lemon adds a lovely contrast to the creaminess of the carrots, while the roasted nuts provide a contrasting texture and added weight. The herbs extend the flavours and add freshness to the overall taste.

Preheat oven to 200°C. Roughly chop carrots and toss with olive oil. Season well. Place in oven and roast until cooked through and slightly brown. Roast the nuts until lightly toasted, blitz in blender to fine crumbs. Place in a food processor and blend with olive oil, fennel seeds, herbs and lemon juice. Add the chopped nuts and check seasoning.

Place some on top of the toast and garnish with chives or dill. (The dish looks better if you pipe the mixture).



KUKU SABZI

PERSIAN OMELETTE WITH FRESH HERBS

8 – 10 eggs (medium size) 3 tbsp barberries (sorted and cleaned), 4 tbsp roughly chopped walnuts, 25 g kuku sabzi (dried herbs from an Iranian shop – add water 1 hour before cooking), 50 g fresh coriander, a bunch of spring onions, 150 g fresh parsley, 2.5 tsp curcuma, 2 tsp pepper, 2.5 tsp Iranian mixed herbs (adwijeh) or mild curry, 4 tsp salt, 300 ml vegetable oil for frying, tomatoes and cucumber for garnishing.

Persian recipe prepared by Roya Vahedi-Stolp



Arm ist, wer alleine essen muss.
(Persian)

*Poor is the person who has no one
to share his/her meal with.*
(free translation)

Finely chop the spring onions and fresh herbs (remove stems beforehand). Mix with spices, barberries and chopped walnuts. Add eggs as well as fresh and dried herbs and mix well with a fork. Heat oil at a high temperature, pour the mixture carefully into the pan and even out with a fork. Cover the pan with a plate and roast slowly at a low heat. When the mixture has almost set, cut into pieces (do not turn yet) and fry for another 2-3 minutes. Then turn the pieces carefully and fry for another 4-5 minutes. Enjoy the dish with pita bread and salad.



YOGHURT DIP

500 ml yoghurt (10% fat)
 1 green pepper
 half a cucumber
 4 leaves of wild garlic (musir) (soften in water before using)
 2 tsps of dried mint
 2 tsps salt
 1.5 tsps pepper

Persian recipe prepared by Roya Vahedi-Stolp

Chop the pepper, cucumber and wild garlic very finely and add to the yoghurt with the dried mint. Stir very thoroughly.



*Zemheride yoğurt isteyen, cebinde bir
 inek taşır. (Turkish)*
*If you want yoghurt in winter, carry a cow
 in your pocket. (free translation)*



PATATNIK

1 kg potatoes
1 leek
3 eggs
200 g Bulgarian cheese
2 tsp dried mint
1 tbsp salt
100 g butter
1 packet filo pastry sheets (paper-thin sheets of raw, unleavened flour dough used for making pastries in Balkan and Middle Eastern cuisine).

Bulgarian recipe prepared by Pavlina Chakarova and Elena Lazarova



Гладна мечка, хоро не играе.

(Bulgarian)

A hungry bear won't dance. (English)

Peel and grate the potatoes and the leek. Add salt and leave them to drain. Crush the cheese and mix together with the eggs and mint. Add the drained potatoes and stir well. Melt the butter and use half of it to grease a baking tin. Place two of the pastry sheets in the base of the tin, pour over the potato mixture and then add the top few sheets, wrapping them with the lower edges of pastry. Bake in an oven at 220°C for about 20 minutes. The dish can also be cooked in a pan turning it on the both sides, instead of baked in the oven. Serve hot.



KARELIAN PIE

Filling: 200 ml uncooked rice, 1 litre milk, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 tablespoons butter, 300 ml of hot milk for dipping the pasties

Dough base: 500 ml rye flour, 200 ml cold water, 2 tsp salt, plain flour for rolling out

Recipe from Finland prepared by Heli Koivulahti



Niin on nälkä, että näköä haittaa.
(Finnish)

I'm so hungry that I can't see.
(free translation)

Mix the rye flour, water and salt to form a firm dough. Divide into 10 small pieces and roll out thinly into circles of 15 cm diameter and flour well. Keep covered to prevent from drying out. Prepare the filling by cooking the rice in the milk and butter until it forms a fairly thick porridge. Cool and place a spoonful of the filling in the centre of each dough base. Fold over the sides and crimp the edges, leaving some of the filling exposed. Bake the pasties in a very hot oven, at 250-300 °C (500 °F) for 10-15 minutes. Remove from the oven, immediately dip them in the hot milk and leave covered with a cloth for a while for them to soften. Mashed potato, instead of rice, can also be used as a filling.



GREEN SOUP

1 medium carrot
 3 cloves garlic
 a small piece of celery
 2 onions
 1 kg broccoli
 milk
 butter
 salt & pepper
 parsley
 sour cream (15-20% fat)
 parmesan. (Roughly 4 - 5 servings.)

Recipe from Poland prepared by Magdalena Laskowska



In Poland soups are very popular. Every traditional dinner consists of two dishes. The first course is always a soup, and the second is often meat, potatoes and salad. Nowadays, many people don't have time to prepare two dishes for dinner. Unfortunately, I don't either. One day I had to cook something quickly. In my refrigerator I only had some vegetables, sour cream and a little piece of parmesan, and so I prepared something using these ingredients. The result was green soup.

Take a large pot and heat the butter. Add chopped onion to the melted butter. When the onion is a little golden, you can add chopped carrots and a small piece of chopped celery. Then add 2 chopped cloves of garlic and fry in butter for a short while (remember that the onion should not be too brown).

Next, add the broccoli and enough water to just cover it. Cook covered until the broccoli and vegetables are soft. Add chopped cloves of garlic, chopped parsley and blend soup. Season with salt and pepper and add milk. Serve with sour cream and parmesan.



CREAMY MUSSEL SOUP WITH VEGETABLES

1.5 kg mussels (in shells)

2 onions

1 small bag of chopped vegetables (carrots, leeks, celery, cabbage)

½ l water

¼ l white wine (dry)

salt & pepper, parsley

125 ml cream

If you buy and use ready boiled mussels (approx. 50) you need 1 onion instead of 2 and a little extra oil or butter.

Recipe from The Netherlands prepared by Ally de Vries



Mussel soup can be made in different ways, with lots of vegetables or (nearly) without, with cream, or cheese or both. Here we present a soup with quite a lot of vegetables, but one can use less of course. It is suitable for fresh mussels (still in their shells), but also for ready boiled ones.

In case you use ready bought mussels without shells, skip the first step. Start by chopping the onion, fry it softly in the oil or butter and follow the second step of the recipe from here: add water, wine and vegetables (chopped), bring to the boil, etcetera.

Chop the onions, bring the water and wine to the boil, add onions and some of the vegetables and simmer for about 3 minutes. Add salt and pepper, then add the mussels in shells and boil for around 10 minutes. The shells should be open by then. Pour through a sieve, take the mussels out of the shells (throw away the unopened ones, because they cannot be used !!!) and set them aside for as long as needed and as cool as necessary. The follow up can be done very quickly, but also later (the next day or even after saving in the freezer). In either case: before returning the mussels to the stock, add fresh vegetables (chopped), bring to the boil till they are still crispy and then add the mussels; once the soup is boiling again, turn down the heat, stir in the cream, and add salt and pepper if needed. Add the chopped parsley and serve.



GREEK SALAD

(For 6 persons)

6 tomatoes (large)

1 cucumber (large)

12 olives

1 onion (large)

Greek feta cheese (about 200 grams)

a little bit of oregano

100 grams of olive oil

some salt

Recipe from Greece prepared by Nikolaos Balodimas



This is a traditional Greek salad. Preferably it is served in the summertime, as this is the right season for tomatoes and cucumbers. (In other words, in the wintertime this salad does not reach its maximum taste.)

First of all, wash the tomatoes and cucumber well. It is suggested that the cucumber should be peeled (as extra protection against fertilizers used during its cultivation). Cut the tomatoes and cucumber into pieces (arrange for somewhat smaller pieces if children are also eating the salad). The onion should also be cut into (round) pieces and washed under water, so that its taste becomes milder. Add a little salt. Place olives symmetrically inside the bowl.

Cut the feta cheese into pieces and place it on the top of the salad. (Take care: for matters of hygiene, which means due to its sensitivity to high temperatures e. g. especially during summer time in Greece, the feta cheese should be added only right before the salad is to be served). Then pour olive oil into the bowl. Apart from taste, it will give the salad some shine. Finally, sprinkle oregano onto the salad.



FENNEL AND ORANGE

6 medium-sized blood or navel oranges
 1 medium fennel cut into thin strips
 3 tablespoons finely chopped walnuts
 1/2 cup whole, pitted olives
 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
 Oregano, salt and black pepper to taste

Recipe from Italy prepared by Wendy Harcourt



I prepare this dish in summer for my family and sometimes for guests, though it is not considered a very festive dish. It is fresh and easy to prepare and a very nice way to finish a meal on a hot summer day. I learnt about the dish when I moved to Italy where combining oranges and fennel into salad was a wonderful treat for me, as someone used to plain green lettuce salads or coleslaw from Australia. I moved to Italy in 1988 in my late 20s where I learnt a completely new culture of food. I learnt that every region of Italy has different foods and styles of cooking and a real love of quality food. There is no real Italian food. Sicilian food with pasta, oil, citrus fruits and wonderful desserts based on almonds is completely different from Lombardian food, which is rice based, creamy and much richer. This dish comes from Sicily but is commonly served in Rome where I live.

Peel the oranges, slice them into thin rounds and place them in a dish, slightly overlapping them. Sprinkle over the fennel strips, olives and walnuts. Drizzle the olive oil over, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Tilt and turn the dish so that the oil and juices spread over the oranges, sprinkle oregano on the top.



Persian recipe prepared by Roya Vahedi-Stolp

FESSENJOON

CHICKEN WITH POMEGRANATE SAUCE AND ROASTED WALNUTS

1.2 kg chicken breast, cut into strips of 2-3 cm; 2 onions, diced; 250 g finely chopped walnuts; 25 tbsp pomegranate sauce (or more if you like!); 3 tbsp adwije (Iranian spice mixture) or mild curry powder; 2 tsps turmeric; a pinch of salt; 2 tsps pepper; 1 tsp cinnamon (optional); oil for frying.

Heat some oil in a pot. Fry the onions until they are light brown and roast the walnuts, stirring constantly. Add around 500 ml hot water and simmer over a low heat. In the meantime, heat oil in a frying pan and fry the meat on both sides. Then add the meat and spices to the pot with the walnut mixture and simmer for around 45 minutes. (Around 15 minutes for chicken breast.) Add the pomegranate sauce and a pinch of salt to the meat and cook gently for another 10 minutes. Stir carefully. Note: while the meat is cooking, cover the pot with a lid, and do not open it too often, as this can lead to a loss of flavour and the meat becoming hard.



TAHDIG SAFFRON BASMATI RICE WITH POTATO CRUST

TSCHELO – A PERSIAN WAY OF COOKING RICE

600 g basmati rice (rinsed in lukewarm water and left to steep in warm water with 1 tbsp salt for 1 – 2 hours); 2-3 medium-sized potatoes, peeled and cut into thin slices of around 3 mm; 5 tbsp oil; a pinch of turmeric; around 0.2 g saffron.

Persian recipe prepared by Roya Vahedi-Stolp & Parto Teherani-Krönner



Tschelo means rice cooked without ingredients.

Tahdig means the crust at the bottom of the pot. It can be made with rice, potatoes, or flour and saffron. It gets crispy while the rice is cooking and is a very tasty side dish.

Fill half of a large pot with water and bring to the boil. Carefully add the rice and the water used to steep it and immediately stir carefully two or three times. At a high heat, the rice will take 5 or 6 minutes to cook, but will still be slightly hard. Drain the rice in a sieve.

Then add the oil and a pinch of turmeric to the pot and cover the bottom of the pot with a layer of potatoes. Cover the potatoes with the rice. Wrap the lid of the pot in a clean tea cloth and cover the pot with it. Cook the dish at a low heat for our 35 minutes. Warning: During this time, do not remove the lid! Plunge the pot into cold water before serving the dish so that the potatoes will be easier to lift. Serve at once.



Recipe from Turkey prepared by Gonca Erdem and Ilknur Saydam



*Toku ağırlamak güçtür. (Turkish)
It is difficult to receive a guest with a full
stomach. (free translation)*

TURKISH DOLMA

WITH DRIED AUBERGINES AND PEPPERS

string of dried aubergines, red peppers.

For the filling:

2-3 medium onions, finely chopped; some cloves of garlic;
a little tomato paste; 100 ml tomato sauce; 1 cup white rice;
juice of 1 lemon; 1 tsp black pepper; 1 tsp cumin; parsley; 200
ml water; 2 tbsp olive oil; salt.

Boil a large pot of water and add the dried aubergines. Cook until they soften enough that a fork can go through them easily. Rinse in cold water and set aside. Mix all the filling ingredients well. Using a small spoon, fill the aubergines and peppers. Place dolmas (filled vegetables) side by side in a wide pot.

Top with grated tomatoes and sprinkle over butter. Add hot water to cover the dolmas. On top of the pot, place a fairly flat plate upside down. It will hold the dolmas down when you are cooking them. Bring to the boil and turn down to low for 30-35 minutes or until the rice is cooked. Leave the pot to stand for 5 minutes and serve with crusty bread.



LINGUINE ALLA STROMBOLANA

For 4 people:

70 g anchovies, 150 g black olives, 300 g cherry tomatoes, 3 tbsp olive oil, 2 cloves of garlic, salt, 400 g pasta (linguine), 20 g breadcrumbs, 20 g pine nuts, 30 g raisins, capers (from Sicily) and fresh fennel.

Recipe from Italy prepared by Sonja Cappello



As you might know, pasta is an everyday dish in Italy. We have pasta at almost every meal. My favourite pasta is linguine alla Strombolana. It's a typical recipe from the island of Stromboli, Sicily, where I normally spend my summer holidays. My family (father) is from Sicily, so I feel a deep connection with the place. For this dish you should use local products, like anchovies, capers, olives and fennel ...

In a nonstick pan, pour the olive oil and add the garlic.

Sauté the garlic and remove from the pan. In this oil, sauté the anchovies over a low heat, then add the olives.

Stir for a few seconds and add tomatoes cut into quarters, salt, raisins and pine nuts, and cook for 20 minutes. When cooked, sprinkle with fresh fennel and breadcrumbs.

Meanwhile, boil the linguine, and once cooked, stir well with the sauce.



GREEN CELERY AND LEMON

Ginger root
garlic
onion
black (and red) pepper
green celery
lemon (organic, not waxed)
500 g vegetable stock

Recipe from England prepared by Madlen Maehlis



I picked the recipe up at a friend's house while taking care of her child. She cooked it with chicken breast. Since you can prepare it within 20-25 minutes, it is perfect for busy parents, rather lazy cooks, office workers who prefer light meals, etc. The sour taste of the lemon makes it a cooling meal. The green of the celery reminds you of freshness. As a salad, it is a perfect contribution to a barbeque on summer nights.

Add some pieces of fresh, chopped ginger strips, garlic and onion to hot oil and stir. Add roughly ground pepper and mix. Add the celery pieces and half a liter (or less) of vegetable stock. Cook for 1 minute. Add half of a lemon chopped into pieces and cook for max. 3 minutes. Then add the other half of the lemon. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Serve warm with basmati and/or wild rice. Or, if you want to prepare the dish as a salad, let it all cool and mix it with the rice.



RYE BREAD DESSERT

10 slices coarse rye bread (about 350g in total), slightly dried with the crusts removed
 1 tbsp honey
 250g cream
 2 tbsp sugar
 ½ tsp vanilla sugar
 150 g loganberry or cranberry jam (not very sweet)
 50 ml warm water
 cinnamon to taste (optional)

Recipe from Latvia prepared by Līga Kaleja and Dzidra Babra



We usually make this dessert for the family on Sundays or also on some occasions when the family is together. The best thing is that we can buy grated bread in the supermarket, which makes it much easier and faster to prepare this dessert. Now we can prepare it in the evening or for lunch too.

*Ja maizīte nokrīt zemē, tad uzceļot tā jānobučo. (Latvian)
 If you drop bread on the floor, you must pick it up and kiss it. (free translation)*

(1) Finely grate slices of bread using a hand grater or food processor. In a dry pan, toast the bread on a medium heat. If necessary, grate once more in a food processor so that the bread is finely grated. Leave to cool. **(2)** Whip the cream and add the sugar and vanilla sugar. **(3)** In a bowl make honey water – add honey to the warm water and stir until it is melted. Then add gradually to the grated bread. Maybe you won't need all of the water, maybe you will need more. The bread must be a little bit damp, but you must still be able to sprinkle it. **(4)** Divide the toasted breadcrumbs in 3 parts, two of which are equal and one that is slightly smaller (to be used for topping). **(5)** Divide the cream in two parts. You can make the dessert in portions (if so, use 4 small dessert dishes) or use a shallow dish (ideally, glass). Put one part of the breadcrumbs on the bottom of your container. **(6)** Using a spatula or spoon, gently spread half of the loganberry jam over the breadcrumbs. Then spread the whipped cream over. Be careful that the layers don't run into each other. You should be able to see them separately through the glass. Repeat with bread, jam and cream. Top the dessert with a thinner layer of the remaining breadcrumbs. Cover the container and leave the dessert to set in the fridge. Chill for 2 –5 hours.



ALVA

SEMOLINA DESSERT

1 cup vegetable oil
3 cups semolina
4 cups water
2 cups sugar
vanilla
150 g chopped walnuts (optional)

Recipe from Macedonia prepared by Katerina Nussdorfer



Alva is one of those Balkan dishes that stems from the Ottoman Empire and comes from Persia and the Middle East, but in Macedonia it is a tad different than in other countries.

Heat the oil in a wide, semi-deep pan. Add the semolina and fry until golden brown. Put aside. On the side, make a syrup out of the water and sugar by boiling them until they are fairly thick. Put the pan with the semolina back on the heat (lowest) and start adding the syrup in slowly, stirring constantly. Leave to simmer until the mass starts separating from the bottom. Add the vanilla, leave to stand and cool. Serve cut up in cubes with walnuts on top.



OLD-FASHIONED PRUNES

WITH SWEETENED CREAM

250 g dried prunes, 150 ml red wine (instead of wine or port you can use lemonade or fruit juice. Probably you can do with less sugar in that case), 150 ml strong cold tea, 1.5 spoons sweet red port, crème de cassis, etc., 3 spoons sugar, 50 g walnuts (chopped), 50 g pure/ bitter chocolate

150 ml cream, 150 g (Greek) yoghurt, 3 spoons sugar (fine), 3 spoons rosewater (or other sweet tasty syrup, for instance elderberry blossom), (2 spoons sweet red port or other sweet liqueur)

Recipe from The Netherlands prepared by Ally de Vries



Dried prunes can be used for very delicious desserts: our grandmothers knew that very well. Here is an example of an old-fashioned delight.... And its attraction even grows if prepared the day before!

Our grandmothers knew that too of course: that 's why they used the Saturday for this wonderful Sunday dinner desert.

Simmer the prunes and sugar gently for about 20 minutes in the mixture of wine + tea + port (or other sweet liqueur); stir now and then, making sure that the sugar melts nicely. Then remove from the heat and give the prunes time to cool and absorb the tasty fluid.

Serve the prunes with ice cream, a nice pudding, whipped tasty cream or yoghurt. Before serving the prunes, you need to add the walnuts and chocolate. Chop the walnuts and roast them briefly. Also chop the chocolate.

In case you want to top them with the delightful cream, you have to whip the cream (and yoghurt) with the sugar, add the rosewater or other syrup (and maybe finish with the port or liqueur). Divide the prunes among 4 glasses, add the chopped and roasted walnuts and the chocolate, take the bowl with the sweet and tasty cream and turn this old-fashioned delight into the treat it surely is.



COCONUT PANNA COTTA

WITH PINEAPPLE

1 ripe pineapple
 1 vanilla pod
 400 ml coconut milk
 100 ml cream
 30 g demerara sugar
 1 tsp agar agar
 grated peel of a lime
 mint leaves (roughly torn)
 5 tbsp lime juice

Recipe from Thailand prepared by Sabine Küchler



Appetite comes with eating.

Peel and quarter a ripe pineapple. Cut the quarters into thin slices. Scrape out the vanilla pod and cook half of the contents with the coconut milk, cream, demerara sugar, agar agar and 3 tbsp lime juice, stirring frequently. Simmer for 15 minutes, then stir in the lime peel. Rinse small dishes and fill them with the mixture. Leave them in the fridge for an hour. Mix the pineapple with the rest of the vanilla, mint leaves and 2 tbsp lime juice.

Turn the panna cotta out on to plates with the pineapple served around it.



Recipe from Germany



This is a typical cake for “Kaffee und Kuchen” in the afternoon – which is usually served with slightly sweetened cream (for the cake) as well as sugar and milk (for the coffee) at around 4 pm. Our mothers prepared filter coffee and often had cups and plates with small flowers. On Sundays and from time to time during the week, family members or friends were welcome. Although there are various new influences meanwhile – we love latte macchiato, Wiener Melange and all types of tea, and the rhythms of our days are much less strict – the “Kaffee und Kuchen” tradition is still popular and is one of the occasions to enjoy delicious cakes, tortes and other sweets and to chat and gossip.

Brigitte Wörteler

REDCURRANT CHEESECAKE

Base: 300 g of flour, 150 g of sugar, 150 g soft butter, 1 egg, 1 pack/2 tsps of vanilla sugar, a pinch of salt

Topping: 700g of redcurrants, 500 g of curd cheese, 180-200 g of sugar, 2 eggs, 200 ml whipped cream, 2 tbsp of flour, 1 pack/2 tsps of vanilla sugar, grated peel of an organic/unwaxed orange or lemon, 70 g of flaked almonds, some sugar crystals for decoration.

Instead of redcurrants, you may also use rhubarb or another rather tart fruit, whichever is in season.

Knead the dough ingredients to a smooth shortcrust pastry that is soft but not sticky. Roll the dough into ball, cover and leave in a cool place for about 45 minutes. Wash the currants and drain them well.

Separate the egg. Mix the egg yolk, curd cheese, sugar, vanilla sugar, orange peel and flour. Whisk the egg white and cream until they are stiff and fold into the cheese mixture. Roll out the dough on a slightly greased baking sheet (with a high edge). Put the curd cream on it and smooth it out. Distribute the almonds and the currants on it.

Bake in the preheated stove at 175 C for about 45 minutes. Take it out and leave it to cool. If you like, sprinkle some sugar crystals on it before serving.



ST. JAMES' CAKE - TARTA DE SANTIAGO

5 (10) eggs
300 (600) g sugar
300 (600) g ground almonds
grated peel of a lemon
vanilla sugar
icing sugar

Recipe from Spain prepared by Sabine Bremer



This is a cake from Galicia in the north of Spain where the famous Camino de Santiago ends.

Therefore it is decorated with the Saint James' cross. It is a very easy and fast recipe and I prepare it when I don't have much time, but need a nice dessert. Orange salad goes very well with it.

Beat the eggs and the sugar until frothy; add almonds, lemon and vanilla sugar. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes in a spring form of 22 cm, at 190 degrees. Use the icing sugar to decorate the cake. You can use the template of the Saint James' cross. If you double the ingredients, you can prepare the cake in a baking tray.



We learned more about meal cultures and their changes and listened to family stories about meal preparation. We went out for excursions. We prepared and enjoyed delicious meals with our guests from many EU countries:

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