Food and the Internet

Proceedings of the 20th International Ethnological Food Research Conference, Department of Folklore and Ethnology, Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Łódź, Poland, 3–6 September 2014
Opening Lecture
It was in 1970 that the first symposium on ethnological food research, which would influence and shape regional ethnological food studies in the succeeding decades, took place in Lund, Sweden, from the 21st to the 25th of August of that year. Organised by Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Professor of Nordic and Comparative Folklife Studies, the Institute of Ethnology, University of Lund, the theme of the symposium was “Ethnological Food Research – Development, Methods and Future Tasks”. An important aim of the meeting was to gain an overview of the state of ethnological food research in different parts of Europe and the USA at that time. Reports on the situation in their respective countries, solicited by the organisers, and provided by delegates from many of these areas prior to the symposium, were distributed in advance to the participants. This enabled them to get a picture of the general position of ethnological food research internationally at that time and to plan co-operation in and development of this branch of food studies for the years ahead (Valeri 1971, pp. 185). This approach is set out in a joint introductory paper entitled “Ethnologische Nahrungsforschung in Europa. Stand, Probleme, Aufgaben” (“Ethnological Food Research in Europe. Position, Problems, Tasks”) by Nils-Arvid Bringéus (Lund) and Günter Wiegelmann (1928–2008) (Münster, Germany), in a subsequent symposium volume, Ethnological Food Research in Europe and USA, edited by them (Bringéus / Wiegelmann 1971, pp. 6-13). Twenty-two other papers in that volume dealt with the position of research on food habits in the following countries and regions of Europe – Austria, the Baltic States, Britain, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland,
France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland (two papers), Sweden, Switzerland (two papers), the USSR, and Yugoslavia – while another paper focused on the position of food studies in the USA. A further twenty-two thematic papers presented at the symposium – and grouped under the following headings – “Problems and Methods”; “Sources and their Treatment”; “Hunger and Plenty”; “Kitchen Utensils and Food Habits”; “Food Complex Studies”; “Distribution and Change” and “Individual Food Elements” – were published in *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1971 (Bringéus 1971; See also Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Cover of *Ethnological Scandinavica* 1971. “Jacob slaughters a kid from which Rebekah prepares a dish for Isaac, Genesis 27. Painting from around 1430-40 in the old church at Risinge, Östergötland. Photo: Soren Hallgren.”

4 A report on the International Committee for the Anthropology of Food and Food Habits, of which Margaret L. Arnott, Philadelphia (also a member of the ethnological food research conference) was President, set up during the 8th Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences which took place in Tokyo / Kyoto in September 1968, was provided by Dr. Igor de Garine, France, at the conference, and it also appeared in the conference volume (Bringéus / Wiegelmann 1971, pp. 211-213). See also Bringéus 2000, pp. 19-20 in this regard.
The scientific programme of the first symposium on ethnological food research was broadened and complemented by study visits and excursions to food-related sites in the Swedish countryside, and by a range of gustatory experiences as delegates sampled a variety of Swedish regional food specialities (Valeri 1971, p. 186). This “field” aspect remains an integral part of the international ethnological food research conferences to the present day.

In their joint article dealing with the position, problems and tasks facing ethnological food research in Europe, mentioned above, Bringéus and Wiegelmann stated:


[A matter of crucial importance over the coming years is to work towards getting an overview of regional differences in the old rural diet of Europe. Such an overview would offer not only a basis for historical studies but also for analyses of change in modern times.]

The theme of the second ethnological food research symposium – “Dominierende Züge in regionalen Speisesystemen im 20. Jahrhundert” / “Dominant Traits in Regional Food Systems in the 20th Century”? – which was held in Helsinki, Finland, three years later (13–18 August 1973), partly reflected the above statement. Organised by a committee consisting of Professor Dr. Toivo Vuorela (Helsinki) (1909–1982), Professor Dr. Ilmar Talve (Turku) (1919–2007), Hilkka Vilppula, Doz. Dr. Bo Lönnqvist, Päiviikki Kokkonen and Hilkka Uusivirta, under the chairmanship of Professor Dr. Niilo Valonen (Helsinki) (1913–1983), forty-three delegates attended the meeting (Valonen / Lehtonen 1975, p. 5) and the subsequent symposium publication Ethnologische Nahrungsforschung / Ethnological Food Research (Valonen / Lehtonen 1975) contained twenty-seven papers. This

5 For a report on the conference see Genrup 1974, pp. 138-142.
6 According to Valeri (1971, p. 186), a second symposium for international ethnological food research, with the preliminary theme, “Famine Food and Poor Man’s Fare”, was planned to take place in Poland, but this obviously did not happen since the second meeting was held in Helsinki, Finland, in 1973.
7 Included in the conference volume are papers by middle and eastern European scholars – Wassil Marinow (Bulgaria), Vacys Nilius (Lithuania) Zofia Szromba-Rysowa (Poland) Ofelia Văduva (Romania), and Romulus Vulcănescu (Romania) – who did not actually attend the conference. The possibilities for scholars from these regions of Europe to participate in the ethnological food research conferences have varied over
volume pointed the way forward for the future thematic, theoretical and methodological emphases of food studies for a considerable time. A number of participants in these initial symposia in Lund and Helsinki, respectively – especially Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Eszter Kisbán (Hungary), Konrad Köstlin (Austria), Grith Lerche (Denmark), Renée Valeri (Sweden) and Johanna Maria van Winter (The Netherlands), continue to be active members of the international ethnological food research group. Also contributing to the above-mentioned symposia was the German social and economic historian, Hans Jürgen Teuteberg, who subsequently formed The International Commission for Research into European Food History (ICEFH) in Münster, Germany, in 1989.

Delegates from the Welsh Folk Museum, Trevor M. Owen, Curator, and S. Minwell Tibbott, also participated in the 1973 meeting. This is of interest as the third conference was held four years later (22–27 August 1977) in Cardiff, where it was hosted by the Welsh Folk Museum. According to the editors, the proceedings resulting from the conference were entitled Food in Perspective (1981), because “the 33 contributions from many different countries each throw a different light on the study of food and the relevance of such study to social history” (Fenton / Owen 1981, p. v). While German and English were the languages of the previous symposia volumes, Food in Perspective was, according to the editors, an English language publication for “the English-speaking world, since the subject and the various methods of approach that are demonstrated here have been familiar in several other countries for some time” (ibid.).

These three international meetings put the international ethnological food research group, led by Professor Nils-Arvid Bringéus, on a solid footing, and

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8 See Valeri 1976 for a review of the volume.
10 Now St. Fagans National History Museum, Cardiff, Wales.
11 Thereafter, the conference publications were mainly in English; for an exception see note 18.
12 Professor Bringéus was also President of SIEF (1982–1987) having been elected at the Suzdal SIEF conference of 1982. See “Previous Presidents of SIEF”, retrieved 1.6.2014 from www.siefhome.org/about/president/previous.shtml. See also, Bringéus 1982, pp. 149-150; Bringéus 2000, p. 21.
helped to stimulate further national and international research and co-operation in the area of ethnological food studies, which is still ongoing today.

The fourth conference, arranged by Dr. Maria Kundegraber (1924–2014) and Dr. Anni Gamerith (1906–1990), and held in Styria, Austria (24–30 August 1980), after a three-year interval, examined food from a communicational perspective. By taking as its theme “Nahrung als Kommunikation” (“Food as Communication”), the conference recognised that food is not just a means of survival but that it is also a key element of social, cultural, political, and personal discourse. While the proceedings of this conference were not published, a substantial review of the meeting appeared in Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde 1980, pp. 252-263 (= Schindler 1980).

Concepts and processes such as innovation, adaptation, and change in food and eating habits from the Middle Ages onwards, engaging scholars, such as, for example, Günter Wiegelmann (e.g. Wiegelmann 1967, 1974, 2006), became the themes of the fifth and sixth ethnological food research conferences, respectively. The fifth conference (16–20 October 1983) arranged by Dr. Eszter Kisbán, Institute of Ethnology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and held at Mátrafüred, in the Mátra Mountain area of Hungary, had as its theme “Sequences and Shifts in the History of Popular Diet”. It thus had a strong historical focus with periodisation in food habits being a key concept. The proceedings of this meeting appeared in the volume entitled Food in Change. Eating Habits from the Middle Ages to the Present Day (Fenton / Kisbán 1986). Two of the papers in this work – by Eszter Kisbán (“Food Habits in Change: the Example of Europe”) (ibid. pp. 2-10), and by Hans J. Teuteberg (“Periods and Turning-Points in the History of European Diet: A Preliminary Outline of Problems and Methods”) (ibid. pp. 11-23), respectively – sought to discern, and to reach general conclusions about, the causes and effects of the major periods of change in European food habits. Further papers looked

13 Anni Gamerith was a well-known European ethnologist. At the First International Symposium for Ethnological Food Research, Lund 1970, she put forward her theory that there was an interdependence between food, cooking utensils, and cooking processes … and the fireplace”, in her paper “Feuerstättenbedingte Kochtechniken und Speisen”. She distinguished two basic cooking technologies – the open hearth and the cooking oven, the former giving rise to Herdkost (“hearth food”) and the latter to Ofenkost (“cooking-oven food”) (Hörandner 2003, pp. 96-97; Gamerith 1971, pp. 78-85).

14 According to Schindler 1980, p. 263, the 5th International Ethnological Food Research Conference was due to take place in Münster, Germany, in 1983. Instead, as is evident, it took place in Hungary.
at changes in such habits in a number of individual countries, or areas, and two papers dealt with medieval fasting regimes.

The sixth conference (8–13 October 1985), organised by Dr. Anna Kowalska-Lewicka (1920–2009), Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences, Kraków, was held in Karniowice, Poland, the theme of which was “Innovations in Food Habits”.15 While the proceedings of this conference were not published, reviews of the meeting appeared in Ethnologia Scandinavica 1986, pp. 161-163 (= Borda 1986) and Etnografia Polska 31(1), 1987, pp. 213-215 (= Szromba-Rysowa 1987).

Seventeen years after the first symposium in Lund, the ethnological food research conference went north again to Scandinavia where the seventh congress (10–14 June 1987) was held in Søgndal, in south-western Norway. It was organised by Professor Andreas Ropeid (1916–1996), Norsk Etnologisk Gransking (NEG), University of Oslo, and Astri Riddervold, Oslo, a food ethnologist and an independent scholar. The conference theme was “The Storage and Preservation of Food”. Central to the discussions on that occasion was how people in different parts of the world, at different time-periods, managed ecological and economic conditions in order to prepare food in such a manner that, when stored, it would not undergo decomposition and become a health hazard. Such knowledge of preservation procedures was of vital importance for the management of household food supplies and meals. In the course of the conference, the topic of the storage and preservation of food was examined from technical, cultural and historical perspectives, an approach evident also in the subsequent volume of proceedings entitled Food Conservation. Ethnological Studies, which was published one year later (Riddervold / Ropeid 1988).

The representational role of food was dealt with at the eighth conference (18–23 June 1989), held in Philadelphia, USA, the theme of which was “Food as Symbol”. The conference was co-organised by William Woys Weaver, food historian and writer, and Dr. James Turk of the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, which also acted as institutional host. A key question dealt with by the conference participants was why food is so often charged with powerful symbolism. While the proceedings of this conference – the only one held in the USA to date – remain unpublished, a report on the meeting appeared in Ethnologia Scandinavica 1990, pp. 144-146 (= Genrup 1990).

15 Dr. Anders Salomonsson (1946–2004), Institute of Ethnology, Lund University, succeeded Professor Nils-Arvid Bringéus as President of the International Commission for Ethnological Food Research at the Karniowice, Poland, conference in 1985 (Borda 1986, p. 163; Bringéus 2000, p. 21).
In the two succeeding conferences, specific foods featured as conference topics. The theme of the ninth conference (17–22 June 1992), which was held in Ireland, was “Bainne agus Táirgí Bainne / Milk and Milk Products” in recognition of the historical and contemporary importance of milk and its products in the Irish diet and economy. It was hosted by the Department of Irish Folklore, University College Dublin, and was organised by Dr. Patricia Lysaght of that Department. After its formal opening in University College Dublin, the conference, in view of its topic, moved southwestwards to Kilfinnane, Co. Limerick, a rural village located in the rich dairying area known as the Golden Vale. Here, the formal indoor lectures were complemented by field excursions – including visits to commercial and private cheese-making enterprises, and to Dromcolliher in the west of the county where the first dairy co-operative in Ireland was founded in 1889 – which emphasised the importance of milk and milk products in the local, regional, and indeed, in the national economy of Ireland also. Thereafter the conference moved to the Burren area in northwest Co. Clare, in the west of Ireland, where the final sessions were held. As an extensive karst region with an oceanic climate, and unique winter grazing systems or reverse transhumance, the Burren is an area, about which it has been said, that there “the cowman and not the ploughman is king” (Parr / Moran / Dunford / Ó Conchúir 2009, p. 145). Thus, the conference delegates had an opportunity to experience a number of different kinds of landscapes, stock-raising methods, and milk-production systems in Ireland. Overall, the conference presentations and the conference publication which followed, entitled Milk and Milk Products from Medieval to Modern Times (Lysaght 1994), examined the role of milk and its products in the food structures and meal systems of diverse cultures in many parts of the world, including the role of women in dairying culture and the folklore associated with that economic activity.

The theme of the tenth conference (6–10 June 1994), which was held in Freising, Germany, was “Kulturprägung durch Nahrung: Die Kartoffel” / “Culture Formation through Food: The Potato”. Since food and eating are phenomena which


both underpin and express culture, the potato was seen as an excellent illustration of this reciprocal cultural relationship and thus worthy of discussion on an international interdisciplinary level. Arranged by Professor Dr. Sigrid Weggemann (Freising) and Dr. Gertrud Benker (München), in co-operation with the Technische Universität München, Freising-Weihenstephan, and the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Ernährungsverhalten (AGEV), the proceedings of this conference, bearing the same title, were published in part, three years later (Weggemann / Benker 1997).18

In 1996, the eleventh ethnological food research conference travelled south to Cyprus, an island lying strategically in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, and host to an array of culinary influences which reached the island as a result of invasion, conquest and colonisation over the centuries, and intensive tourism in the course of the twentieth century. The conference (8–14 June 1996) which was organised by Nicholas Andilios with Intercollege, Nicosia, as institutional partner, held its formal opening session in the capital Nicosia, then moved to Agros village in the Troodos Mountains in the centre of the Island, and held its final sessions in Droussia village in the Paphos district of western Cyprus. Working with the theme “The Impact of Migration, Immigration and Tourism on Ethnic Traditional Food”, the conference itself and the subsequent publication, *Food and the Traveller. Migration, Immigration, Tourism and Ethnic Food* (Lysaght 1998), explored the impact of the movement of people and foodstuffs on traditional foods and food habits historically and in contemporary times, in many parts of Europe and the New World.

After visiting the Mediterranean region, the conference went north to Sweden where the twelfth meeting (8–14 June 1998) was arranged by Dr. Kurt Genrup and hosted by Umeå University, Sweden, in co-operation with the Gastronomic Academy of Norrland, Åbo Akademi University, and the Frostviken community in Jämtland, north-western Sweden, where the second part of the conference was held. “Making the Most of Nature” was an appropriate conference theme in view of the acclaimed natural food resources of Norrland. The resulting conference volume, *Food from Nature. Attitudes, Strategies and Culinary Practices* (Lysaght 2000), dealt with the historical and contemporary dynamics of wild foods in the diet and food habits of environmentally and climatically different regions of the world.

The first of two visits by the ethnological food research conference to the Adriatic region occurred in 2000, when Dr. Maja Godina Golija, Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences, in co-operation with Inja Smerdel, Director of the Slovenian Ethnographical Mu-

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18 These part proceedings were published in German only.
seum, Ljubljana, organised the thirteenth international conference (5–11 June 2000) on the theme, “Food and Celebration: From Fasting to Feasting” / “Hrana in Praznovanje: Od Posta do Preobilja”, with sessions taking place in Ljubljana, Pred­dvor (with its Alpine climate), and Piran in Slovenian Istria. Both the conference itself, and the publication of the same title which followed (Lysaght 2002), dealt with the role of festive foods in different celebratory circumstances, in contrast to the use and meaning of fasting foods, in diverse regions and cultures of the world. The impact of industrialisation on food culture was also analysed in a number of papers at that conference.

The industrialisation of food and its impact on everyday life and mentality, past and present, was taken as the theme of the next conference – the fourteenth conference (30 September–6 October 2002) of the international ethnological food research group, arranged by Professor Dr. Christine Burckhardt-Seebsass, and held at Basel University and at the Alimentarium / Food Museum, Vevey, Switzerland, under the directorship of Dr. Martin R. Schärer. Working with the title, “Changing Tastes. Food Culture and the Process of Industrialization”, the conference itself, and the subsequent conference publication, developed this important topic along a number of lines, with papers focusing on, for example, changes in taste arising from the introduction of new products, from product differentiation and homogenisation, from the development of new combinations and consistencies by the food industry, and from the influence of makers and mediators of new tastes, such as cooks, cookery books and cookery schools, scientists, technical processes and devices. The role of retro movements, re-inventions, fashion, and industrialisation, and the impact of the interaction of forces of tradition and modernisation, in innovation processes, were also dealt with. The part played by marketing in influencing taste preferences, product selection, and culinary practices as part of, and arising from, the industrialisation process, was also discussed during the conference. This, together with the above-mentioned aspects, featured in the succeeding conference volume entitled Changing Tastes. Food Culture and the Processes of Industrialization (Lysaght / Burchardt-Seebsass 2004).

The second meeting of the international ethnological food research group in the Adriatic region took place from the 27th of September to the 3rd of October 2004, when Dr. Ass. Professor Nives Rittig-Beljak of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, and Mirjana Randić of the Ethnographic Museum, Zagreb, organised the fifteenth conference in Dubrovnik on the Croatian coast, on the theme, “Mediterranean Food and Its Influences Abroad”. A lively debate ensued at the congress as to whether a “Mediterranean Region”, or “Mediterranean Food” or indeed, a “Mediterranean Diet”, actually existed or exists, and various theoretical responses to these issues, and others, discernible in the conference discussions,
were also reflected in the volume of conference proceedings, *Mediterranean Food. Concepts and Trends*, published two years later (Lysaght / Rittig-Beljak 2006).

The sixteenth conference of the international ethnological food research group, the theme of which was “Sanitas Per Aquas (Spa). Foodways and Lifestyles in the Search for Health and Beauty”, took place in two locations and in two countries from the 25th of September to the 6th of October 2006. It was hosted initially by the Institute for Historical Sciences and European Ethnology, Innsbruck University, Austria, and then by Touriseum / The South Tyrolean Museum of Tourism, Meran(o), Italy, under the directorship of Dr. Paul Rösch. Arranged by Mag. Oliver Haid, Innsbruck, and Dr. Rösch, Meran(o), the conference debated the part played by tourism in the development of regional cuisines, and role afforded to dietary attitudes, lifestyle choices, and recourse to healing-related activities of different kinds – including health tourism, visits to spas and the taking of the waters – in the search for health, wellness, and beauty. Thus, key aspects of food, health and well-being as reflected in historical and contemporary discourses were discussed and analysed during the conference and in the resulting publication, *Sanitas per Aquas. Spas, Lifestyles and Foodways* (Lysaght 2008).

After visiting Austria and Italy in the south of Europe, the conference moved north again and the next three meetings were held in Norway, Finland and Sweden, respectively.

The seventeenth conference (15–19 September 2008) was hosted by Norsk Folkemuseum / Norwegian Museum of Cultural History, Oslo, in co-operation with Norsk Landbruksmuseum (Norwegian Museum of Agriculture), the theme of which was “Cultural Crossroads. Food and Meals at Cultural Crossroads”. It was organised by a committee led by Professor Ann Helene Bolstad Skjelbred, together with senior scholars from the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History, the University of Bergen, the Norwegian Museum of Agriculture, and the staff of Norwegian Ethnological Research. The conference itself, as well as the subsequent publication entitled *Food and Meals at Cultural Crossroads* (Lysaght / Skjelbred 2010), explored the complex diversity of multicultural societies, the cultural dialogues which emerge when fundamental cultural elements, such as those concerned with food and meals, cross boundaries, meet at cultural crossroads, and try to negotiate their future paths across space and time. The representational and interpretational roles of museums in relation to foodways in multicultural societies were also discussed.

An aspect of food culture which is also of special interest to ethnologists is the transformation of food into dishes since regional and national perspectives are then often to the fore. Thus the eighteenth conference (18–21 August 2010), hosted and arranged by Professor Dr. Anna-Maria Åstrom and staff, Department
of Ethnology, Åbo Academi University, Finland, took as its theme, “Time for Food. Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits”, with the aim of examining the topic from regional, national, transnational, ethnic, ethical, ecological and organic standpoints. As was evident from the conference publication, *Time for Food. Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits in a Global Perspective* (Lysaght 2012; Fig. 2), the focus was thus on the principled management of food-production and global food-trade mechanisms, on ethical food marketing and consumption, and on the food choices and habits involved in the daily organisation of food intake in domestic, public and institutional settings. The manner in which global trends influence or even re-invent the notion of traditional food was also examined.

*Fig. 5: Time for Food. Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits in a Global Perspective (2012). (With permission of Åbo Akademi University Press.)*
In 2012, the nineteenth international ethnological food research conference was held in Lund University, Sweden (15–18 August 2012), the place where the first international symposium for ethnological food research had been held forty-four years previously. Arranged by Associate Professor Håkan Jonsson and Anna Burstedt of the Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences, Lund University, the conference theme, “The Return of Traditional Food”, and the subsequent publication bearing the same title (Lysaght 2013), led to a discussion of the return to prominence of traditional food in various gastronomical settings and under certain conditions and creative impulses. A strong focus on the New Nordic Kitchen and on terroir was evident throughout the conference, as was discussion of the impact which specific EU protection schemes may have on how regional products are perceived, promoted, and marketed. The effects on traditional foodways of the commercialisation of revitalised food traditions in different parts of the world, and the complex role which traditional foodways play in the immigrant process, were also examined.

In 2014, after an interval of almost thirty years, the international ethnological food research group returned to Poland, where the twentieth conference (3–6 September 2014) was organised by Professor Dr. Violetta Krawczyk-Wasilewska, and hosted by the Department of Ethnology and Folklore, Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Łódź, the theme of which was “Food and the Internet”. The aim of the twentieth conference was to discuss the impact of the global reach of the Internet on national and regional culinary cultures. The present volume, *Food and the Internet*, based on the results of that conference, demonstrates the multi-faceted influence on food culture of the global transfer of knowledge by means of the Internet, and its influence on daily cultural interaction, including matters of nutrition, in many parts of the world.

**Conclusion**

From its inception in 1970, the international ethnological food research group has been committed to the development of ideas, themes, and co-operation among scholars and disciplines for the furtherance of food studies on an international scale. Of the twenty international conferences which have been organised by the group so far, nineteen, as we have seen, have taken place in European countries,

19 This aspect of food cultural studies was dealt with by Bernhard Tschofen in a paper delivered at the Slovenian conference in 2000 and published in its proceedings (Tschofen 2000).

20 An alphabetical listing of the European countries involved is as follows: Austria, Austria / Italy, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland (x2), Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Norway (x2), Poland (x2), Slovenia, Sweden (x3), Switzerland, and Wales.
and one was held in the USA. Over the years, the conference topics have reflected, to a certain extent at least, focal themes in ethnology. The volumes of conference proceedings published so far, have addressed a range of existing and emerging questions relevant to food research in ethnology and neighbouring disciplines. These publications have contributed to the development of programmes in food culture at third level institutions, and dynamic collaborations between different disciplines are emerging in this context. The growing interest in food studies among graduate students and early-career academics has been evident at recent conferences (e.g. Lysaght 2010; Lysaght / Skjelbred 2012; Lysaght 2013), and a number of papers presented by this cohort at the recent conference in Łódź (2014) appear in this volume.

The ongoing discourses about food, especially on social media, affect the dietary choices of many people, in different parts of the world, on a daily basis. In recognition of this phenomenon, the Łódź conference explored the effects of the digital age on food culture. It examined the influence of the Internet – as a provider of a seemingly limitless flow of information and discourse about food sources, production, distribution, and consumption – on attitudes towards food, in the context of ecological, environmental, ethical, health, and everyday lifestyle issues, at local, regional, and global levels.

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**Internet**


