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# Live encounters

October 2013

Free online magazine from village earth



**Perinaz Avari - Parsi Cuisine**  
**Maha Noor Elahi - Saudi Women**  
**Sally McKenna - Traditional Irish food**  
**Jill Gocher - Food Gallery**



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Live Encounters is a not-for-profit free online magazine that was started in 2009 in Bali, Indonesia. It showcases some of the best writing from around the world. Civil and human rights activists, animal rights activists, poets, writers, journalists, social workers and more have contributed their time and knowledge for the benefit of the readers of the magazine.

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Live  
encounters

October 2013

**"You can chain me, you can torture me, you can even destroy this body, but you will never imprison my mind." - Mahatma Gandhi**

## Dear Readers,

This issue features articles on entertainment in Saudi Arabia, Parsi and Irish traditional food with recipes, photography, philosophy, human rights and healing.

We thank our contributors...

- **Maha Noor Elahi**, Lecturer in a college in Jeddah.
- **Perinaz Avari**, International Chef
- **Sally McKenna**, Irish American Artist
- **Jill Gocher**, Photographer
- **Rosemary Grey**, Civil and Human Rights
- **Ivo Coelho**, Philosopher and Priest
- **Terry McDonagh**, Irish Writer, Poet and Playwright
- **Natalie Wood**, Journalist and Writer
- **Nikola Stepanov**, Civil and Human Rights
- **Candess M Campbell**, Health

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## Saudi Women and the Emerging Culture of Entertainment **Maha Noor Elahi**

Maha Noor Elahi, ESL Lecturer in a private college in Jeddah, KSA, wife and mother of three children is an MA in English Literature majoring in Drama. She established the Drama Club where she works and has written and directed several comedy sketches. The Club's latest performance was in December 2012, titled Kaleidoscope. Her work focuses on empowering women whether in their studies, professional or social lives. Maha is also a poet. [www.saudi Revelations.wordpress.com](http://www.saudi Revelations.wordpress.com) [www.freewebs.com](http://www.freewebs.com)



## Shining the Spotlight on Parsi Food **Perinaz Avari**

Perinaz (Peri) Avari is a proud Parsi Zoroastrian, native of cosmopolitan Mumbai in India and hospitality professional who's been on many 'food adventures', especially during her 10 years working for the Taj Group of Hotels in India. Now living in America, Peri shares her hospitality wisdom and passion for Parsi and Indian food by creating simple recipes with a global appeal, through her informative articles and world travel adventures on - [Peri's Spice Ladle](http://Peri's Spice Ladle)



## Traditional Irish Cooking by an Irish American **Sally McKenna**

Sculptor, Sally McKenna, relays her life story intertwined with imagery, symbols, politics and the journey back to the ancestral land of Ireland. Life is mirrored in art from her earliest influences to the current day. It is a retrospective look from the vantage point of an age of prosperity and international upheaval. It is an honest reverie of how she made choices and fought the system. Art provided a grounding and creative base to discover and launch her dreams. [www.sallymckenna.com](http://www.sallymckenna.com) [Blog](#) [sally mckenna FaceBook](#)



## Food Gallery **Jill Gocher**

Bali based international photographer has spent her life exploring and enjoying Asian cultures. Her work has appeared in National Geographic, Time, International Herald Tribune, Asia Spa, Discovery, Silver Kris and many more. Her books - Asia's legendary Hotels, Periplus, Bali- Island of Light -Marshall Cavendish, Indonesia - Islands of the Imagination. Periplus, Australia - the land down under - Times Editions, Singapore, Indonesia - the last paradise - Times Editions. She has held exhibitions in Singapore, Kathmandu, and Bali. [www.amazon.com/author/jillgocher](http://www.amazon.com/author/jillgocher)



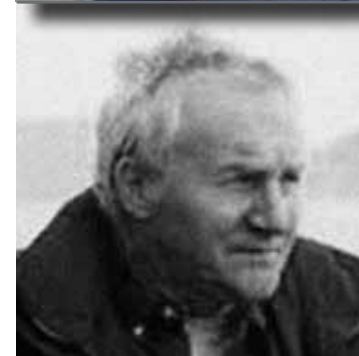
## Beyond Rape... **Rosemary Grey**

Grey is a PhD Student in the School of Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) and a visiting scholar at the Centre for International Governance and Justice. Her research interests are gender issues in international criminal law, focusing particularly on the prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence at the International Criminal Court. First published in [Regarding Rights](#)



## Of Friendship, Tea, and Dialogue **Ivo Coelho**

Coelho earned his PhD in philosophy from the Gregorian University, Rome. He is Reader in Gnoseology and Metaphysics at Divyadaan: Salesian Institute of Philosophy, Nashik, India, and editor of Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education. Born in 1958 at Mumbai, he specialized in the hermeneutical thought of the Canadian philosopher, theologian and economist Bernard Lonergan. He is the author of Hermeneutics and Method: The 'Universal Viewpoint' in Bernard Lonergan and editor of Brahman and Person: Essays by Richard De Smet. [www.divyadaan.in](http://www.divyadaan.in)



## Moon Phases **Terry McDonagh**

Irish poet and dramatist, Terry McDonagh, taught creative writing at the University of Hamburg and was Drama Director at the Int. School Hamburg for 15 years. He now works freelance; has been writer in residence in Europe, Asia, Australia; published seven poetry collections, book of letters, prose and poetry for young people translated into Indonesian and German, distributed internationally by Syracuse Uni. Press; latest poetry collection Ripple Effect due for publication in May/June 2013, Arlen House; next children's story, Michel the Merman, illustrated by Marc Barnes (NZ) to be published in September 2013. He lives in Hamburg and Ireland. [www.terry-mcdonagh.com](http://www.terry-mcdonagh.com)



## Corporal Punishment and Children... **Nikola Stepanov**

Stepanov is a doctoral scholar in philosophy and law (Rights of Children) with the Melbourne Medical School & School of Population and Global Health, The University of Melbourne, and recipient of an Australian Postgraduate Award. Nikola also works part-time as a lecturer in Medical Ethics and Law with the School of Medicine, the University of Queensland. She will be spending the summer in Cyprus as an invited visiting scholar of the University of Central Lancashire's (UCLan) Centre for Professional Ethics and UCLan Faculty of Law-Cyprus. First published in [Regarding Rights](#)



## Great Charter - Huge Hatred - Nothing Changed **Natalie Wood**

Born in Birmingham, England, U.K., Natalie Wood began working in journalism a month prior to outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. She remained in regional Jewish journalism for over 20 years, leaving full-time writing to help run a family business and then completed a range of general office work. Wood and her husband, Brian Fink emigrated from Manchester to Israel in March 2010 and live in Karmiel, Galilee where she continues to work, concentrating on creative writing. She features in *Smith Magazine's* new *Six Word Memoirs On Jewish Life* and contributes to *Technorati*, *Blogcritics* and *Live Encounters* magazine. Her stories - [Website](#) and journalism - [Website](#)



## Experiencing Subtle Energies **Candess M Campbell**

Candess M. Campbell, PhD is an internationally known Intuitive Life Coach, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Seminar leader, Hypnotherapist and Author. She specializes in assisting others to gain their own personal power and to live a life of abundance, happiness and joy. Early 2012 she will be releasing her book *12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine*. [www.12weekstoselfhealing.com](http://www.12weekstoselfhealing.com)





## Saudi Women and the Emerging Culture of Entertainment

Saudi Arabia...oppression, rigorousness, and a great deal of limitations; perhaps that's all what you've heard or read about my country, and when it comes to women, the case is even worse. I am not trying to change what you think about Saudi Arabia here, rather I will just take you on a quick fresh journey from the heart of Jeddah...*fresh as in 2013!*

With all the negative international media coverage about Saudi Arabia, you might find it almost impossible to believe that you are going to read about entertainment and fun in Saudi Arabia!

In the last few years, a lot of Saudi young men have amazingly overrun YouTube channels through a variety of short comedy programs criticizing common social, economic, and political issues, and later on, they went on different theatres in Riyadh and Jeddah, performing what is internationally known as stand-up comedy, doing a great job ever since they started. Amongst them are **Omar Hussein, Fahad Al-Butairi, Hisha Fageeh, Badr Saleh**, and many others, but it may seem just normal for those young men to bloom in a male-dominated society.

**What you might have never heard about is that there are a few notable female entertainers in Saudi Arabia, specifically in Jeddah, for "life" finds its way in those who want to enjoy it regardless of their condition or the restrictions around them.**



**Hatoon Kadi with her two children Ahmed & Awab**

Her YouTube program "Noon Al-Niswa" represents the voice of every-day Saudi women, who are not from the high or velvet class, and who have balanced, wise attitudes and insights about life, family, and work. The program criticizes *female behavior* in the Saudi society, especially acts that are associated with the nouveau riche and the so-called "cool" generation of females.





From left to right: Founder of the Reading Forum, Thuraya.A Batterjee, artist Safiya BinZagr and former Executive Director of the United Nations Populations Fund, Dr. Thurayya Obaid.

A few years ago, a young Saudi academic and IT specialist, who happens to be a friend of mine confided in me that she wanted to do something really big...something that would create a buzz in our society! And since she had always had this sharp and thought-provoking sense of humor, her dream came true, and she has become the first YouTube Saudi female entertainer! Hatoon Kadi is not a full-time comedy program presenter; she is a wife and a mother of two adorable boys.

Her YouTube program "Noon Al-Niswa" represents the voice of everyday Saudi women, who are not from the *high or velvet* class, and who have balanced, wise attitudes and insights about life, family, and work. The program, in addition; criticizes many female behaviors in the Saudi society, especially acts that are associated with the nouveau riche and the so-called "cool" generation of females. In a cynical light-hearted way, Hatoon mocks the "cool wannabes", who are usually appearance-centered, show-offs, and completely dependent on maids to serve them and raise their kids. Hatoon tackles these social issues from a woman's perspective, without making judgments or offering solutions; she just displays reality in her own way, and if that makes her audience enjoy a good laugh, she feels satisfied.

Nevertheless, "Noon Al-Niswa" is only a small part of Hatoon's life. Most of her time, she is a caring mother, who works half of the day and runs after her kids the other half.

**"I have started my career when I was pregnant with my first son Ahmed and I never stayed home. Maybe I was lucky because the place I worked at provided a very good nursery service, which was a relief, so we had always been a package, leaving home at 7:30 and coming back around 5 pm. In Saudi Arabia, I used to have a maid, but she was never a cook or a nanny as I usually take off my Abayah and put on my apron once I return home to prepare dinner for my family. I have always believed that it is the mother's responsibility**



Children during an improvisation activity holding a sign "I am an Arab! I read in Arabic!"

**to ensure good nutrition for her family. Now as I am doing my PhD in the UK, things are different as there is no full-time maid, so in the morning I just urge everyone to do their beds, I clean bathrooms, load the dishwasher, and then come back after a full day to do the rest. Well, I know it's not a very pinky and bright picture, but it is manageable and rewarding."**

**Along with her daily chores as a wife and mother, Hatoon is preparing for her PhD degree at the University of Sheffield Information School.** Her research is about the impacts of the deployment of virtual learning environment systems on teaching in Saudi higher education institutions.

Needless to say, Hatoon's experience is a perfect example of the will-power and tenacity that Saudi women have. She is a real-life example of how Saudi women can be whenever they have the desire, knowledge, determination, and of course, family support.

And definitely, Hatoon Kadi is not the only positive archetype. There are many other women in Saudi Arabia who understand the value and importance of entertainment; not just for the sake of fun or social criticism, but for educational purposes as well.

At the beginning of 2013, **Mrs. Thuraya A Batterjee**, children's books writer and owner of publishing house **Kadi and Ramadi**, decided to take the initiative of designing a public reading forum to spread the love of reading among children and to educate both children and parents through entertainment, particularly through amusing interactive reading workshops and stage performances.

Planning for such a forum, which included more than 50 workshops, meetings with a number of well-known published authors, and performing two plays for children, was undoubtedly not an easy task. It needed thorough planning, keeping in mind all those tiny details.





Stars of Dakoon the Frog after their first performance

Of course, such events like the reading forum happen all the time around the world, but what is unique about **Jeddah's Reading Forum for Children** is that it was initiated, planned, and executed by women! A team of 12 women were involved in the planning and coordination procedures and more than 20 young Saudi girls volunteered to help and organize during the five-day event.

The forum included a variety of engaging activities such as story-telling, an art exhibition showcasing children's work, book signing, and workshops that encourage reading and discuss diverse ways to help parents and children live enjoyable experiences with books. All these activities were presented by famous male and female figures in the Saudi society; prominent authors, educators, artists, businessmen, journalists, TV presenters, company owners, and many more participated in the event, believing in the great cause behind it; the development of the new generation through *non-traditional and attention-grabbing ways*.

In addition, two major performances took place during the forum days; a performance of a play titled *The Secret Lives of Princesses* by *Philippe Lechermeier and Rébecca Dautremer*, performed in English and directed by a promising Saudi female director, **Ms. Lana Qumosani**, and another play called **Dakoon the Frog** by **Haidar Solaiman**, performed in Arabic and directed by me. Selecting children (the actors) between ages 5 to 16 was done after a number of auditions, and the training and rehearsals of both plays continued for about 3 months, two or three times a week including weekends, sometimes.

To prepare for the plays the whole forum, each member of the organizing team worked day and night, dedicating their time and effort to achieve the goal of the event; spreading awareness and love of reading through entertainment.



From left to right: Dallah Al Baraka official Ayman Felimban, Thuraya A Batterjee, famous program presenter, Muna Abu Sulaiman, radio presenter, Terad Sonbol

The plays were received with great excitement by the audience, children and parents, and both plays were performed more than once upon the demand of the audience. All in all, the forum received full media coverage and positive, encouraging feedback from those in attendance.

**In Saudi Arabia, people are thirsty for amusement that supports their values and principles, and this emerging culture is a translation of changing and developing needs and interests. It is a way to adapt to the rapidly changing world; it is a rather new culture full of life and energy led by women, along with men.**



Hatoon Kadi during her program



The *Faravahar*, believed to be a depiction of a *Fravashi*, which is the guardian spirit who sends out the soul into the material world to fight the battle of good versus evil. [LINK](#)

## Shining the Spotlight on Parsi Food

To understand Parsi Food, we need to step back in time and take a look at the Zoroastrian immigrants' arrival on the western shores of India from Persia to escape religious persecution, around the 8th Century CE.

Followers of the teachings of Prophet Zarathustra/Zoroaster, the ancient religion of Zoroastrianism is as relevant today in its basic tenets of 'Good Thought, Good Words, Good Deeds' as it was in the days of King Darius I of Persia. Legend goes that since these immigrants came from the Persian region of '*Fars*' and spoke the ancient language of '*Farsi*', they soon came to be known as '*Parsi Zoroastrians*' or '*Parsee*' around the Indian subcontinent.

Most of the Parsis settled around Gujarat on the west coast of the country and adapted to India's food habits and culture. Over the last thousand years, thanks to our love of food, the Parsi cuisine has been history in the making, as it evolved into a unique west Indian regional cuisine. A stunning creation of food with ancient Persian touches added to well-known Indian ingredients and cooking techniques.

Our ancestors' early relationship with India fittingly starts with food. An interesting tale of the Parsis landing on the west coast of India has been passed down the generations and goes something like this:

**Upon arriving in Gujarat on the coast of west India around the 8th century CE, the leader of the Zoroastrian immigrants was promptly informed by the ruling King of Gujarat that his land was already quite populated and there was no space for immigrants. Since the two sides spoke different languages, they used metaphoric gestures to convey their thoughts. The King used a bowl filled up to its brim with milk, to signify that his land (the bowl) was filled to capacity with milk (his population) and hence more milk cannot be added to this bowl. At this point, the intelligent Zoroastrian leader took a spoonful of sugar (signifying the immigrants) and very carefully, without spilling a drop, stirred the sugar into the bowl of milk; thus signifying that the new handful of Zoroastrian immigrants would only be adding sweetness to the land and blend with his people like milk and sugar. I guess that sealed the deal, and the Zoroastrian diaspora became an integral part of India.**



While the Parsi Zoroastrian population in India may be dwindling, the interest and passion for Parsi food continues to grow, instead gaining a global audience, as Parsis migrate and settle around the world. The Parsi cuisine is a unique amalgamation, over the course of more than a thousand years, of classic Indian flavors with large doses of ancient Persian influences. This is no ordinary regional cuisine; Parsi fare is a true example of what we call 'global food' in today's culinary parlance.

### What makes Parsi Food So Unique?

Let's take a close look at a few of the elements, nuances and quirks of this interesting cuisine that truly sets it apart.

### The Dynamic Duo of Cider Vinegar and Jaggery/sugar

Known among Parsis as the 'khattu mitthu' (sour-sweet) touch to a gravy preparation, Parsi recipes often use a unique balance of acidic tartness from cider vinegar along with jaggery or sugar for sweetness, both added to a dish at the end of the cooking process.

### For the Love of Eggs

Eggs are almost synonymous with Parsi food. From favorites like the Parsi Omelet and *Akuri* a spiced scrambled eggs preparation, to the often joked about Parsi concept of *Per Enda* which literally translates to 'put an egg on it'; the Parsis know the ubiquitous egg down to a pat.

The *Per Enda* concept is an interesting one, wherein a vegetable or meat is prepared in regular Indian spices and aromatics, but finally gets served the Parsi way, which means it's topped frittata-style with a layer of fluffy well-beaten eggs or even an individual sunny-side up egg, and cooked in a pan on the stove top, just prior to serving.

Growing up, I remember many busy weekday meals consisted of an Indian-style sautéed vegetable like okra, beans, tomatoes, potatoes or sometimes a ground meat preparation '*kheemo*'; always served topped with a generous layer of deliciously seasoned frothy eggs over it.





Parsi Jashan ceremony (in this case, a house blessing) [LINK](#)

### One Pot Meals with Lentils, Meat and Vegetables

Although traditional Indians follow a predominantly vegetarian diet, Parsis show their Persian roots by being a largely meat-eating community, which has lead to a unique way of preparing one pot meals, featuring lentils and vegetables with meat added to them.

Home cooked brown lentils-n-mutton favorite *Masoor ma Gosht* and the ever-popular Parsi specialty *Dhansak* made using lentils, meat and vegetables all cooked together in one pot, truly showcase the delightful effect of bringing together Indian lentils with meat.

Home cooked brown lentils-n-mutton favorite *Masoor ma Gosht* and the ever-popular Parsi specialty *Dhansak* made using lentils, meat and vegetables all cooked together in one pot, truly showcase the delightful effect of bringing together Indian lentils with meat.

### Fruity and Nutty Touch to the Meal

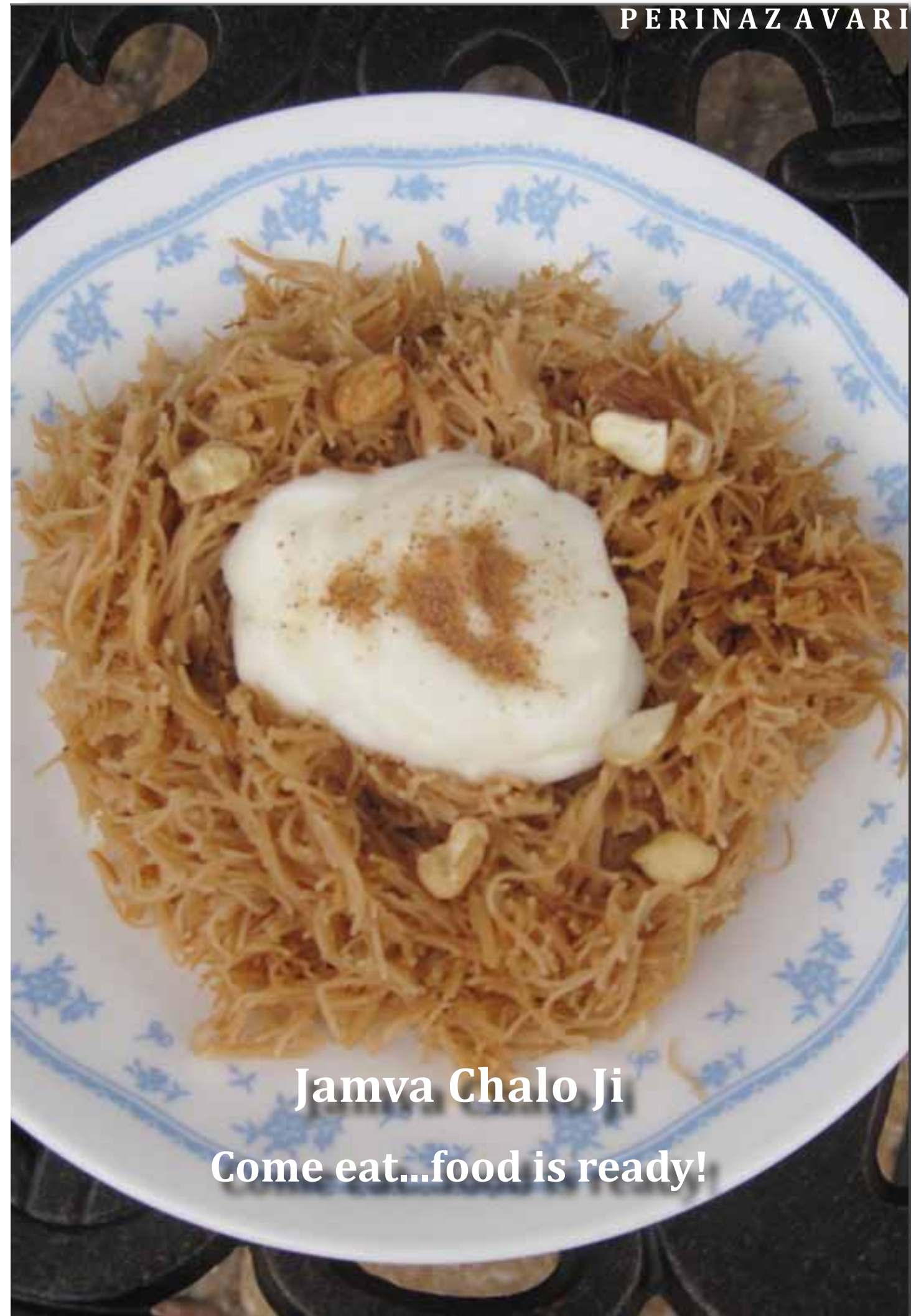
Dried fruits like apricots and raisins, as also pistachio, cashew and almond nuts, commonly appear in Parsi dishes like the celebratory 'Sev Dahi', a sweet roasted vermicelli preparation filled with dried fruits and nuts, and 'Jardaloo Salli Boti', a savory dried apricot and tomato-based gravy.

It's not uncommon to find fresh fruits like pomegranate in Parsi gravies and lentil dishes.

### A Look at 5 Mouthwatering Parsi Classics

The Parsi cuisine offers a smorgasbord of delightful servings, and below is a list of five all-time favorites that aptly highlight the uniqueness of this cuisine; I'd say each of these dishes is 'a culinary stalwart in its own right'.

(Opposite Pic : Sev-Dahi, a Parsi Celebratory Serving with Roasted Vermicelli, Dried Fruits and Nuts, Topped with Cardamom Vanilla Yogurt. Pic © Perinaz Avari)



Jamva Chalo Ji  
Come eat...food is ready!





Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Patra ni Macchi

Unique in every way, Patra ni Macchi is a fish preparation, in which fillets of firm white flesh fish like pomfret or tilapia are covered with a thick layer of Parsi-style green coconut chutney, steamed in a banana leaf, and served in its own flavorful juices. This preparation is often part of the menu at events like Parsi weddings and *Navjotes* - a Parsi rite-of-passage tradition for children in the 7-11 age groups.

### Serves 4

1 ½ lbs tilapia fillet (4-5 fillets)  
 2 tablespoons lemon juice  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon pepper  
 Slices of lemon to top the fish  
 For the Coconut Chutney  
 3 teaspoons cumin seeds  
 9 garlic cloves  
 4 tablespoons coconut flakes/desiccated coconut  
 2 cups cilantro leaves  
 1 cup mint leaves  
 2 Serrano pepper/4 small green chili (reduce for lesser spice)  
 3 teaspoons sugar  
 4 tablespoons white vinegar  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 3 tablespoons lime juice

Wash and clean the tilapia fillets. Cut 3-4 slits on both sides of the fillet, add lemon juice, salt and pepper and refrigerate till the chutney is ready.



A Parsi wedding, 1905 [LINK](#)

In a food processor, blend all the ingredients for the coconut chutney except the lime juice, really well. Use a few teaspoons of water as required to aid the grinding of the chutney. Once you have a fine paste consistency, mix in the lime juice with a spoon.

Cut 4 large squares of heavy duty foil. Place one tilapia fillet in the centre of the foil square and liberally slather the coconut chutney over both sides. Top with a round slice of lemon. Seal the tilapia fillet in the foil. Repeat this step for the other fillets.

Heat an outdoor grill to 350F. Place the fish packets directly on the rack, cook for only 12 minutes. Remove and leave aside for 5 minutes, then check to make sure the fish flakes easily. (You can also make this in an indoor oven at 350F for 12-15 minutes.)

Serve the fish hot along with all its juices from the packet over a bed of Cumin and Cilantro Brown Rice Pulao.

### Cumin and Cilantro Brown Rice

#### Serves 4

2 cups brown rice, cooked and hot  
 2 tablespoon olive oil  
 1 teaspoon cumin seeds  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 3 tablespoons chopped cilantro

Heat olive oil in a pan and when it shimmers, turn off the flame and add the cumin seeds. Drizzle this tempering over hot cooked brown rice. Mix the salt and cilantro into the rice using a fork.

Serve hot as a bed for the Grilled Coconut Chutney Tilapia or as a side with any meat, lentils, vegetable preparation of your choice.





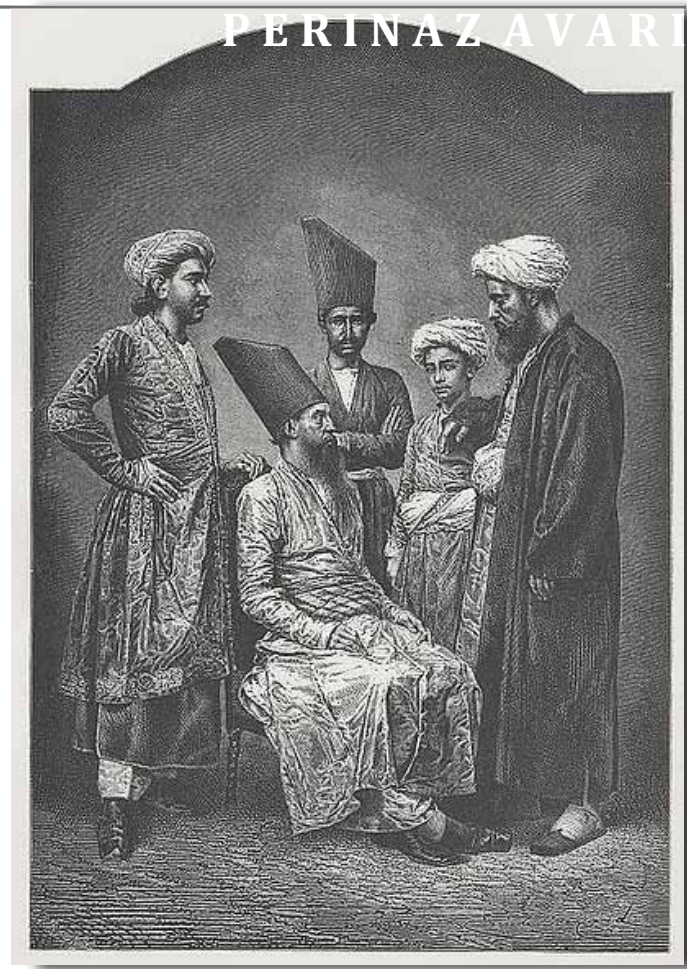
Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Jardaloo Salli Boti

An apricot and tomato based meat-n-gravy preparation; Jardaloo Salli Boti uses the tart-n-sweet 'khattu-mitthu' technique mentioned above, along with dried apricot and meat of choice. This unique dish is a true Parsi cuisine classic, using boneless cubes (boti) of any meat of choice and Persian touches like apricot (jardaloo,) red vinegar and sugar along with a blend of Indian spices and aromatics. It's best served topped with crisp 'Salli' or shoestring potatoes (although a handful of crushed potato chips work well too.)

### Serves 4

1 lb boneless meat of choice like chicken thighs/mutton/lamb cut in 1 inch cubes  
 1 tablespoon ginger garlic paste (4-5 garlic cloves & ½ inch ginger, grated)  
 ½ teaspoon each, salt & cracked black pepper  
 2 tablespoons canola oil  
 2 cups finely chopped onion  
 ½ teaspoon ground red chili or Cayenne pepper  
 ½ teaspoon ground turmeric  
 ½ teaspoon ground cumin  
 ¼ teaspoon ground coriander  
 ¼ teaspoon Garam Masala  
 1 ½ teaspoon sugar or 1 teaspoon jaggery  
 3 medium tomatoes, finely chopped (about 1 ½ cups)  
 2 cups chicken broth or water  
 5 dried apricots (see note below)  
 ½ teaspoon salt (to taste)  
 2 tablespoon cider vinegar  
 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro  
 Salli or shoestring potatoes or crushed potato chips, as a topping



"Parsis of Bombay" a wood engraving, 1878 [LINK](#)

In a bowl, bring the cubes of boneless meat together with grated ginger and garlic (ginger garlic paste) and salt/pepper. Let the meat marinade refrigerated for at least 2 hours or even overnight, especially if using mutton or lamb.

Heat canola oil in a large pan and add the chopped onions. Fry to a light brown on a medium flame. Mix the marinated meat into the onions, sauté together till meat is coated with the aromatics (in mom's words: 'let your nose guide you'.)

Next, sprinkle the dry spices and jaggery or sugar and sauté for 5-7 minutes. If you feel the spices sticking to the bottom of the pan, add a few tablespoons of broth/water to help it cook.

Add the diced tomatoes, apricot, salt and 2 cups of chicken broth (you can adjust the broth to the desired consistency of the gravy.) Bring this mixture to a boil and cook covered for 10-12 minutes till the broth is absorbed, and the meat and tomatoes are cooked through.

Taste for salt and add cider vinegar, chopped cilantro to the preparation, simmer for another 3-4 minutes for the flavors to blend together.

Serve Jardaloo Salli Boti hot, topped with Salli or shoestring potatoes (a handful of crushed potatoes chips will work as a substitute) alongside warm Indian bread like roti-chapati, naan or steaming basmati rice.

### Note

Dried apricots can be used un-pitted since the apricot will soften and blend into the gravy, pits can be removed prior to serving or while eating.

The dried golden apricots available in Western countries are generally sold pitted and work just as well for this preparation, offering a slightly tangier albeit equally delicious taste.





Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Chicken Farcha

Spiced and egg-batter fried Chicken Farcha is a crisp on the outside and juicy on the inside succulent chicken bite. A Farcha's amazing taste and *can't-eat-just-one-piece* quality has lead to a large local fan following in India for this dish.

### Serves 4

- 1- 1 ½ lb Chicken thighs (4-6 pieces) or drumsticks
- 2 tablespoon lemon or lime juice.
- 2 teaspoons ginger garlic paste (3-4 cloves garlic and 1 inch ginger, grated)
- ½ teaspoon ground red chili or Cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon garam masala
- ½ teaspoon kosher or rock salt
- ½ teaspoon cracked black pepper
- 1 cup Panko breadcrumbs (regular breadcrumbs can also be used)
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest (grated rind of a lemon)
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 eggs, beaten with a fork
- ½ teaspoon kosher or rock salt
- ½ teaspoon cracked black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground red chili or Cayenne pepper

### Mint-n-Mustard Yogurt Dip

- ½ cup plain yogurt
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon (5-6 leaves) shredded mint leaves
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon (a pinch) each ground cumin, salt and pepper



Parsi Navjote ceremony [LINK](#)

### Parsi Chicken Farchas

Start by putting the chicken pieces in a bowl along with the lemon/lime juice. Leave aside for 15 minutes. This helps tenderize the chicken.

Add ginger garlic paste, dry spices and seasonings to the chicken, making sure all the pieces are well-coated. Marinade chicken in the refrigerator for at least 2-4 hours.

In a flat plate, mix the panko or regular breadcrumbs with lemon zest and ground cumin.

Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl along with salt, cracked black pepper and ground red chili or Cayenne pepper.

Preheat the oven to 400F. Grease a baking sheet with a wire rack on it (it's also fine to place the chicken pieces directly on a greased baking sheet.)

Working with one piece of chicken at a time, coat each chicken piece with the breadcrumbs mix first, then dip each piece in the beaten seasoned eggs and lay it on the greased wire rack or directly on the greased baking sheet.

Bake at 400F for 25-30 minutes for chicken thighs and drumsticks (chicken breast cooks faster) till a golden crust is achieved on the chicken Farchas and the meat is done to an internal temperature of 165F. Before serving, let the chicken rest for 3-5 minutes.

Alternately, chicken Farchas can also be shallow or deep fried in a pan.

Serve Parsi Chicken Farchas while hot and crisp, as an appetizer or entree along with refreshing Mint-n-Mustard Yogurt Dip.

### Mint-n-Mustard Yogurt Dip

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl. If the yogurt's too thick use a teaspoon or two of water to thin it down. The dip should have a coating consistency. Refrigerate for the flavors to blend.





Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Parsi Omelet

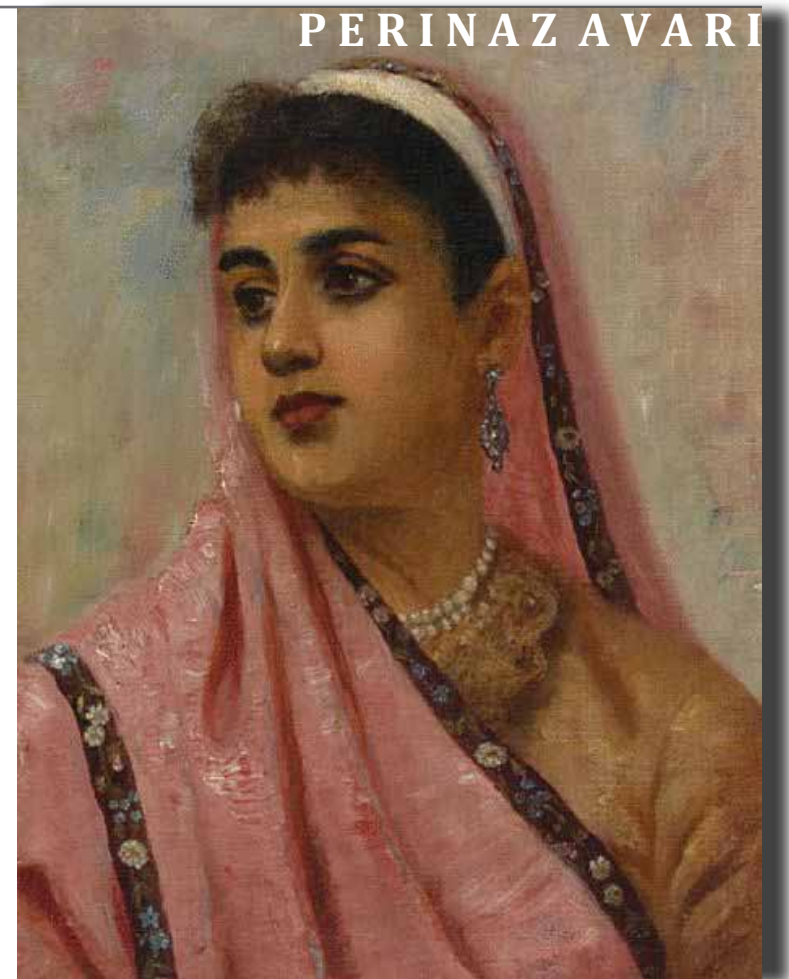
Parsi-style omelet, a classic preparation served just as often for breakfast as for dinner, is ultimate comfort food. Spiced and seasoned fluffy eggs are mixed with raw onion, ginger, garlic, tomato, green chilies and raw mango, if in season, along with chickpea flour (besan) and cooked on a pan.

**Serves 4-6** • Hands-on time 10-15 minutes

4 eggs  
 1 medium onion, finely chopped  
 1 medium tomato, chopped  
 ½ teaspoon ginger garlic paste (or 1 minced garlic clove/¼ inch grated ginger)  
 1 Serrano pepper, minced (optional)  
 1-2 tablespoons raw mangoes, finely chopped (only if you have them on hand)  
 ½ teaspoon each: chili powder, cumin powder, turmeric and ground black pepper  
 ¾ teaspoon salt  
 1 tablespoon chickpea flour/gram flour\*  
 2 tablespoons cilantro/coriander leaves  
 1 tablespoon mint leaves  
 Canola oil to cook omelets  
 Juice of half a lemon

\*Chickpea flour or gram flour is available in the bulk section of most grocery stores or sold at ethnic stores as besan/channa flour. If you need to make it at home- lightly roast dried chickpeas and grind them in a food processor to a flour consistency.

In a large bowl, mix onion, tomatoes, Serrano peppers, raw mangoes, spices & seasonings, chickpea flour, cilantro and mint. Add the eggs to the bowl and mix well.

Portrait of a Parsi Lady by Raja Ravi Varma [LINK](#)

## Avjo Ji

Welcome to my Home  
and  
Please Visit Again!

On a medium flame, heat an omelet pan with some canola oil. When the pan and oil are hot, spoon 3-4 tablespoons of the egg batter into the pan (make sure you spread the vegetables out so they don't heap in the middle of the omelet.) Cook each side of the omelet for 3-4 minutes. Repeat till all the batter is used up, you should get 4-5 omelets. Serve hot with a dash of lemon juice and a warm crusty buttered bread.

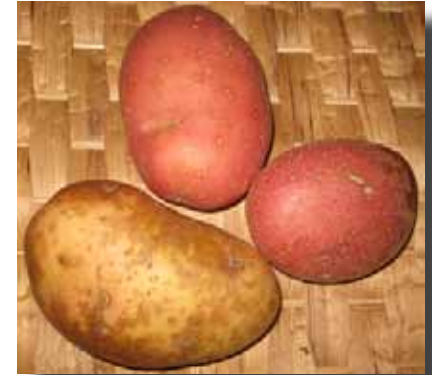
## Dhansak with Brown Caramelized Rice and Kachumber

The ever-popular Parsi 'Dhansak', made using lentils, meat and vegetables all cooked together in one pot is best served over caramelized spiced basmati rice along with a side salad 'Kachumber' made with onion, tomatoes, cilantro, green chili peppers and a cider vinegar dressing.

It's worth knowing that although many Parsi homes cook 'Dhansak' as part of their regular family meals, this dish is traditionally served on sad occasions like the fourth day following a funeral, hence it won't generally be part of the menu at joyful events. If you've been invited to a Parsi home for a meal and would like to taste 'Dhansak', make sure to put in a specific request for it.

**As we don't have a photograph nor the recipe here is the [LINK](#)**





Sally McKenna is a well known Sculptor, Painter, Sketch Artist  
[LINK](#)

## From Arizona to Kiltimagh... American Sally McKenna's Journey Home to Traditional Irish Cooking

**When I arrived in Ireland fourteen years ago to live in a small town in the West of Ireland called Kiltimagh, I was introduced to the people and traditions. Neighbors and friends served several of the recipes I will talk about and share in this article. Their hospitality helped me so much to feel at home here. I quickly found out what was important about keeping an Irish Kitchen. The food was entirely different from what I was used to in Arizona but very much like what I grew up with in Wisconsin.**

I don't consider myself a Cook but I do, like everyone, have to make meals. The great thing about Irish cooking is that it is hearty, uses local foods and tastes wonderful. It wasn't long after I arrived in 1999 that I visited a neighbour and was given some home made soda bread and tea. She told me that I could make it myself but I was straight over from the American South West where for years I used tortillas bought in large plastic packs for everything. I hadn't yet thought about returning to the oven so I bought soda bread both brown and white for years at the store.

One day I stopped by Nora Rooney's (my neighbour) and she encouraged me again to make Soda Bread. Nothing tastes as good as soda bread right out of the oven. It is low calorie except for the butter one puts on it. Nora makes it two ways, on top of the stove in a pan and in the oven. I like it best made on top of the stove. This was the way it was made on the open hearth in the big iron kettles seen now in museums.

Another Irish cook told me just yesterday that the secret to good cooking is good ingredients. Go for Top Class they say here. Nora always uses buttermilk. In the days when she was young everyone who visited the house took a turn at the churn. Then buttermilk was plentiful in every kitchen. If you don't have buttermilk on hand sour milk will do. This is great for me because I can never use up a full quart of milk before it goes off. You can also help your milk out with yogurt. The fermented milk mixes with the flour gluten and gives the soda bread its lightness. You can make a brown soda with whole wheat flour mixed half and half with white.

Most European recipes use the metric system which drives us Americans up the wall or in a twist. The thing to remember is that one ounce equals 28 grams. I can't even tell you how hard it is to learn to bake in centigrade temperature settings. The comfortable familiarity of knowing what each F. setting will do is gone. It might be helpful to use both so I did in this recipe.



**SALLY IN THE KITCHEN PREPARING SODA BREAD**



## TRADITIONAL IRISH FOOD



WHITE SODA BREAD - WET METHOD



### Ingredients

3 and half cups of white flour  
 1 tsp salt.  
 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda. Scant not heaping. Yes, the same yellow box that you used to let sit in the fridge to keep odors away. It is also called, here in the stores, bread soda.  
 Be careful with the soda because it can make your bread yellow if too much is used  
 400 ml or half pint of buttermilk or soured milk

Make a little pile of the dry ingredients and gradually stir in the buttermilk. It will be somewhat sticky but not like a batter.

### The WET method

If you want to make it on the stove top take a small to medium heavy fry pan, grease it with butter and pat the wet mix in and spread to the sides. Put it on the stove at a low temp and cover with a loose lid when it browns on the bottom and dries on the top pat it with butter and turn it over to cook the other side. It is called a pancake and is my favourite as I like the flavor and it is brown and crispy. It has to be watched which differs from throwing something in the oven and then going off to read your e-mails which I do. I have since found that multi tasking and cooking doesn't often work.



## SALLY MCKENNA



WHITE SODA BREAD - DRY METHOD

### The DRY method

Extra flour keeps your fingers from sticking together into a knobby mess.

The less you handle the dough the lighter it will be.

You push it into a flattened hump of dough and cut a Celtic cross in the top of it. *It helps to let the heat in to the middle and is also a prayer to the Evermore of Evermore.*

The oven is preheated to 180 - 200 C about 375 F and then cooked for about 20 to 30 minutes. It needs to be nice and hot when it is put in. All ovens vary so check on it until you have done it several times.

Your bread is done when you turn it out, thump the center and it gives off a dull hollow sound. It also smells divine.

Cut it hot and serve with butter and jam and tea.





## TRADITIONAL IRISH FOOD



TEA

**Tea is an important subject in Irish life, in fact it is the hub of the culture.**

You might think you know how to make *Tea*. I was best at making sun ice tea. There is not enough sun here for that so I had to learn how to make a real pot of good tasting and rejuvenating tea. If you are not from the UK or Eire here are a few pointers which I learned after much patience and help from my friends.

First if you are an American forget that you ever knew what tea was. It is nothing like the tea here. There are commercials that suggest a break for a Barry's cup of tea fixes everything. This is true. There are many good brands and everyone has their favourite.. One friend always uses loose tea but most use tea bags. If it is a group one tea bag will do for two people. Count the number of people divide by two and hang in a large pot. Our Womans' Group can make the best tea for twenty people in a blink of an eye. I try to help but I am useless. I help with the washing up which is another word for doing the dishes. If you are using a tea pot always rinse the pot with boiling water first. There are electric kettles here that are the jet engines of the kitchen. They sound like it and boil the water in seconds. It is the first thing to buy if you will be here for more than one month. This and a 220 voltage electric hair dryer are essentials. Always ask if your guest likes their tea strong or light. A light tea drinker can be identified by watching them resist snatching the tea pot and start pouring.

The next vital thing to know about is MILK. The cow and Ireland are inseparable. If you think you can use skim milk for anything but your own hidden uses think again. Most Americans have given up on milk and why not after seeing that blue liquid skim milk on their Rice Krispies. LO FAT or light milk is sold, accepted and permitted in public here. Cream is not put into coffee or tea.

My biggest challenge is to have fresh milk on hand for visitors. One friend accommodates me by having the coffee black. It is just me here and to use a liter of milk before it goes off (spoils) is a challenge.

## SALLY MCKENNA



SALLY'S BLACK BERRY LAYER CAKE

I usually have about three cartons in varying stages of sour to use in baking. Once it separates I give up and throw it out. Chemistry in the fridge.

It is amazing to see how milk is always available for the ever present cup of tea in so many places. People stop on their way to work to pick up a liter for the office tea, for the teachers lounge or any place where there is a tea break. For example, after any procedure that requires a heavy sedative at Mayo General Hospital tea, scones and a pat of butter are served to the groggy, fasting patient afterwards. Honestly, this is true and very, very welcome.

Not everyone has sugar with their tea but it needs to be available. No one uses packets of Sweet n Lo or Equal so if you are travelling you will need to bring that along. If you are a co-dependant pleaser don't pull your Sweet n Lo pink sachet out in front of the locals. There are some things best done in private. Also when eating a big meal tea and coffee are served at the end of the meal. We don't wash our food down with beautiful Tea. If you want it with your meal you have to ask for it, if you are visiting a private home they will be glad to oblige.

Finally' if your big strong builder says he is going home to his tea. He is not going home to a single cup of tea but a full small meal of maybe a bacon sandwich, chips, coleslaw and then the tea. He had his main meal at noon. If someone asks you to have a cupa that is often one cup of tea and a biscuit like a Hob Nob, Kit Kats, Mikados or Digestives (like a graham cracker, but addictive). The selection of biscuits for tea are varied and delicious. Often something home made is offered, a slice of *brack* (I have never made that) a slice of treacle (I have made that), a piece of apple lattice tart which is readily available in most food stores (fattening). My favourite Christmas present is a bag of treacle buns from Nora. Treacle is a heavy, dark molasses found in red and gold cans on most market shelves. **It lasts forever, just as does the Irish hospitality.**





BLACK BERRY JAM

### Autumn is the Harvest Season

The Autumn is called **Samhain** (sowain) For all countries the Harvest is a reward and a busy, busy time. The tractors are up and down the Mill Road. The silage ( a mixture of the grass and weeds in the fields) is cut and mechanically wrapped in black plastic rolls for the winter cattle feed. The rolls replace the haystack. The hedgerows are full of blackberries this year. All summer long Blackberry vines snake around and trip you , scratch you and invade your favourite plants but everything is forgiven when they put forth such incredible, copious fruit. **The photo also includes sloe berries, can you find them? People make sloe gin , welcome as a Christmas toast. Slainte!!!**

Sieved cooked blackberries make a lovely juice to use in jelly, gelatine (jello) or even just to drink. Tarts (pies) are traditional. I have made a cake with whole blackberries in the centre. Sprinkle them on ice cream or make yogurt smoothies. When mixed in cream cheese they make a beautiful, healthy and delicious spread. Freeze them loose in plastic bags and they can be used as toppings during the winter. Blackberries help to cleanse the liver and have Vitamin C . Because black berries have many pits they can be mixed with bagged frozen fruit called summer berry mix or even fresh strawberries and then cooked down with sugar to taste. This is Mary Rooney's hint for a year round fresh jam, You will never buy anything else but fresh again.

Rinse your pickings,the flies like them too. I put about a half a cup of sugar with this batch . If cooked slowly just under a rolling boil the fruit mix will thicken . Because of refrigeration canning methods of sterilizing jars and adding a cap of wax is not used as much. There is a fruit sugar in the stores which is used especially for jam but I haven't used it because what I do seems to be working. If it is not broke don't fix it, they say. One of my favourite sayings is Celebrate the Seasons, Celebrate Life. Picking blackberries from the hedgerows is a wonderful celebration of the Season.

**Slan abhaile- good bye, safe home**







## TRADITIONAL IRISH FOOD

NORA ROONEY'S BOXTY

The Irish potato, at one time, was the main item in the diet. A family would eat many bushels a day to keep alive. The tragedy of the *Irish Potato Famine* is part of the awareness of people all over the world. The horror is that there was plenty of food in Ireland but it was shipped out and people were punished if they tried to stop the wagons full of grain.

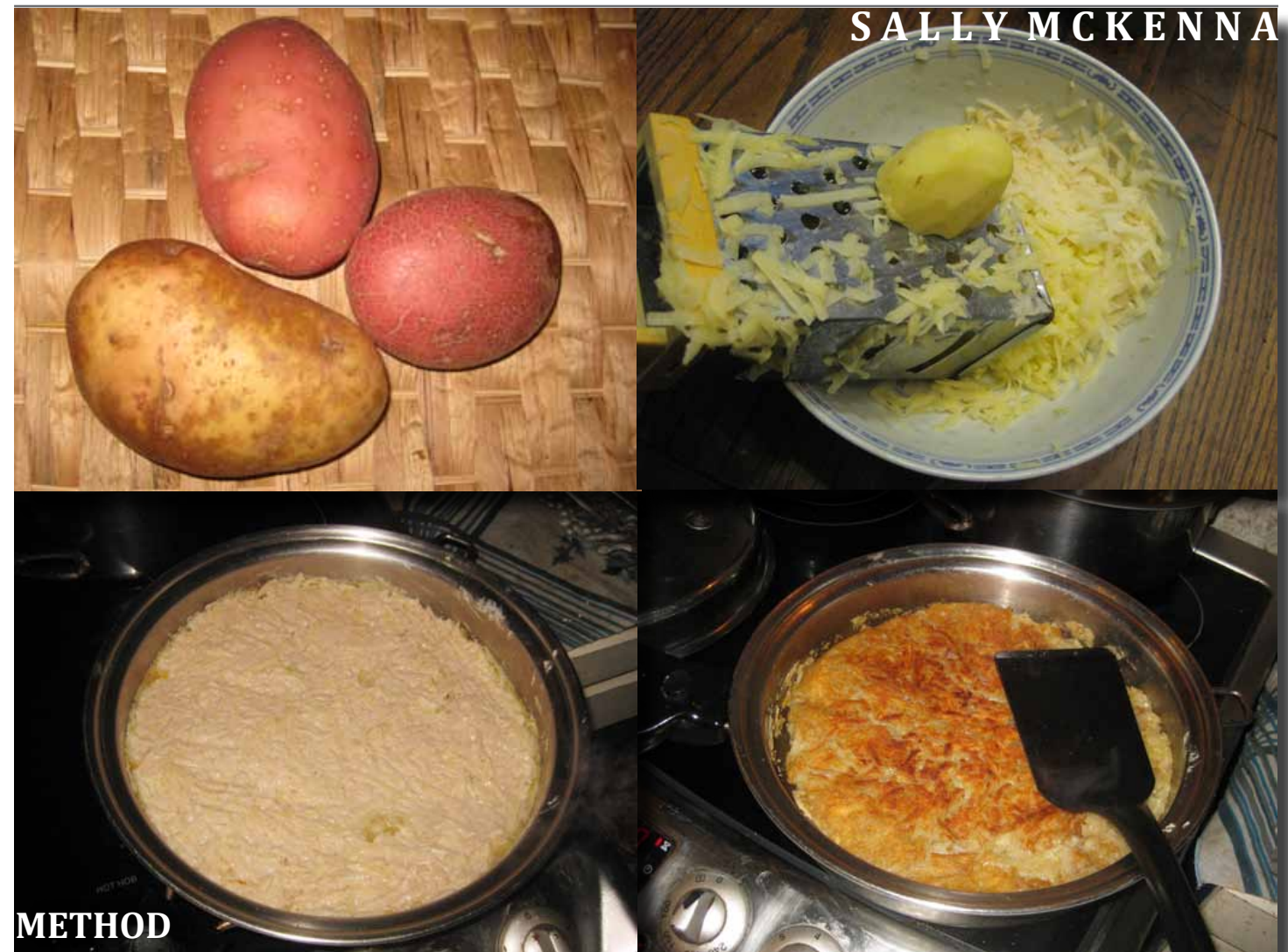
Potatoes are a tremendous source of food energy and contain many vitamins and minerals. Today there are warnings in the media to spray potatoes for blight so it won't happen again. Almost everyone with a garden will grow a ridge or two. I grew some in my compost after discarding some rooting eyes. That was a happy mistake. The actual plant is beautiful green and bushy, the potatoes hang on to the roots.

When growing up in America we had one kind of potato that was used. That was the Idaho. It is a State in the North West of America, ideal for growing potatoes. It is also famous for winter sports and Sun Valley skiing.

Here there are many, many, kinds of potatoes, one for each type of food preparation and taste. There are floury potatoes, dry potatoes, wet potatoes and now trendy new baby potatoes. There are Duke of Yorks, an early potato, Roosters, Queens, King Edwards, Records, Kerrs Pinks, and white potatoes. Potatoes chips are called crisps, French fries are called chips, Wedges are roasted crispy chips with the skin left on, Chips can have vinegar, red sauce (ketchup) curry sauce and cole slaw on them. Chips and crisps are omnipresent in Ireland, just like in the States.

The photo opposite is of large roosters and a white potato.

I will use them to make a version of the traditional Irish Boxtie. A favourite that keeps well in the refrigerator.



## SALLY MCKENNA

METHOD

### Boxty

### Ingredients

5 lbs of potatoes- 10 large potatoes  
Add two cups or more of self rising flour to make a batter  
(some recipes use mashed potato but this one doesn't)  
two teaspoons of salt  
This recipe can be halved

Some potatoes are wetter than others so they are good for boxtie.  
The Rooster is a nice wet potato to use, the wetter the potato the more flour you will use.  
It is best to spend time experimenting with your pan, stove temp and potato type.

Drop about 7 desert spoons (about 7 heaped tbs), on a hot buttered fry pan Nora's is 8 inches (the layer should not be thick) and put a loose lid over it, cook 10 to medium heat.

It will get dry on top and crispy on the bottom, butter top and then flip with a large spatula to cook and brown fully.

Steps are included in the above photos.

You can also drop the mixture by spoonfuls separately into the fry pan to make smaller pancakes.



## TRADITIONAL IRISH FOOD



BACON AND CABBAGE

### Rashers, Bacon, Gammon, Ham, Pork

The Pig, the Irish word for a pig is *muc* and a young pig is called a *banbh*, (bonniv). It was a sacred animal in Celtic history. The Celtic sow was easy to raise, ate simply let loose in the forest and was very fertile. She is a very good mother and is careful of the little ones even though she is of an enormous size.

The pig provided valuable protein and variety in the diet. One of the early Irish coins had a sow and her litter on it. It was often the job of the smaller children to take care of the piglets after weaning, feed them milk, mash and potatoes, veg. peelings. Nora and Patricia both took care of the *banbhs* when they were children and it is one of their fondest memories. Yes, just like the little girl and the pig in Charlotte's Web. The word Bonny is from *Banabh*.

Rashers are thin slices of bacon that all visitors love to try when they arrive. American streaky bacon is entirely different and mostly fat but delicious in its own way. The BLT was the first food I learned how to make myself. I was nine.

Rashers are not bacon. They are part of the culture and have no cholesterol (just kidding) You can have a bacon sandwich that is a hot rasher and white bread. Comfort Food. A breakfast roll is an Irish breakfast in a long baguette and the title of a popular Irish song of mourning. The songwriter had just had a triple bypass.

**Rashers are the most smuggled food. When Irish emigrate it is one of the things missed most. The Airport American customs office must be full of Rashers.**

Rashers are often grilled or broiled (grill is the Irish word for broil and grilling is done outdoors.)



### FALLING IN LOVE WITH RASHERS

L to R - Erin Walker (my daughter) and Jinsey Dauk

They are also fried but, of course, there is more fat and salt that way. Frying often brings up a white froth and that is the brine coming out from curing.

A fry up is the start of many a day.

St. Patrick's Day in the States is celebrated with Corned Beef and Cabbage.

I never liked corned beef growing up, so I am glad I don't have to eat it anymore to celebrate the Saints birthday.

When I moved here I noticed that corned beef was nowhere to be seen.

Corned Beef is a substitute for Bacon and Gammon. In the States that cured cut of pork is not readily available. So we substituted corned beef, I guess because it is pink. It is too late now to change because corned beef and cabbage in America is as traditional as Paddy's pig.

When I moved here one of my first friends was Patricia MacNicholas. She taught me, with great patience, how to make Bacon and Cabbage. It seems easy but it is a different way of cooking than I was used to. Most of the moist cooking that American cooks do is braising.

I often talk to the older ladies in the grocery store on Fridays, which is Pension Day, hence grocery day. Daughters come with their retired mothers to help them shop and it is a busy day. I was fretting about what cut to buy and the lady next to me said "if they are hungry enough they will eat it".

**There is allot of Irish wisdom left.**



## TRADITIONAL IRISH FOOD



### METHOD

### Bacon and Cabbage

Pick out your cut of bacon or cured ham. Gammon is from the hind leg and the word comes from the old French gambe which means hind leg. Gammon can be called bacon but to a butcher gammon is not bacon. I have always been confused and unless you want to ask a lot of stupid questions that everyone already knows here go to the Internet. There are drawings and even a chat page.

This piece is a one kilo of bacon back joint not gammon. Soak in cold water one to two hours, pour off water. If you like it salty, soak less time.

Re-fill a large pot with water and boil for an hour and one half or until tender when tested with a fork. If cooked too long it will toughen. It is not like cooking a pot roast, which I grew up with. The cabbage will take about half an hour to cook, add it half way through. Some like their cabbage really soggy.

There are many types of cabbage here. Most small farms would grow cabbage. It is an easy crop to grow in Ireland except for pesky green cabbage worms left by the white butterfly. Stay organic and pick them off the leaves by hand. Cabbage is a beautiful sight growing. It is good for cleansing the liver. The curly green cabbage is called Savoy and the other in the photo is a round white. Kale is also grown in the modern Irish veg. garden and is very good for you.

The dinner is served with VEG. When dining out here a full side plate of all kinds of vegetables and at least two kinds of potatoes are served. It is the best part of the meal. This meal has the favourite Autumn root crops, carrots, turnips (swedes), parsnips and boiled or steamed potatoes (spuds).

**Delicious, Mahu, mahu is maith liom. Congratulations, good in Irish!**



PATRICIA MACNICHOLAS

I had never eaten parsnips before I moved here and they are now one of my favorites. Roasted parsnips rolled in olive oil and baked are fantastic. There are only a few varieties of squash sold here. Zucchini are called courgettes. They can be grown in a tunnel successfully as can squash but they take up a lot of room so it must be a large tunnel. Oh yes, a tunnel is a greenhouse not something you drive through. Petrol is gas and gas is gaseous. A biro is a pen. Finding the right word to say is part of the learning curve. So get your biro out, make a grocery (market) list (messages) bring your purse (hand bag). Stop for petrol. Change dollars to euros (notes) (30% more than the dollar) bring your totes (Irish law says you pay for carry out bags) pack up your own checked groceries. After you have recovered from the high cost of food here you carry them out by yourself and put them in the boot (the trunk). Drive home (home is a universal- everyone knows what it is) and sort out your messages (put away your groceries) Call (ring) a friend (a mate) and ask them to tea. **It's a gas and good craic (fun).**

Opp. Pic : **Brian Mooney** (L) founded the *Integrated Resource Development Program* here. **Brian Kelly** (R) has an interesting story. He grew up one of six children in the millers cottage in the field next to the Mill. The family then moved to Chicago when he was young. He comes back every year this time for a short visit. He wanted me to include a Mince recipe that the brothers and sisters grew up on. He was born here, but he is kiddingly still the visiting Yank. I am definitely a Yank.

**There is a story in every recipe.**



Text & Pics © Sally McKenna  
2013 october © www.liveencounters.net



**Food**

Beautiful food nurtures the body and sometimes the mind and spirit as well. It comes in all shapes and forms and sometimes, super chefs take it to new heights using their creativity and imagination to take food from the banal plain and raise it to a work of art.

As we eat we need to remember to give thanks and spare a thought for those less fortunate... it's a blessing.



**Jill Gocher**  
Photographer, Bali, Indonesia







**Saigon saveurs -Pho**  
© www.liveencounters.net october 2013



**Vertical salad**





**Lasagne**  
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**Sushi**





**Pumpkin**  
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**Star fruit surprise**





**Strawberry creme brulee terracotta**  
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**Apple Cake**





Fatou Bensouda, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. Image – ICC.

## Beyond Rape

### The evolving concept of 'sexual violence' under international criminal law

First published in [Regarding Rights](#)

In the past two decades the international tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda have developed a rich jurisprudence on sexual violence crimes,<sup>[1]</sup> and the younger international courts, the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone in particular, are beginning to follow suit. There has also been a move to codify sexual violence crimes under international law, the current high water mark being the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (the Rome Statute), which entered force in 2002.

The Statute recognises 'rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and any other form of sexual violence of a comparable gravity' as crimes against humanity,<sup>[2]</sup> and the same range of offences as war crimes in international and non-international armed conflicts.<sup>[3]</sup> 'Rape' and 'sexual violence' are also recognised as acts of genocide in the ICC Elements of Crimes, the supplementary text that defines the crimes enumerated in the Rome Statute.<sup>[4]</sup>

The inclusion of these crimes in the Rome Statute was seen by many feminist legal scholars and gender justice activists as a sign of a new norm of accountability for sexual violence under international law. In that context, the absence of sexual violence charges in the ICC's first case, against Congolose warlord Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, was widely viewed as a step backwards. Human rights groups including Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, Human Rights Watch and Avocats Sans Frontières questioned the (then) ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo's decision to charge Lubanga with the recruitment and use of child soldiers only, when it appeared his forces had also committed other serious crimes, including sexual violence crimes, against civilians in the Congo.<sup>[5]</sup>



While the Prosecutor declined to expand the charges in response to these concerns, he and his team were careful to highlight sexual violence within the existing charges at trial. But it was too little, too late. The Majority found that because the Prosecutor had not raised allegations of sexual violence when presenting the charges at the pre-trial stage, the accused could not be held responsible for any of the acts of sexual violence discussed at trial.<sup>[6]</sup> Fortunately, however, this first case was something of an anomaly insofar as sexual violence crimes have been concerned. The Prosecutor brought charges of sexual violence in several subsequent cases including *Katanga* and *Bemba*, which are currently at trial, and the current Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, has articulated her intention to 'continue to prioritize the sexual and gender-based crimes' during her time in office.<sup>[7]</sup>

In tandem with the increasing codification and prosecution of sexual violence crimes in international courts, sexual violence has also become more visible in the academic literature on international criminal law. CIGJ's own Professor Hilary Charlesworth has been at the forefront of this literature for over a decade,<sup>[8]</sup> and many of the other leading and emerging voices in the field are represented in De Brouwer, Ku and Römkens' 2013 edited volume [Sexual Violence as an International Crime](#).

An interesting pattern to observe, in these important legal and academic discussions of sexual violence, is that the term 'sexual violence' is almost never defined. There are some benefits to this ambiguity: it leaves space for unanticipated forms of sexual violence to be recognised, and ensures that the term is adaptable to different cultural contexts. On the other hand, it is not always clear what the participants in these discussions mean when they/we talk about 'sexual violence,' nor whether they/we are all talking about the same thing. This observation applies even in relation to what many consider the archetypal sexual violence crime – rape, the definition of which differs markedly across jurisdictions. In some penal codes, rape can be committed against women only, whereas in other jurisdictions the crime is defined in gender-neutral terms. In some jurisdictions, the definition hinges on the victim/survivor's lack of consent, whereas in others it hinges on the perpetrator's state of mind. The ICC's definition of rape is particularly broad: it includes the penetration of 'any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body', if such penetration is committed with 'force, or by threat of force or coercion' or 'by taking advantage of a coercive environment' or 'against a person incapable of giving genuine consent.'<sup>[9]</sup>



**The Chamber's reluctance to define 'sexual violence' by reference to the physical elements of the crime seems unobjectionable – progressive, even – as it leaves room for a consideration of the cultural and psychological aspects of sexual violence. On the other hand, it does little to clarify what distinguishes 'sexual violence' from other types of violence, and the suggestion that this is a 'question of fact' seems problematic, given that the 'sexual' nature of an act is often a matter of opinion, rather than something inherent to that act.**

Once one moves beyond the crime of rape, the space for different conceptualisations of 'sexual violence' opens up even further. This point was illustrated recently in the ICC's case against Uhuru Kenyatta, sitting President of Kenya. The case, which is scheduled to go to trial on **November 12**, is concerned with crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the 2007-2008 post-election violence in Kenya. This violence followed ethnic as well as political divisions, with the Party of National Unity (PNU) drawing support from Kikuyu people, and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) drawing support from the Luo, Luhya and Kalenjin.

In its initial application for a summons to appear, and again at the confirmation of charges hearing, the prosecution argued that the forced circumcision of Luo men by PNU supporters constituted a 'form of sexual violence' of comparable gravity to the other sexual violence crimes enumerated in the Rome Statute. The perpetrators were allegedly seeking to punish the men for being ODM supporters. The men were identified as such on the basis they were Luo, and their ethnicity was ascertained after they were forced to undress in public, revealing that they were – as is customary in Luo culture – uncircumcised.

The Pre-Trial Chamber rejected the prosecution's characterisation of these acts as 'sexual violence'. In the Chamber's opinion, the acts were not of a 'sexual nature', and would be better characterised as 'inhumane acts' instead. The Chamber explained that 'not every act of violence which targets parts of the body commonly associated with sexuality should be considered an act of sexual violence,' but rather 'the determination of whether an act is of a sexual nature is inherently a question of fact'.<sup>[10]</sup> The Chamber's reluctance to define 'sexual violence' by reference to the physical elements of the crime seems unobjectionable – progressive, even – as it leaves room for a consideration of the cultural and psychological aspects of sexual violence. On the other hand, it does little to clarify what distinguishes 'sexual violence' from other types of violence, and the suggestion that this is a 'question of fact' seems problematic, given that the 'sexual' nature of an act is often a matter of opinion, rather than something inherent to that act.

Further complications arise when the Chamber's approach to defining 'sexual violence' is contrasted with the definition of rape. The ICC's definition of rape (excerpted above) focuses on the parts of the body that are penetrated, and the circumstances in which the penetration occurred. In proving rape, the prosecution is not required to show that the penetration was intended as 'sexual', or experienced by the victim/survivor in that way.

**As more cases come before the ICC, it seems likely that the definition of 'sexual violence' will be further contested, and might ultimately become more settled. Such developments should be informed by a robust debate in the academic literature, in consultation with affected communities, about what it means to say an act of violence is 'sexual' in nature, and how 'sexual violence' should be defined under international criminal law.**

By contrast, it would appear that 'sexual violence' is not defined by the parts of the body subjected to violence, but rather with reference to something qualitatively 'sexual' about the act which must be demonstrated. This apparent inconsistency is not necessarily a problem, but further analysis of these issues by the Court is necessary in order to shed light on exactly what kinds of acts constitute 'sexual violence' for the purposes of the Rome Statute.

As more cases come before the ICC, it seems likely that the definition of 'sexual violence' will be further contested, and might ultimately become more settled. Such developments should be informed by a robust debate in the academic literature, in consultation with affected communities, about what it means to say an act of violence is 'sexual' in nature, and how 'sexual violence' should be defined under international criminal law.

[1] See Brady, H. "The power of precedents: using the case law of the ad hoc international criminal tribunals and hybrid courts in adjudicating sexual violence and gender-based crimes at the ICC." *Australian Journal of Human Rights* 18 (2) Dec 2012: 75-108.

[2] Rome Statute, Article 7(1)(g).

[3] Rome Statute Articles 8(2)(b)(xxii); 8(2)(e)(vi). Nb. There are some minor differences in the description of the residual crime of 'any other form of sexual violence' in each of these articles.

[4] Elements of Crimes, Article 6(b), fn 3.

[5] See, for example: Avocats Sans Frontières, Center for Justice and Reconciliation, Coalition Nationale pour la Cour Pénale Internationale RCD, Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme, Human Rights Watch, International Center for Transitional Justice, Redress, Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice. 2006. *Joint letter to the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court*, 1 August 2006 [cited June 19 2012].

[6] *Prosecutor v Thomas Lubanga Dyilo*, Trial Judgment, Trial Chamber I, 14 March 2012 (ICC-01/04-01/06-2842) at [896].

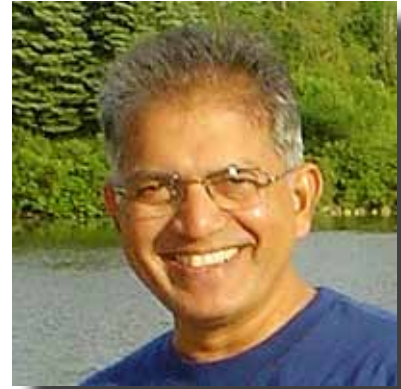
[7] Bensouda, Fatou. *Address to the Assembly of States Parties*. Eleventh Session of the Assembly of States Parties, 14 November 2012, The Hague.

[8] E.g. Charlesworth, H & Chinkin, C 2000, *The Boundaries of International Law*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, UK; Charlesworth, H, Chinkin, C & Wright, S 2005, 'Feminist Approaches to International Law: Reflections from Another Century', in Doris Buss and Ambreena Manji (ed.), *International Law: Modern Feminist Approaches*, Hart Publishing, Portland, pp. 17-47

[9] Elements of Crimes, Articles 7(1)(g)-1; 8(2)(b)(xxii)-1; 8(2)(e)(vi)-1.

[10] *The Prosecutor v Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta*, Confirmation of Charges Decision, Pre-Trial Chamber II, 23 January 2012, (ICC-01/09-02/11-382-Red) at 265.





## Of Friendship, Tea, And Dialogue

When I was younger, perhaps in the years when I was just beginning to read philosophy, I found myself extremely open to all religions, and interreligious dialogue rather easy. We were introduced to Hinduism and in a lesser way to Buddhism by people of the calibre of Fr Richard De Smet, SJ and Sr Sara Grant, RSCJ, which is why it would not be entirely wrong to say that the first religion I really *reflected* on was Hinduism, at least in its Advaitic incarnation. As for the Buddha, I have, I think, always found him a fascinating figure: in many ways, the Buddha remains the dream of the intellectual type of person.

Things became complicated when I began to get deeper into the religion into which I was born. That was another adventure in itself, and anything I write will probably be a simplification, but this much I can say: from Raimundo Panikkar I picked up the idea that the only way to get out of a religion is either to sink into its depths or rise to its heights. In other words, you cannot really judge a religion unless you have first experienced it, lived it profoundly. So I decided to allow myself to sink into the depths of Catholic Christianity. That kind of process, of course, is not one that has a clearly marked terminal point, so I guess it is still going on for me. But I know that taking my own religion seriously made the understanding of other religions and interreligious dialogue that much more difficult.

### So where do I stand at this point?

I believe I have an enormous respect for the religions of the world, though I am not equally familiar with all of them.

I believe also that dialogue cannot take place by first cutting away everything that bothers or seems like an obstacle. I believe deeply, I hope, in Jesus called the Christ with the faith of the Catholic Church, and I know this puts me in difficulty in different ways with different religions. For both my Jewish and my Muslim brothers and sisters, Jesus as professed in the Creed is quite impossible to accept. And my Hindu and Buddhist brothers and sisters will have problems from another angle, for are we not making too much of history and of the word, and should we not instead transcend the whole sphere of the *vyavaharika*, the everyday, in favour of that which is beyond, the ultimate, the absolute, the *paramarthika*? So there are difficulties, major ones. But my point is that dialogue cannot and does not proceed by first putting aside everything that seems to be an obstacle. If it were to do that, there would be precious little left to dialogue about.

### So how then might we proceed?





**Stephanie Saldana, author of *The Bread of Angels* likes to speak in this context of the sheikha with whom she was privileged to study certain surahs of the Koran in Damascus. This sheikha, who ran a Koranic school for Muslim girls, believed that no religion has a monopoly on salvation: people of all faiths can go to paradise provided they do what is in their holy book. She was not an ultra-liberal sheikha by any means, Stephanie says, but here she was, a beautiful human being who could recognize and respect and love the humanity in another human being from another religion and another culture.**

I am convinced, first of all, of the importance of friendship. Friendship, as Aristotle says, is the condition for doing philosophy. It is also the absolute condition for interreligious dialogue. Friendship is the lived recognition of our common humanity, beyond differences on the level of belief. Even if we never come to agreement, friendship will remain an absolute value and something to be treasured.

But friendship is a goal to be achieved. Perhaps we need to stress, even before that, the importance of simple contact. It is quite amazing how we can live our independent lives even in the midst of the most startling diversity. I have lived most of my life in cosmopolitan Mumbai, rubbing shoulders at home and at school with Hindus, Muslims and even the occasional Jew. Just now I am living in Jerusalem, surrounded by Jewish neighbours. But it does not follow automatically that we know one another, or even that we have sufficient contact. Contact needs to be achieved. It is the most basic step in dialogue. I heard a friend saying recently that there is no dialogue in the abstract, and there is much truth in that.

Stephanie Saldana, author of *The Bread of Angels* likes to speak in this context of the sheikha with whom she was privileged to study certain *surahs* of the Koran in Damascus. This sheikha, who ran a Koranic school for Muslim girls, believed that no religion has a monopoly on salvation: people of all faiths can go to paradise provided they do what is in their holy book. She was not an ultra-liberal sheikha by any means, Stephanie says, but here she was, a beautiful human being who could recognize and respect and love the humanity in another human being from another religion and another culture. Interreligious dialogue has to have a human face. Dialogue between Islam and Christianity might not mean much, but dialogue with another human being, yes.

And then there was the ‘settler’ I met at a Taize prayer meeting in Ratisbonne, who spoke to me about his way of dialogue: giving a lift to any Palestinian he passed on the road. This man knew the importance of simple contact and interaction. Much of the time we tend to demonize the Other simply because we do not really know him or her. My friend told me how he had once taken a rather orthodox young man from his settlement to meet a Palestinian family in their house. It was the very first time this young man had ever come in proper contact an Arab family, and he came away a little changed by his encounter. “They seem to be quite nice, after all.” Friendly contact has a way of breaking down the walls we have put up between ourselves.

Contact and friendship bring up the topic of leisure and language. If we are to be friends, we need to invest time, and we need to have a medium of communication. This became so wonderfully evident to me last year when we paid a visit to the Benedictine monastery of Abu Ghosh, not far from Jerusalem.

**This is what Baba Devdas, a Salesian Catholic priest, does in the village where he runs a place for ‘street kids.’ He often gets groups from the neighbouring village barging into his house, and they are not always reasonable and sometimes potentially violent. What do you do, I asked him. I make them sit down first, he told me. Then I offer them water – you always offer water first in a hot country, it is the basic courtesy. And then tea. And they usually become quite reasonable by then. So I often think of tea as an important element in dialogue, including the interreligious variety.**

Benedictine monks pray and work. They have no external ministry. This means they have time for people.

Brother Olivier, for example, meets many people from all walks of life and all religions. For his diaconate ordination last year he said he was surprised by the number of people who turned up: Christians of course, but also Muslims, men and women, Palestinians as well as Israelis, religious Jews as well as soldiers, and even twenty Israeli bikers with their Harley-Davidsons. I think the secret is that Olivier and many of the monks speak Hebrew, and they have time to waste with people. That is the wonderful thing about being a monk: no other ministry, and plenty of time for people. “We show that we must live together, and that we can,” said Olivier. “I can tell you that my political views are quite different, but I experience that people love me just the same.” And he told us of an sms that he received from an Israeli soldier that made him cry and laugh: “I miss you. Take care of yourself. Don’t go out into the sun.”

Tea is another wonderful ingredient in interreligious dialogue, especially in a country like India. If someone invites you for tea in his house, it is usually a sign of esteem and friendship, and you would do well to accept it. And if a turbulent group confronts you, offer them some tea, and you will see how the temperature drops significantly.

This is what Baba Devdas, a Salesian Catholic priest, does in the village where he runs a place for ‘street kids.’ He often gets groups from the neighbouring village barging into his house, and they are not always reasonable and sometimes potentially violent. What do you do, I asked him. I make them sit down first, he told me. Then I offer them water – you always offer water first in a hot country, it is the basic courtesy. And then tea. And they usually become quite reasonable by then. So I often think of tea as an important element in dialogue, including the interreligious variety.

Tea, after all, has ancient religious roots. As *cha* it comes from the Sanskrit word *dhyān*, meditation; from there it migrated to China, where it became *cha’n*, and eventually Japan, where it became the better known Zen. But in India it is a sign of friendship, especially when it is ‘cut.’ So when your host pours half the cup into the saucer and offers you the saucer, don’t hesitate to drink from the saucer.

And then the importance of simple information. That became evident to me when a Hindu gentleman once approached me in Nashik. The Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan had just concluded, and Mr Patwardhan was writing a book on the new Kargils in the centre of India – by which he meant Christian missions all over the country. He felt these were the new and hidden centres of conflict.



**Swami Abhishiktananda, the Benedictine monk Henri Le Saux, underwent the acute experience of the tension between Christianity and *advaita*, between the *vyavaharika* and the *paramarthika*. He was never able to transcend these antinomies in any satisfactory way. His greatness lay instead in having lived within himself the symbiosis of two traditions, Hindu and Christian, in such a way that they both became part of himself. In the words of the theologian Jacques Dupuis, his stubborn fidelity to two faiths made of him a prophetic figure at a time when the marriage of East and West was being felt as an urgent need.**

But he wanted to be fair to the Christians, he said, and so he had decided to meet some and hear from them their side of the story. We had several sessions. Unfortunately he would turn up without warning, and I, as usual, always had a thousand things on my plate. I was not too patient, and he was not too open. What I realized in this short exchange was that not even the basic information about our religions could really be taken for granted. We cannot take for granted that we share the same data; and even when we do, it tends to be tremendously slanted in one way or another. Inter-religious dialogue will often involve working painstakingly through the little details which we take for granted, and once again, friendship and leisure are a tremendous help.

From here we can go on to more sophisticated reflections. Panikkar distinguishes dialectical dialogue from dialogical dialogue. Bernard Lonergan notes that, where dialectic treats subjects as objects, dialogue deals with subjects as subjects. I find Gadamer's remarks terribly enlightening in this regard: When we claim to understand the other person in advance, we actually succeed in keeping her claim at a distance. The dialectic of charitable or welfare work, Gadamer says, operates in this way, penetrating all relationships between people as a reflective form of the effort to dominate. And the educative relationship is also but an authoritative form of welfare work. When we want to deal with subjects as subjects, there has to be the effort not to co-opt the other into our schemes. We cannot pretend to understand the other in advance. Such understanding destroys dialogue, because it treats the other as an object, it fails to relate to her as subject.

Which brings us to another important aspect of dialogue: the ability to hold things together in tension. We will often not be able to 'resolve' the inherent tensions in dialogue. Two examples come to mind here: Swami Abhishiktananda and Stephanie Saldana, once again. Swami Abhishiktananda, the Benedictine monk Henri Le Saux, underwent the acute experience of the tension between Christianity and *advaita*, between the *vyavaharika* and the *paramarthika*. He was never able to transcend these antinomies in any satisfactory way. His greatness lay instead in having lived within himself the symbiosis of two traditions, Hindu and Christian, in such a way that they both became part of himself. In the words of the theologian Jacques Dupuis, his stubborn fidelity to two faiths made of him a prophetic figure at a time when the marriage of East and West was being felt as an urgent need. He was able to live with the tension, leaving to others the task of constructing a synthesis. Stephanie Saldana, who reads the Gospel of Luke with Muslim students at the Al Quds University in East Jerusalem, echoes the same thing in a different way. How, we asked her, do her students relate to a Jesus who is believed to be God, and who is at the same time feels afraid in the Garden of Gethsemane? Strangely, she said, her students are able to connect with Jesus' fear and weakness. How do you explain that?

**Even the irenic Panikkar does not hesitate to say that true dialogue demands the lifting of all brackets. For if the other has reached his deepest level, and I, out of politeness, remain at what is for me only a penultimate level, I am not being really authentic. There is a point in the dialogue when dialogue itself give way and makes place for the witness, the testimony, the test is or the 'third' that speaks through us and breaks into another dimension.**

Perhaps only by the fact that many of us actually do live with contradictions more often than we think. We might, for example, have strong prejudices about people from a certain community, and yet also have close friends among members of that community. The ability to hold things in tension is another very important aspect of interreligious dialogue. We need to resist the temptation to make everything the same. God is surely more complex than we think.

On the other hand, within the context of friendship, dialogue will probably demand also the courage to go beyond the bounds of political correctness and to call a spade a spade. Within friendship and in a spirit of charity, we should surely be able to speak also hard truths. Not all love is merely sweetness and light. Here the three stages of community that Scott Peck speaks about in *The Road Less Travelled* might be instructive: true community begins when we are able to go beyond initial politeness and dare to face the chaotic, and it is born when we are able to get beyond chaos to true understanding. Even the irenic Panikkar does not hesitate to say that true dialogue demands the lifting of all brackets. For if the other has reached his deepest level, and I, out of politeness, remain at what is for me only a penultimate level, I am not being really authentic. There is a point in the dialogue when dialogue itself give way and makes place for the witness, the testimony, the test is or the 'third' that speaks through us and breaks into another dimension.

But surely all dialogue calls for a generous dose of a quality that Richard De Smet had in abundance: an inner strength, a centredness, the *hara* that enables one to stay calm, persist, persevere, even when the going is tough and one is challenged at one's deepest levels. Here then is the emotional dimension of interreligious dialogue, one that blends and merges imperceptibly into the religious or spiritual dimension, into that strength and gentleness and peace that comes from a Source that we somehow know is not of our doing.





This very short poem, Moon Phases, grew out of a conversation I had with my son one evening out walking in Hamburg. It was full moon. We looked up. He told me about men on the moon and I tried to talk about the man in the moon.

I was about to tell him the man on or in the moon was imaginary when, suddenly, I realised time had passed and man had gone to the moon since my childhood. We were on two different planets.

### **Moon Phases**

My son tells me stories  
of men on the moon.

I remember the man  
in the moon  
lighting up playful fox cubs  
on a hill at harvest time.



Pic © Mark Ulyseas





### Corporal Punishment and Children:

Why is there a legal discrepancy in Australia between the use of physical force against children, and the use of physical force against adults?



Children at the 2011 UNRWA Summer Games Source: UN Photo / Shareef Sarhan  
Reprinted by special permission of Benjamin Authers, [Regarding Rights](#)

The recent Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) Position Statement [Physical Punishment of Children](#) illuminates the ongoing discrepancies in many nations, including Australia, between the legal rights of adult persons and the legal rights of children.

In seeking to ensure children are protected from the potential harms of corporal punishment, the RACP made several reasonable, evidenced-based arguments<sup>[1]</sup> including:

- That current Australian practice allowing the corporal punishment of one's own children is inconsistent with the rights of other persons in society (including other children), and is incongruent with basic human rights;
- That physical punishment is an outdated practice;
- That there are other, more effective ways of disciplining a child; and
- That there may be adverse, long-term consequences to the child and that this outweighs any counter-claims of short-term effectiveness or compliance due to physical punishments.

The RACP Position Statement raises an important question about why children in Australia do not enjoy the same right not to be harmed as adults and whether this discrepancy is based on any valid moral or legal premise. As of 2012, 33 international states had prohibited all forms of corporal punishment, including in the home and in schools. A further 18 governments are also publicly committed to considering prohibitions, including our Asian neighbours Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Bangladesh, and Thailand.<sup>[2]</sup> Concerningly, a formal commitment from the United States and Australia appears to be absent.

Currently in Australia the use of non-consensual physical force, including harming another adult or another person's child, may open up a liability under the tort of trespass. That the force was a form of punishment for some wrong is not an acceptable defence. However, as noted in the RACP Statement, using physical force against one's own child is acceptable in all jurisdictions provided the level of force is reasonable and for the purpose of correction.<sup>[3]</sup> This discrepancy highlights a fundamental flaw in our nation's occasionally ad-hoc approach to implementing and enforcing those basic human rights (as defined in various United Nations instruments) to which all persons have a claim, and to which Australia has formally agreed.



**At international law, children have the same claim to basic protections and rights as other persons. This status provides the rationale for the position that children enjoy the same claim to “rights” as adults such as the right not to be harmed or killed. Furthermore, children occupy a special moral status in society that recognises their vulnerability, the significance of their special relationships with family, their potential as persons, and their limited cognitive ability to make decisions about their own care and needs.**

Although the notion of personhood and the characteristics defining what makes a human being a person are frequently debated at a theoretical level, it is generally accepted that most living human beings have enough of the characteristics of “personhood”—such as sentience and a vested interest in their own future—to have a claim to basic human rights.<sup>[4]</sup> At international law, children have the same claim to basic protections and rights as other persons.<sup>[5]</sup> This status provides the rationale for the position that children enjoy the same claim to “rights” as adults such as the right not to be harmed or killed.<sup>[6]</sup> Furthermore, children occupy a special moral status in society that recognises their vulnerability, the significance of their special relationships with family, their potential as persons, and their limited cognitive ability to make decisions about their own care and needs.<sup>[7]</sup> This unique status affords them the right to basic protections as well as extra protections as noted in Article 19 s1 of the United Nations [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#):

Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Moreover, the convention places responsibility on states to ensure that these rights are protected and facilitated, stating at Article 19 s2:

Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.<sup>[8]</sup>

This extension of basic human rights to include extra rights for children is reflected in other declarations, including the 1924 *Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child* and the *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959.

Human rights, however, are aspirational in nature, aiming to bring about “the accomplishment of particular social or moral goods”.<sup>[9]</sup> Whilst all persons, including children, have the same moral claim to human rights, the potential to actualise or realise those claims may be limited by factors such as a nation’s financial resources, political will, or the physical environment.<sup>[10]</sup> Therefore, legally promoting and facilitating human rights is dependent on each nation’s ability to or interest in conferring responsibility to enforce human rights by way of laws and legislations.<sup>[11]</sup> Many developing nations lack the resources or the political and legal structures to make basic human rights enforceable.<sup>[12]</sup> This is not the case in Australia, however, particularly within the context of enforcing the right of children not to endure corporal punishment from their parents.

**This position must be reasonably justified in order to explain why Australia continues to allow practices that are at odds with numerous human and child rights declarations and frameworks, and the emerging empirical evidence of the harms of corporal punishment. Alternatively, we should face squarely the full moral and legal impact of what we are doing and seek to address such obvious inconsistencies with our international and domestic human rights obligations.**

Furthermore, many nations that have prohibited or will seek to prohibit the corporal punishment of children are less well-placed in comparison to Australia. The RACP Position Statement offers a challenge to our current practices and our approach to enforcing human rights.

If we accept that current practices in Australia are permissible then we are accepting a position that is incongruent with many other nations and with the various conventions on the rights of children. Furthermore, we are identifying that there is something about being a child that reduces or sets aside their claim to the basic rights enjoyed by other persons. This position must be reasonably justified in order to explain why Australia continues to allow practices that are at odds with numerous human and child rights declarations and frameworks, and the emerging empirical evidence of the harms of corporal punishment.

Alternatively, we should face squarely the full moral and legal impact of what we are doing and seek to address such obvious inconsistencies with our international and domestic human rights obligations.

<sup>[1]</sup> The RACP Position Statement includes references to a number of national and international published articles in well-ranked journals to support their claims, as well as a number of Commissioner’s Reports.

<sup>[2]</sup> Global Progress. (2012) *Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children*. Available from: [LINK](#). Date accessed August 27 2013. Corporal punishment prohibited in all settings: Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldavia, Romania, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela.

<sup>[3]</sup> RACP, n 1; Gawlik J, Henning T & Warner K. (2002). *Physical Punishment of Children*. Tasmania Law Reform Institute. Hobart; Australian Institute of Family Studies, [Corporal Punishment: Key Issues](#). Date accessed August 27 2013.

<sup>[4]</sup> Singer, P. (2011). *Practical Ethics: 3rd Edition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>[5]</sup> ‘Child’ is defined in Article 1 of *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as ‘every human being below the age of 18 years’.

<sup>[6]</sup> Freeman, M. (1985). *The Rights and Wrongs of Children*. London, Francis Pinter; Wald, M. S. (1979). “Children’s Rights: A Framework for Analysis.” *U.C.D Law Review* 12(255); Rodham, H. (1979). “Children’s Right’s: A Legal Perspective.” In P. B. Vardin, I. (Ed.), *Children’s Rights: Contemporary Perspectives*. New York: The Teacher’s College Press.

<sup>[7]</sup> Kerridge, I., M. Lowe and C. Stewart (2013). *Ethics and law for the health professions*. Leichhardt, The Federation Press.

<sup>[8]</sup> Australia signed the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in 1990, and was an active contributor in the development of the convention with delegates including former Chief Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commissioner, Brian Burdekin. Details available from: [LINK](#)

<sup>[9]</sup> Freeman, M. n 6. 1985. p 37.

<sup>[10]</sup> Singer, P. n 4. 2011.

<sup>[11]</sup> Freeman, M. n 6. 1985; UN n 5; Wald, M. n 4. 1975.

<sup>[12]</sup> Singer, P. n 4. 2011.





## Great Charter - Huge Hatred - Nothing Changed

**Magna Carta**, described as “the greatest constitutional document of all times” and considered the cornerstone of the British constitution, devoted two important clauses to the Jewish community of the period.

The famous first version, signed under duress at Runnymede by King John in 1215, is said to have placed certain checks on the absolute power of the English monarchy. This did not prevent Edward I from expelling his Jewish subjects in 1290 – a mere 75 years later. It was to be 366 years before any Jews returned to England openly, although like everywhere else in Europe, a tiny number of ‘hidden’ Jews remained throughout. I’ve been considering this again, as I did in 2006 when the Anglo-Jewish community celebrated the 350th anniversary of its resettlement in England. This follows the British Library’s decision to mark the charter’s 800th anniversary in 2015 by bringing together the four surviving copies of the original document. Two are kept at the library, another is at Lincoln Cathedral and the fourth is at Salisbury Cathedral.

The two ‘Jewish’ clauses, explained below, have been dismissed as ‘antisemitic’. In my view they prove how essential the community was to medieval English life – and how vital to the economy. I suggest that the rulings were not inherently anti-Jewish but the way they were interpreted by Jews’ enemies caused unnecessary hostility. This is not the same thing! Magna Carta (usually translated as ‘Great Charter’) contained two articles relating to money lending and Jews. Such involvement with money lending caused Christian resentment as the Church forbade the lending of money at interest (then known as usury). It was seen as a vice (such as gambling, an un-Christian way to profit at others’ expense) and was punishable by excommunication, although Jews, as non-Christians, could not be excommunicated and were thus in a legal grey area.

Secular leaders tolerated Jewish usury because it gave them an opportunity for personal enrichment. This resulted in a complicated legal situation: debtors frequently tried to bring their Jewish creditors before Church courts, where debts would be absolved as illegal, while Jews attempted to get their debtors tried in secular courts, where they would be able to collect plus interest. The relations between the debtors and creditors would often become very nasty and there were many bids to resolve this problem. The relevant clauses in the original Magna Carta illustrate the legal code of the time:

“10. If anyone who has borrowed a sum of money from Jews dies before the debt has been repaid, his heir shall pay no interest on the debt for so long as he remains under age, irrespective of whom he holds his lands, if such a debt falls into the hands of the Crown, it will take nothing except the principal sum specified in the bond”.



“11. If a man dies owing money to Jews, his wife may have her dower and pay nothing towards the debt from it. If he leaves children that are under age, their needs may also be provided for on a scale appropriate to the size of his holding of lands. The debt is to be paid out of the residue, reserving the service due to his feudal lords. Debts owed to persons other than Jews are to be dealt with similarly”.

Pope Innocent III annulled the first version of Magna Carta only two months after it was written. He claimed it was illegal because the king’s signature had been forced. Future versions contained no mention of Jews. The Church saw Jews as a threat to its authority, and to the welfare of Christians, because of their special relationship to kings as moneylenders.

“Jews are the sponges of kings,” said one William de Montibus, “they are bloodsuckers of Christian purses, by whose robbery kings despoil and deprive poor men of their goods.”

So it is clear that on the subject of ‘usury’ and Jews, the medieval Church relayed an unpleasantly mixed message: the wording relating to Jews in the first version of the Magna Carta was there partly because it suited the Christian nobility and was symptomatic of the larger power struggle between Church and State throughout the period.

Little changes. If anyone reading this piece believes modern antisemitism relates solely to the State of Israel, I commend them to the website [‘Jewish Currents’](#) which has readers’ talk-backs under its article about Magna Carta. I conclude by quoting several in full without further comment:

Barbara - June 27, 2011

“Why don’t Jews just live in their own country?”

Jack - June 27, 2011

“Wow, that must have been a virtual paradise in England, without any Jews. What a great time to have lived”.

Mike Bailey - July 10, 2011

“Among other crimes King John expelled the Jews for: (1) ritual Jewish murder (the Hugh of Lincoln incident, sort of like Cayley Anthony, but a long time ago) (2) Coin clipping. This is a form of stealing / lowering the value of a silver or gold coin by chipping a little of the precious metal off the edge of the coin with a hammer and chisel. Modern coins have knurled edges as a safeguard against this type of thievery. That’s why Bernie Madoff worked exclusively with paper securities”.





## Experiencing Subtle Energies

In the last few months in the 12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine series, we explored your beliefs and feelings, as well as how to handle trauma. Now we will explore your energy system. At some level, you are already aware of subtle energies. Now you can learn some tools for working with them that will assist you on the road to self-healing. We all feel subtle energy at times. You may have walked into a room and immediately sensed that there was someone there before you who was angry. Maybe you have been around someone who was depressed and noticed that you began to lose energy and feel unmotivated as well. Have you ever been in a room full of people and seen someone across the room looking at you ... and you then felt a surge of energy and excitement? How about spending time with young children and being energized by the experience? Subtle energy is the energy around your body. It is a part of you, and others feel it as well.

In his 1998 book, *Subtle Energy*, William Collinge tells us that Albert Einstein showed through physics what the sages have taught for thousands of years. “Every animate and inanimate object in our material world is made of energy, and everything radiates energy. The earth is one enormous energy field; in fact, it is a field of fields. The human body, a microcosm of this, is a constellation of many interacting and interpenetrating energy fields.”

Many of us experience the subtle energies of a pet as healing. The giving of love to the pet, the receiving of love and the caring for a pet are all ways that energize and heal. This is especially true for people who live alone, for children who often have a need to touch and explore their textural world, and for the elderly who do not receive much physical connection. When you pay attention, you realize subtle energies are around everyone. Notice the feelings you have when you are close to a parent or a lover. Think of hugging a loved one and then hugging a stranger. Now think about hugging someone whose heart is open and someone whose heart appears to be closed. You know the difference immediately.

When you touch someone, there is an energy exchange. An example from Collinge is that of a mental health therapist who “starts each day with plenty of energy but feels dragged out and depleted at the end. She decided to learn more about energy and took a class in Chi kung, an ancient Chinese tradition of energy cultivation.” She found one of the principles to be the notion that “when you touch another person there is an exchange in energy” and that “energy will move from the person with the highest energy to the one with the lowest energy.” The therapist experimented with this and found that her teacher was correct. When she stopped touching her clients, she stopped losing her own vital energy. You may begin to notice what happens to your own energy level depending upon whom you touch.

I remember when I worked at the Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations as a mental health counselor. This was a treatment program for primarily Native American adolescents. After spending all day with their manic and depressive moods, I felt unusually tired after work. Often, I went straight to



my daughter’s house and rolled around with my young grandchildren. After a few minutes with them, my energy level lifted, and I was able to go on with the rest of my day.

In addition to the subtle energies in and around our bodies, we are affected by the subtle energies of the world around us. Collinge shares that there are studies showing an increase in mental hospital admissions, suicides, and even lottery payouts related to the cycles of the moon. The planet radiates its own energy, and cosmic happenings can affect our behavior on a daily basis. Scientists know some of these energies, such as the geomagnetic field, but others are left to esoteric tradition. One response to these energy patterns is feng shui (pronounced fung-shway). Feng shui is an ancient Chinese art involving the placement of objects in such a way that energy can flow smoothly, thereby allowing health, peace, and prosperity to come to those who inhabit the space.

Feng means “wind,” and shui means “water.” In Chinese culture, gentle wind and clear water have always been associated with good harvest and good health. Thus, “good feng shui” came to mean good livelihood and fortune, while “bad feng shui” came to mean hardship and misfortune.

According to Rodika Tchi, a Feng Shui consultant, “Feng Shui is based on the Taoist vision and understanding of nature, particularly on the idea that the land is alive and filled with Chi, or energy.” She explains that in ancient times, Chinese people believed that the energy of the land and the way that energy flowed were strong determinants of the kingdom’s fate. The Taoist theory of yin and yang, or opposing but complementary opposites, and the five elements of Feng Shui—wood, fire, earth, metal and water—are primary underpinnings of this theory. Light and color are also believed to be very important.

Tchi further explains that the main tools used in a feng shui analysis are the compass and the bagua. The bagua is an octagonal grid containing the symbols of the I Ching, the ancient oracle on which feng shui is based. Knowing the bagua of your home will help you understand the connection of specific feng shui areas of your home to specific areas of your life.

I have created a [bagua map](#) for you to reference on my website. Look at the map from the direction in which you enter the room. You can then place items that will attract energy to the areas where you would like more energy. Many books have been written about feng shui, and there are many different styles of this ancient science. Feng shui is about bringing harmony to an area. Some of the ways to do this include removing clutter, making adjustments for rooms and homes that are irregularly shaped, harmonizing with color, and using tools for abundance and purification. This is a very basic introduction to feng shui. I strongly encourage you to research this fascinating topic on your own. That being said, I have had some validating experiences with it myself. Several years ago I was looking for a home to buy. I wanted to be near water and found a nice house north of Spokane, Washington, here in the US. It had a beautiful creek nearby.



**November 5th, (US time) I will be having a book launch. When you purchase the book on this day only, you will receive several valuable gifts such as audio downloads, e-books, tele-seminars and more. Sign up on my website to make sure you get this information!**

As I walked the property, I realized that the house had been built between two small hills in a canyon, and there was no place for the energy to move. I saw that energy would get stuck between the two hills, right where the house was built.

I informed the realtor, "According to feng shui, the energy here would get stuck around the house. That would mean whoever lived here would get sick." He looked at me with surprise and described the illnesses of the two people who lived there. He explained that these illnesses were occasioning their move. While this was sad for me to hear, I was not proficient in feng shui and didn't understand how to remedy the situation.

Later, when I did purchase a home across from the Spokane River, I had a feng shui practitioner come over to help me make sure the space was able to attract good chi and allow the energy to flow easily. She was very helpful when I was building my office. She instructed me to make a flat wall where a corner would have been. This revision eliminated a sharp corner that would have been pointing at me when I sat in my chair. It also offered me more room. I've had several additional good experiences using feng shui, but the one I would like to share here took place while seeing a new massage therapist.

When I went into her office and rested my body on her table, I felt extremely uncomfortable. I was face down and felt the energy above me as disturbing. I sat up, looked up, and saw that she had a three-dimensional metal star above the massage table. There was a sharp point coming right down toward the back of her customers. When she came into the room, I pointed this out to her. While not aware of feng shui and energy medicine, she kindly took the star down. As I write this, I can't help but wish I had followed up with her to see if she experienced a better return rate after making the change.

Collinge explains how technology offers some understanding of subtle energy, but that it is also important to note the human perceptual system is able to pick up energies that current technology has not yet been able to measure. Science tells us that if we cannot measure it, it does not exist, to which Collinge responds, "By this logic, of course, brain waves didn't exist until the invention of EEG equipment."

To help you understand the subtle energies, I have included six principles described by Collinge.

1. We are beings of energy. When we think of our anatomy, we ordinarily think of our bones, muscles, organs, and other physical tissues. However, we also have an energetic anatomy. It is composed of multiple interacting energy fields that envelop and penetrate our physical body, govern its functioning, and extend out into the world around us. This anatomy serves as a vehicle for the circulation of vital energies that enliven and animate our lives.

**You can find more information about the book *12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine* here. [LINK](#)**

2. The earth herself has an energetic anatomy, similar to our own, that influences our own energy field. The entire earth and biosphere in which we live is one gigantic living organism, with its own metabolic and energetic qualities. Energy centers, energy channels, and energy fields emanating from the earth, plants, and animals are in many ways analogous to our own. By understanding this vast system's energetic life, of which we are a part, we can learn to live in a greater state of harmony and balance.

3. Our relationships with other people are shaped by the interactions of our energies. They are based on more than just psychology and family history. The energetic states that we bring to one another can introduce dynamics that are even more profoundly influential. Simply by touching another person, we influence what happens in that individual's energy field. We can come to understand the impact of our own energy on others, and theirs on us, so as to relate with great clarity and effectiveness.

4. Through the simple act of breathing, we traverse the boundary between the physical and the spiritual at every moment. There is no life activity more important than breathing. It is our most immediate and intimate connection to the life force in every moment of our lives. It is a direct link to many expressions of subtle energy and spiritual attunement, as well as a doorway to profound states of harmony and peace.

5. We are each capable of sustaining and cultivating our vital energy. Our vital energy has a metabolism that we can come to understand and manage. Through attending to the nourishment we take into our bodies, our patterns of rest and activity, and our practice of energy cultivation disciplines, we can learn to become the stewards of our vital energy.

6. Meditation, prayer, and healing are rich with subtle energy phenomena that represent contact with the spiritual dimension. Many experiences we have during these practices can be taken as direct evidence of a state of communion or communication with Spirit. Healing abilities are present within us all, and we have unknowingly used them throughout our lives.

In the *12 Weeks* book, I also address your Biofield and how you can shift your energy by working in and clearing your chakras.

A practice for you is to review your week and see where you may have become more energized by the energy of others and where you may have been drained. Then, think back to your life before you suffered with pain. Who were the people in your life at that time? Were you energized or drained by them? What situations were you in that may have energized or drained you?



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October 2013

Free online magazine from village earth



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