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FREE ONLINE MAGAZINE FROM VILLAGE EARTH
MARCH 2018

PAULO COELHO
THE POWER OF THE WORD

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY SOURAV JOURDAR



Photograph Mark Ulyseas

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Live Encounters is a not-for-profit free online magazine that was founded 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.

We are appealing for donations to pay for the administrative and technical aspects of the publication. Please help spread the free distribution of knowledge with any amount that you feel you want to give for this just cause.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om
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Photograph of Ankita by Sourav Jourdar

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The Power of the Word

Paulo Coelho

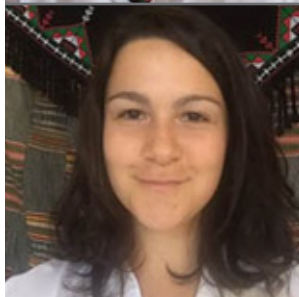
Paulo Coelho (Portuguese: [ˈpawlu kuˈeɫu]), born August 24, 1947) is considered one of the most influential authors of our times. He is most widely read and his books have sold more than 225 million copies worldwide, have been released in 170 countries and been translated into 81 languages. He has received numerous prestigious international awards amongst them the Crystal Award by the World Economic Forum. He has been a member of the Academy of Letters of Brazil since 2002, and in 2007 he was proclaimed Messenger of Peace by the United Nations. Paulo is the writer with the highest number of social media followers and is the all-time best-selling Portuguese language author. <https://www.facebook.com/paulocoelho/>



Karma Mechanics

Mark Ulyseas

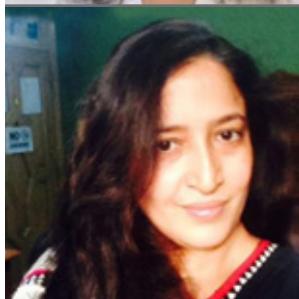
Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created *Live Encounters Magazine*, in Bali, Indonesia. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication Live Encounters Poetry & Writing. He is the author of three books: *RAINY – My friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya – Anthology of Dystopian Lives* and *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*. www.amazon.com



Unpacking the History of Sabich

Jennifer Shutek

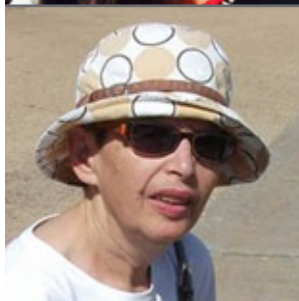
Jennifer Shutek is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies at New York University, Steinhart, where she is pursuing research projects on several interwoven topics, including: the social functions of generosity among West Bank Palestinians, the semiotics of agricultural images in Zionist and Palestinian propaganda. She obtained her BA in Middle Eastern and Islamic History with a minor in English literature at Simon Fraser University and her Master of Philosophy in Modern Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Oxford. Twitter: @quixoticavocado



Afghanistan: Battle of narratives...

Dr Shanthie Mariet D'Souza

Dr. D'Souza is researcher, analyst, writer, editor, consultant and subject matter expert with specialisation in International Relations (IR), Afghanistan and South Asia. She is Associate Editor, Journal of Asian Security & International Affairs (Sage Publications); Expert and Contributor to the Middle East-Asia Project (MAP) at the Middle East Institute, Washington DC; Senior Analyst, South Asia desk, Wikistrat Analytic Community, New York; Advisor, Independent Conflict Research & Analysis (ICRA), London; Fulbright Fellow at South Asia Studies, The Paul H Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC and more. www.mantraya.org



A Non-Jew Who Saved Jewish History

Natalie Wood

Born in Birmingham, England, U.K., Natalie Wood began working in journalism a month before the outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. She emigrated from Manchester to Israel in March 2010 and lives in Karmiel, Galilee from where she writes several blogs, micro-fiction and free-verse. She features in Smith Magazine's *Six Word Memoirs On Jewish Life* and has contributed to Technorati and Blogcritics along with *Jewish Renaissance* and *Live Encounters magazines*.



Brides of Bengal

Sourav Jourdar

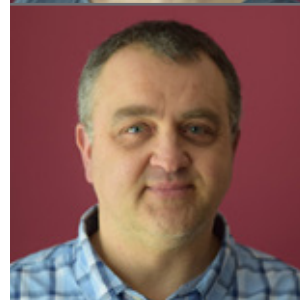
Dreaming dreams and capturing moments of the moving life - small and big, bitter and sweet - through the lens is what I am living for. I, Sourav Jourdar, 32, have been working as a photographer for the North Bengal Bureau of *The Statesman* from 2008 to 2013. Now I am working with *Uttarbanga Sambad*. Born and brought up in Siliguri, a cosmopolitan town in Darjeeling district of Bengal known as the Gateway to the Northeast. My passion is to present the commonplace in a way that makes it look something out of the common for that reason 4 years ago I started my own small photography studio business with a small team named *Flashback - The Memory Makers*.



The vegan philosophy...

Elizabeth Harrop

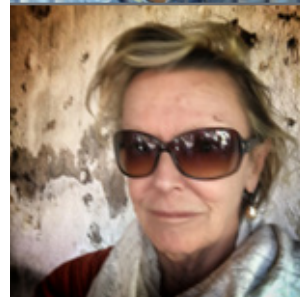
Elizabeth Harrop is a consultant in gender and child rights advocacy, with extensive knowledge of international human rights law and the UN system. Elizabeth is a researcher, writer and editor and produces written and creative multimedia materials for UNICEF and international NGOs, from human-interest stories and white-board animations, to literature reviews and qualitative analysis. While passionate about human rights, Elizabeth is equally committed to exploring human responsibility – toward fellow human beings, the environment and animal world.



Rainbowl vegan recipe

Andrea Lamberti

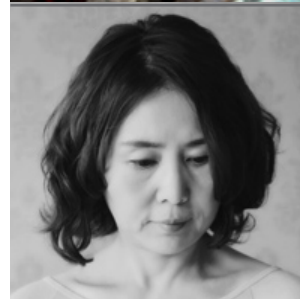
Andrea Lamberti has used a vegan diet to address long standing health issues, and to create a more ethical relationship between person and planet. As well as supporting his physical health, Andrea found veganism is naturally aligned to his philosophy of living simply and minimally, allowing less packaging, chemicals and processing, and avoiding the unnecessary commodification of animals. A keen photographer of nature and the underwater world, Andrea is a quiet advocate of humanity inhabiting the world as a curator rather than as a consumer.



Pictures from an exhibition

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.



Postcards from Chang Mai

Mikyoung Cha

Mikyoung Cha is a graduate in Oriental Painting from Hyosung Women's University, Daegu, South Korea. She has participated in a number of group art exhibitions in South Korea and Japan. In 2016 she took up photography – the camera becoming her paint brush. This globe trotting photographer is a regular contributor to Live Encounters Magazine.



Etli Pilav

Ozlem Warren

International cooking teacher and Turkish culinary expert Ozlem Warren is a native of Turkey, lived there and extensively travelled for 30 years. She has been teaching wholesome, delicious Turkish cookery in the US, Jordan, Istanbul and England. Her recipes have been published in the local media in England, Hurriyet and Sabah national daily newspapers in Turkey. Ozlem also took part at the *"Turkish Chefs of the World"*, *"Dünyanın Türk Seferi"* TV program aired at TRT, National Turkish TV channel and in 37 countries.

Paulo Coelho (Portuguese: [ˈpawlu kuˈeɫu]), born August 24, 1947) is considered one of the most influential authors of our times. He is most widely read and his books have sold more than 225 million copies worldwide, have been released in 170 countries and been translated into 81 languages. He was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1947 and discovered early his vocation for writing. He worked as a director, theater actor, composer and journalist. His collaboration with Brazilian composer and singer Raul Seixas gave some of the greatest classic rock songs in Brazil. He has received numerous prestigious international awards amongst them the Crystal Award by the World Economic Forum. He has been a member of the Academy of Letters of Brazil since 2002, and in 2007 he was proclaimed Messenger of Peace by the United Nations. Paulo is the writer with the highest number of social media followers and is the all-time bestselling Portuguese language author.

<https://www.facebook.com/paulocoelho/>



PAULO COELHO - THE POWER OF THE WORD

Destroying your neighbour

Malba Tahan illustrates the dangers of the word:

A woman claimed again and again that her neighbour was a thief, and, in the end, the young man was arrested. Days later, he was discovered to be innocent; the boy was released, and the woman was sent to court.

‘Words never hurt anyone,’ she told the judge.

‘I see,’ replied the judge. ‘Today, when you go home, write down on a sheet of paper all the bad things you said about that young man; then tear the paper up and scatter the pieces along the road. Come back tomorrow to hear the sentence.’

The woman obeyed and returned the following day.

‘You will be forgiven if you can produce all the pieces of paper that you scattered yesterday. Otherwise, you will be sentenced to one year in prison,’ declared the judge.

‘But that’s impossible! The wind has scattered them!’

‘Precisely! Just as a simple remark can be scattered by the wind and thus destroy a man’s reputation; and, by then, it’s too late to repair the damage done.’

And he sent the woman to prison.

A legend from the North Pole

According to an Eskimo legend, at the dawn of the world, there was no difference between men and animals; all creatures lived in harmony on the face of the Earth, and any creature could transform itself into any other creature in order to gain greater mutual understanding. Men turned into fish, fish turned into men, and they all spoke the same language.

‘At the time,’ the legend goes on, ‘words were magical, and the spiritual world was lavish in its blessings. A chance remark could have strange consequences; you had only to express a wish for that wish to be fulfilled.’

Then the creatures began to abuse this power. Confusion reigned and wisdom was lost.

Words, however, continue to be magical, and wisdom still gives the gift of performing miracles to all those who respect it.’

The Spy, the latest novel by Paulo Coelho
www.amazon.com



Difficult times

A man was selling oranges in the street. He was illiterate and so never read the newspapers. He merely put out a few signs along the road and spent the day proclaiming the excellence of his merchandise.

Everyone bought from him, and the man prospered. He invested the money he earned in more signs and went on to sell more fruit. Business was booming when he had a visit from his son, who had been educated and had studied in the big city.

‘Brazil is in desperate straits, Pa. The economy’s in a terrible state!’

Worried, the man reduced the number of signs and started re-selling inferior goods because they were cheaper. Sales plummeted.

‘My son’s right,’ he thought. ‘These are indeed difficult times.’

The instruction manual

After buying a new machine for peeling vegetables, a woman carefully read the instruction manual, but still could not get the machine to work. In the end, she had to give up, leaving the various machine parts scattered about the table.

She went to the market and returned to find that the maid had put the machine together.

‘How did you manage that?’ she asked in some surprise.

‘Well, since I don’t know how to read, I had to use my head,’ came the reply.



Photograph Mark Ulyseas

© www.liveencounters.net march 2018



Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created Live Encounters Magazine, in Bali, Indonesia. It is a not for profit (adfree) free online magazine featuring leading academics, writers, poets, activists of all hues etc. from around the world. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication Live Encounters Poetry, which was relaunched as Live Encounters Poetry & Writing in March 2017. He has edited, designed and produced all of Live Encounters' 122 publications till date (March 2018). Mark's philosophy is that knowledge must be free and shared freely (without charge) to empower all towards enlightenment. He is the author of three books: *RAINY – My friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya – Anthology of Dystopian Lives* and *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*. www.amazon.com

KARMA MECHANICS

Excerpt from *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*

by Mark Ulyseas. www.amazon.com

Bali, Indonesia

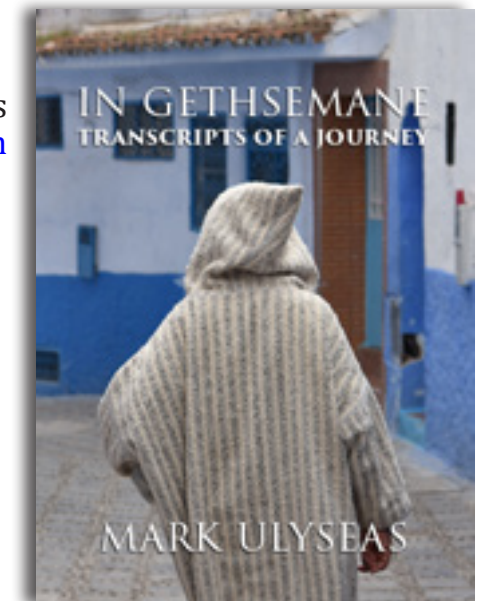
Somewhere on this isle, nestling in the cracks and crevices of society are the karma mechanics, aspiring avatars of the likes of Osho, Maharishi Yogi and their kind. They carry the weight of mankind's troubles on their shoulders. And this is odd because no one has asked them to do so. Nor, in my opinion, are they qualified in even the remotest sense of the word.

The karma mechanics are people lost in a brave new world, clutching at straws in the wind. The straws being the bits and pieces of eastern religious instruction they have collected on their brief journey from sideshows in their own countries to the daunting Asian Diasporas that have art, culture and religion compressed over the ages into layers like sedimentary rock formations.

They are akin to the untrained motor mechanics that miraculously appear on an Indian road when a car breaks down. Knowledge of the workings of the engine is irrelevant. Fiddling till the engine regains life is all that is needed. Money changes hands and everyone is happy. Life goes on oblivious to the density of the mental capacity that has just been displayed!

I have had the honour of meeting a few of these karma mechanics who can fix anything from a leaking aura to the more complex problem of the 're-alignment' of someone's spiritual engine that has been derailed and needs to get back onto the magnetic lines of the Universe.

In Gethsemane Transcripts of a Journey, by Mark Ulyseas
www.amazon.com



Many of us may recall that inspiring book by Robert M Pirsig – *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*; the travels of a motorcyclist and the philosophical discussions that transpired along the way. The karma mechanics call this a cult book and therefore unworthy to be read. And when I spoke recently to Joe, a mechanic, of Carlos Castaneda, the silence-hung heavy in the air and the only sound that could be heard was one of ignorance. Fortunately for him it was broken by an elderly expat from New York who winked at me and whispered in my ear ‘magic mushrooms.’ We shall not delve into the Yaqui way of life. Not now, for we still need to cruise through the world of the mechanics to understand the tools of their trade.

Joe told me that the tools he uses are tarot cards, mind readings, silent sittings, synchronising one’s chakras with the help of yoga and more importantly teaching one the ways of the Buddha. Apparently Buddha is in fashion not Cat Stevens who converted to Islam. Often one encounters mechanics massaging drinks at restaurants some aptly called Buddha something or the other, loudly beginning a sentence with ‘the Buddha says’ while sinking their teeth into a rack of succulent pork ribs. But don’t let these visual impressions dissuade you from using their services. I have it from reliable sources that Joe has fixed the leaking aura of a friend of mine. It so happened that she heard it dripping in the night like droplets of water hitting the base of an empty bucket. Not a good sound when one is lost to the world. And how he did this, no one is saying.

And then another buddy of mine, Dave told me that he had been guilty of many past sins before he arrived on the isle. After he met Joe, the bad karma that he had carried with him in his hold all had been dispensed with through a series of give and take. He gave money to Joe and Joe took it, besides of course counselling him to commit good acts in the present continuous.

“Herman Kuhn quoting from Tattvarthasutra describes karma as – a mechanism that makes us thoroughly experience the themes of our life until we gained optimal knowledge from them and until our emotional attachment to these themes falls off.”

Now where is Joe when I need him to explain Kuhn’s observations? Last I heard he was on a visa run.

There are other mechanics some who have gained much respectability through a pragmatic approach to karma problem solving. Janice is a fine lady from a European country who has settled comfortably in Bali providing ‘karmic advice’ to lost souls who approach her out of guilt – the result of their unseemly past. She has given them crystals to wear, specially blessed stones and advice on the specific

colours of clothes to don for designated days of the week, the Full Moon and some phases of the moon being an exception. She is a one-woman service station that appears to be consistently effective in the overhauling of run down spiritual engines of weary travellers. Word on the street has it that she offers a money back guarantee for unsatisfied customers. This is a good business practice however what if one returns as a dog in another life how will one collect the refund?

Karma mechanics have mastered the art of trivial pursuit through acts that obfuscate the real issues at hand. They fiddle with the soul engines of hapless people who arrive at their doorstep seeking reconciliation with the universe for a misspent life. But as we all know everything is relative and so is our religious make up. For example, if one is a Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist or Jain the Law of Karma will apply.

But in the case of a Christian what does one do? How does the Law of Karma apply to him or her? Didn’t Christ die on the cross for the sins committed by humanity? And what about Heaven and Hell? Where do these two fit in, in the grand scheme of the Universe?

And there are those among us who have still to study the Koran to know what is said about all this in the world of Islam.

The truth is plain to see. The karma mechanics are not really trained mechanics in every sense of the word. They are, like many of us, lost in a contradictory world that defies definition.

So to confuse you further, dear readers, here is a quote –

Buddhism relates Karma directly to motives behind an action. Motivation usually makes the difference between “good” and “bad,” but included in the motivation is also the aspect of ignorance; so a well-intended action from a deluded mind can easily be “bad” in the sense that it creates unpleasant results for the “actor.”*

Next time you need a tune up of your aura or re-alignment of your wheels of fortune walk into the friendly neighbourhood karma mechanic’s workshop but ensure that the money back guarantee is cashable in this lifetime.

* *The Manual of Life – Karma by Parvesh Singla, www.lulu.com*

Jennifer Shutek is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies at New York University, Steinhardt, where she is pursuing research projects on several interwoven topics, including: the social functions of generosity among West Bank Palestinians, the semiotics of agricultural images in Zionist and Palestinian propaganda, the entangled histories of sabich and Arab-Jewish migrations to Palestine/Israel, and gastrodiploacy in Palestine/Israel and among diasporic Palestinian and Israeli communities in North America. She obtained her BA in Middle Eastern and Islamic History with a minor in English literature at Simon Fraser University and her Master of Philosophy in Modern Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Oxford. Twitter: @quixoticavocado



UNPACKING THE HISTORY OF SABICH

Jennifer Shutek



Still from Shahar Marcus' 2006 short film "Sabich."

The scene opens on a man wearing a white T-shirt, faded blue jeans, and lace-up sneakers covered in what appear to be splatters of white paint. He stands with his back against a white painted-brick wall. On his left sit clear glass bowls filled with various ingredients: cucumber pickles; shiny, peeled hard boiled eggs; vibrant chopped salad; thick chunks of charred purple aubergine; turmeric-yellow *'amba*. Each bowl contains a long-handled wooden spoon. He begins by reaching for the bowl of tahina; the frame widens, revealing a massive pita sitting atop a silver drop cloth; the artist uses a wooden spoon to drip the tahina across the pita's surface. He continues, Pollock-like, to walk around his pita-cum-canvas, drip-painting with all of the ingredients – flicking *'amba*, using his hands to crush and crumble the eggs, scattering chopped salad – until the pita is covered with thick layers of the ingredients for the widely consumed Israeli street food: **sabich**.

This short film, the work of the internationally acclaimed Israeli performance and film artist Shahar Marcus, speaks both to his past (as a child, Marcus would sometimes breakfast with a neighbouring family of Iraqi Jews, sharing a plate of

tahini, *'amba*, small pitas, eggplant, and hard boiled eggs) and to the current Israeli food scene. The proliferation of small kiosks selling sabich alongside falafel and shwarma, the appearance of destination sabich vendors such as [Sabich Oved in Giv'atayim](#), and the publication of numerous articles on sabich in the last two and a half decades attest to sabich's place of prominence in the Israeli culinary landscape.

Food writers and cookbooks authors agree that sabich began as an Iraqi Jewish Shabbat food, detailing how the standard ingredients of fried aubergine, hard-boiled egg, chopped salad, tahina, and *'amba* (a South Asian pickled mango sauce) were prepared on Friday and left out overnight in accordance with Shabbat requirements. Brought to Israel in the 1950s during the mass migration of Middle Eastern Jews (Mizrahim), these ingredients were later put into a pita to create the now-familiar sabich sandwich. Articles in *Haaretz*, *Tablet Mag*, and *Saveur*, for instance, state that the idea of putting the ingredients into a portable pita was "100 percent Israeli."¹ These texts often cite the popularity of sabich and other "Middle Eastern" or "Arab" foods as indicative of multiculturalism in Israel, suggesting that the existence of a cosmopolitan foodscape reflects Israel's diversity and inclusivity.

The rise of sabich reflects the popularity of Arab-Jewish (Mizrahi) foods more generally. Indeed, the number of Arab restaurants in Israel's two largest cities, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, exceeds all other types of eateries except for Italian.² However, the development of a culinary scene favouring Mizrahi foodways occurred over several decades, within a state that historically privileged European Jews (Ashkenazim) over Jewish immigrants from Middle Eastern and North African countries.³ Ashkenazim, culturally and politically dominant during the period of the British Mandate in Palestine and the early years of the Israeli state, slowly and selectively adopted cultural aspects of marginalized groups (especially Palestinians and Mizrahim), and often-overlooked histories of ethnic divisions, class tensions, and traumatic migrations that lie behind the sabich sandwich.

While a discussion of some of the history behind the current status of sabich as a “totem” or archetypal Israeli food in and of itself will not transform painful histories into palatable ones, it can support increased understanding of and sensitivity toward the histories and power dynamics that shape contemporary Israeli culinary culture.

Many members of Israel’s political elite articulated a belief that Arab-Jews constituted a backward, uncivilized population. Abba Ebban, an Israeli politician, scholar, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, for example, voiced his concern that “the predominance of immigrants of Oriental origin force Israel to equalize its cultural level with that of the neighboring world”; Golda Meir asked whether or not the Israeli state could “elevate these immigrants to a suitable level of civilization.”⁶

While culinary exchange and fusion have been taking place for centuries, these have rarely been neutral processes. They have typically occurred within power imbalances framed by conquest, colonization and appropriation. Although cooking dishes from various parts of the world is not an inherently neo-colonialist act, the whole-sale use and labeling of the foodways of one group as those of another can, in fact, participate in appropriation and cultural erasure. Consuming a food or dish without falling into culinary appropriation requires a nuanced understanding of its history and the matrices of power in which it is produced. While a discussion of some of the history behind the current status of sabich as a “totem” or archetypal Israeli food in and of itself will not transform painful histories into palatable ones, it can support increased understanding of and sensitivity toward the histories and power dynamics that shape contemporary Israeli culinary culture.

Iraqi Immigration to Israel

Because sabich originated from Israel’s Iraqi Jewish community, narrating its history requires an understanding of Iraqi immigration. The history of Operation Ezra and Nehemiah (the transportation of most of Iraq’s Jews to Israel from 1951 to 1952) contextualizes sabich’s introduction; its contemporary popularity is rooted in this history.⁴ Several concurrent and mutually intensifying factors, including Zionist propaganda, the memory of the *farhoud* (a wave of unprecedented violence against Iraqi Jews in 1941), governmental instability in Iraq, and the efforts of the Israeli government to transport Iraqi-Jews to Israel facilitated the emigration of approximately 120 000 of Iraq’s 130 000 Jews to Israel between 1950 and 1952.⁵ Resulting from negotiations between Israeli representatives in Iraq and the Iraqi Prime Minister and by the Near East Air Transport and El Al (Israel’s national airline), Operation Ezra and Nehemiah was one of the largest migrations in this period of Israeli history.

The Israeli press portrayed Operation Ezra and Nehemiah as a rescue mission, saving Arab-Jews from oppressive Arab regimes. However, many members of Israel’s political elite articulated a belief that Arab-Jews constituted a backward, uncivilized population. Abba Ebban, an Israeli politician, scholar, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, for example, voiced his concern that “the predominance of immigrants of Oriental origin force Israel to equalize its cultural level with that of the neighboring world”; Golda Meir asked whether or not the Israeli state could “elevate these immigrants to a suitable level of civilization.”⁶



Jewish Immigrants from Iraq leaving Lod Airport, May 1951. This is available from National Photo Collection of Israel, Photography dept. Government Press Office (link), under the digital ID D199-135. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Immigrants_1951.jpg

After arriving in Israel, many Arab-Jews were kept, sometimes for months, in *ma'abarot* (transit camps) where they received food provisions from the state.⁸ While providing sufficient calories, provisions often consisted of unfamiliar foods, and familiar foods cost significantly more.⁹ For instance, while margarine was abundant, oil, a fat more common within Arab communities, was expensive, and Mizrahi immigrants (including those from Iraq) sometimes sold eggs on the black market to obtain money to purchase oil.

This *mission civilisatrice* manifested in initiatives to educate and discipline the minds and bodies of new immigrants through sanitation, personal hygiene, child care, and diet. Doctors, nurses, and journalists frequently depicted Mizrahim as backward and unhygienic in their rejection of western medicine during the period of the British Mandate in Palestine and early years of the Israeli state.⁷ Motherhood guidebooks were produced, aimed at rectifying the “backward” diet and hygiene of Mizrahim and contrasting the good Israeli mother with the deficient Arab-Jewish immigrant mother. After arriving in Israel, many Arab-Jews were kept, sometimes for months, in *ma’abarot* (transit camps) where they received food provisions from the state.⁸ While providing sufficient calories, provisions often consisted of unfamiliar foods, and familiar foods cost significantly more.⁹ For instance, while margarine was abundant, oil, a fat more common within Arab communities, was expensive, and Mizrahi immigrants (including those from Iraq) sometimes sold eggs on the black market to obtain money to purchase oil.

The criticisms of Mizrahi consumption patterns, hygiene, and eating habits began to change at the end of the 1950s. In 1958, a report produced by the Israel Institute of Applied Social Research and the Department of Preventive Medicine at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Hadassah medical School recommended serving Middle Eastern dishes in schools to preserve immigrant foodways and to increase the prestige of Middle Eastern food, in part because it was seen to be more suitable to the Israeli climate. Ofra Tene, a scholar of Israeli food, notes that consumption of Mizrahi food also increased with the incorporation of Mizrahi food into the Israeli army's menus.

The Future of Sabich

A 2017 children's book by creative writing teacher at the University of Haifa and children's writer Tami Shem-Tov, provides an alternative engagement with sabich, one that addresses its difficult history. "Sabba Sabich," or "Grandpa Sabich," narrates the origins of sabich in Israel through the story of Iraqi-Jewish immigration. In a December 2017 *Haaretz* article, Professor of Literature at Tel Aviv University Yahil Zaban notes the significance this book, which deals with ethnicity, immigration, and the appropriation and erasure of Mizrahi identity.¹⁰ While the publication of the book is still too recent to assess its impacts, Zaban indicates that it has enjoyed high sales. Sifriyat Pijama, a reading and literacy program that operates in conjunction with the Israeli Ministry of Education to foster reading-readiness among Jewish Israeli students, created a lesson plan for "Sabba Sabich" which includes a guide for parents with post-reading discussion questions such as

A 2017 children's book by creative writing teacher at the University of Haifa and children's writer Tami Shem-Tov, provides an alternative engagement with sabich, one that addresses its difficult history. "Sabba Sabich," or "Grandpa Sabich," narrates the origins of sabich in Israel through the story of Iraqi-Jewish immigration.

“did you know where the name Sabich originated before reading this story?” and “Sabba Sabich came to Israel from Iraq. Where did your family come from?”

Although it is an optimistic perspective, “Sabba Sabich” helps to imagine how food might enable difficult but essential discussions about larger issues of immigration and ethnicity in Israel. Discussions of sabich that seek to understand its origins and the complex history of Iraqi Jewish immigration to and marginalization within Israel can facilitate a mindful culinary and cultural fusion. Foods like sabich thus become vehicles for discussions about topics including power dynamics, ethnicity, and state-based discrimination, demonstrating the potential for food preparation and eating to increase awareness and cross-cultural empathy.



Youtube screen shot

Dr. Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, analyst, writer, editor, consultant, adviser and subject matter expert with specialisation in International Relations (IR), Afghanistan and South Asia. She is Associate Editor, Journal of Asian Security & International Affairs (Sage Publications); Expert and Contributor to the Middle East-Asia Project (MAP) at the Middle East Institute, Washington DC; Senior Analyst, South Asia desk, Wikistrat Analytic Community, New York; Advisor, Independent Conflict Research & Analysis (ICRA), London;. She has been a Fulbright Fellow at South Asia Studies, The Paul H Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC and more. She has conducted field visits to various provinces of Afghanistan since 2007.

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AFGHANISTAN: BATTLE OF NARRATIVES, POWER CONTESTATIONS, & CYCLES OF VIOLENCE

Dr. Shanthie Mariet D'Souza,
President and Founder of www.mantraya.org



Scene in the aftermath of an explosion of a bomb hidden inside an ambulance, which killed over 100 people in Kabul on 27 January 2018, Photo Courtesy: NewsOne TV.

Abstract

The sudden surge in violence and gory blood bath in January 2018 brought about renewed international media attention to Afghanistan. The growing number of attacks indicates a deteriorating security situation, deepening political crisis and power contestations. In the ensuing battle of area domination between the Islamic State and the Taliban, more blood is being spilled in the streets of Kabul. Moreover, both the Taliban and the Islamic State also appear to be benefiting from the larger geopolitical rivalry of great powers. As the date of presidential elections draw near, power reconfigurations and realignments can lead to an increase the levels of violence. In the light of these developments, it is critical to shore up Afghan government capacities and step up efforts at institution building in key sectors to prevent the backsliding of Afghanistan into further instability and chaos.

The gory blood bath witnessed in Afghanistan in January 2018 is shocking, saddening, and yet not so surprising. Resilience among local Afghans is hardly a matter of choice, while the elite remain well protected behind the blast walls. The place I had moved about relatively freely a decade back is now known as "Fortress Kabul". Every visit since then to the country and particularly to government offices and diplomatic missions, I have seen a steady increase in the number of security barricades and height of the blast walls. The most emblematic of this is the American embassy in Kabul.

The recent attack on January 20 on the Intercontinental Hotel, venue for a conference of provincial telecom officials, is worrisome. In September 2016, I was at the Intercontinental for a workshop organised by an Afghan ministry on local governance. The layered security arrangements made visits to such high-security hotels cumbersome. Despite those security measures, I had been repeatedly warned to stay clear of such high-profile venues. Rumors are rife in Kabul about the insider-outsider collusion with paid information leaks to the insurgents. Most of these attacks are construed to be a handiwork of such collusion. This has further fueled distrust and widened the gap between people and the government. The insurgents are using this space not only to further discredit the government but to spread a pervasive sense of fear and deepen the ethnic faultlines. In light of the forthcoming presidential elections in 2019, this distrust and fear could have a telling effect.

The Taliban insurgency is no longer a pre-2001 monolithic organization. It is a decentralized rural insurgency with undiminished ability to target urban centres. Notwithstanding reports of weakening of the insurgency due to infighting, leadership struggles, and differences over reconciliation with the Afghan government, the Taliban is said to be in control or contests 40 to 50 percent of Afghanistan's nearly 400 districts, which is more territory than at any time since U.S. forces entered the country in 2001.



Source: Hugh Tomlinson and Haroon Janjua, 'Isis and the Taliban compete to spread carnage in Kabul', The Times, 30 January 2018.

Surge in violence: Battle of narratives

Sudden spike in violence in January 2018, the first month of the year, brought about renewed international media attention. The growing number of attacks indicates a deteriorating security situation. Kabul has attempted to avoid such negative publicity, by, among other things, underreporting of casualties. This is mostly to win the 'battle of narratives' and avoid the concomitant negative fall-out of international media reporting which impacts on the national morale as well as international support. The scaling down of international aid by donors, who are weary of funding a country that cannot demonstrate success and is caught in an unending state of violence for perpetuity, remains a cause of worry for Kabul.

Taliban and Islamic State contestation

In the ensuing battle of area domination and contestation between the Islamic State and the Taliban, more blood is being spilled in the streets of Kabul. In May 2017, a lorry bomb tore through Kabul's diplomatic quarter and killed more than 150 people. Fresh security measures were implemented. And yet, terrorists continue to strike, almost daily and at will. On 20 January 2018, Taliban gunmen evaded security guards at the front of Kabul's Intercontinental Hotel, entering via a kitchen door before killing more than 40 people in a 14-hour rampage. On 27 and 28 January, two more attacks—one by the Taliban and the other by the Islamic State, underlined intelligence failures and holes in the city's security set up. On 28 January, the Islamic State's Inghimasi cadres struck the Marshal Fahim National Defense University having scaled a wall at dawn before bursting into the barracks and firing wildly. At least 11 cadets were killed and 15 wounded before the attackers were shot dead.[1] That attack had followed a Taliban bomb hidden in an ambulance that killed 103 people in the heart of the capital on 27 January.[2]

The reinvigorated Taliban insurgency

The Taliban insurgency is no longer a pre-2001 monolithic organization. It is a decentralized rural insurgency with undiminished ability to target urban centres. Notwithstanding reports of weakening of the insurgency due to infighting, leadership struggles, and differences over reconciliation with the Afghan government, the Taliban is said to be in control or contests 40 to 50 percent of Afghanistan's nearly 400 districts, which is more territory than at any time since U.S. forces entered the country in 2001.[3]

Their campaign of indiscriminate violence and killings has led to an exponential increase in fatality rates among Afghan security forces and civilian casualties. Inadequate state response has meant that the insurgents have been able to step up their destabilising activities with impunity from their sanctuaries across the southern border.[4]

Growing Daesh challenge

The Islamic State (IS, also known as Daesh), whose presence and strength have been alternately confirmed and disputed, continues to survive the pounding of airstrikes by the United States, including the 'mother of all bombs'. The actual impact of such strikes remains contested and analysts tend to be guided by the official claims. One such claim is that the IS has apparently been driven out of several districts in its eastern stronghold of Nangarhar province. However, attacks in Nangarhar have continued.

On 24 January 2018, for instance, the IS underlined its continued presence in the province by carrying out an attack on the office of Save the Children organization. The IS now has refocused on capital Kabul by operating through new found cells and recruitment of cadres. In the first week of February 2018, in Kabul's western Qala-e-Wahid district, security forces discovered an IS hideout filled with explosives and suicide vests.

Additionally, the IS has reportedly gained in strength in northern Afghanistan, between Sar-e-Pul province and eastern Badakhshan province. The IS has long sought a foothold in the north, vying for links into the republics of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, from which it drew much of its fighting strength in Syria and Iraq. That now appears to have turned into a possibility. Its cadre strength in Afghanistan is officially estimated to be 5000 fighters, which include former members of the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), fighters from outside the immediate region, as well as Afghan Taliban defectors. In the provinces of Jowzjan, Faryab, and Kunduz, the IS cadres, backed by foreign fighters are challenging the Taliban and are building trafficking routes into neighbouring Central Asian states.[5]

However, despite its expansionist and disruptive potential, the IS, which started its activities in 2014 in Afghanistan, is not quite near the strength and the power of the Taliban.

The deteriorating security situation is further compounded by the protracted political feuds and divisions within the National Unity Government (NUG). The powerful first Vice President General Abdul Rashid Dostum has been prevented from returning to Afghanistan from Turkey by the government. In December 2017, President Ghani dismissed important Tajik powerbroker Atta Mohammed Noor as governor of northern Balkh province[6]. Atta, one of the leaders of the Jamiat-i-Islami political party, which holds half the seats in the coalition government, has refused to step down.

Sponsors, proxy warfare and great power competition

In the battle for area domination and contestation, both the Taliban and the IS also appear to be benefiting from the larger geopolitical rivalry of great powers. Accusations and counter-accusations are rife. Russia has expressed concerns on with the rise of IS activity in northern Afghanistan, which could be used as a launch pad to fuel Islamist insurgencies inside its territory. The Afghan and US governments, on the other hand, have accused Kremlin of opening channels of communication and funnelling weapons to the Taliban. Afghan government officials have alleged that small arms and RPGs from Russia are being provided to the Taliban. Likewise, reports from the field indicate that Iran, Pakistan and China are continuing their support to the Taliban through direct or indirect means.

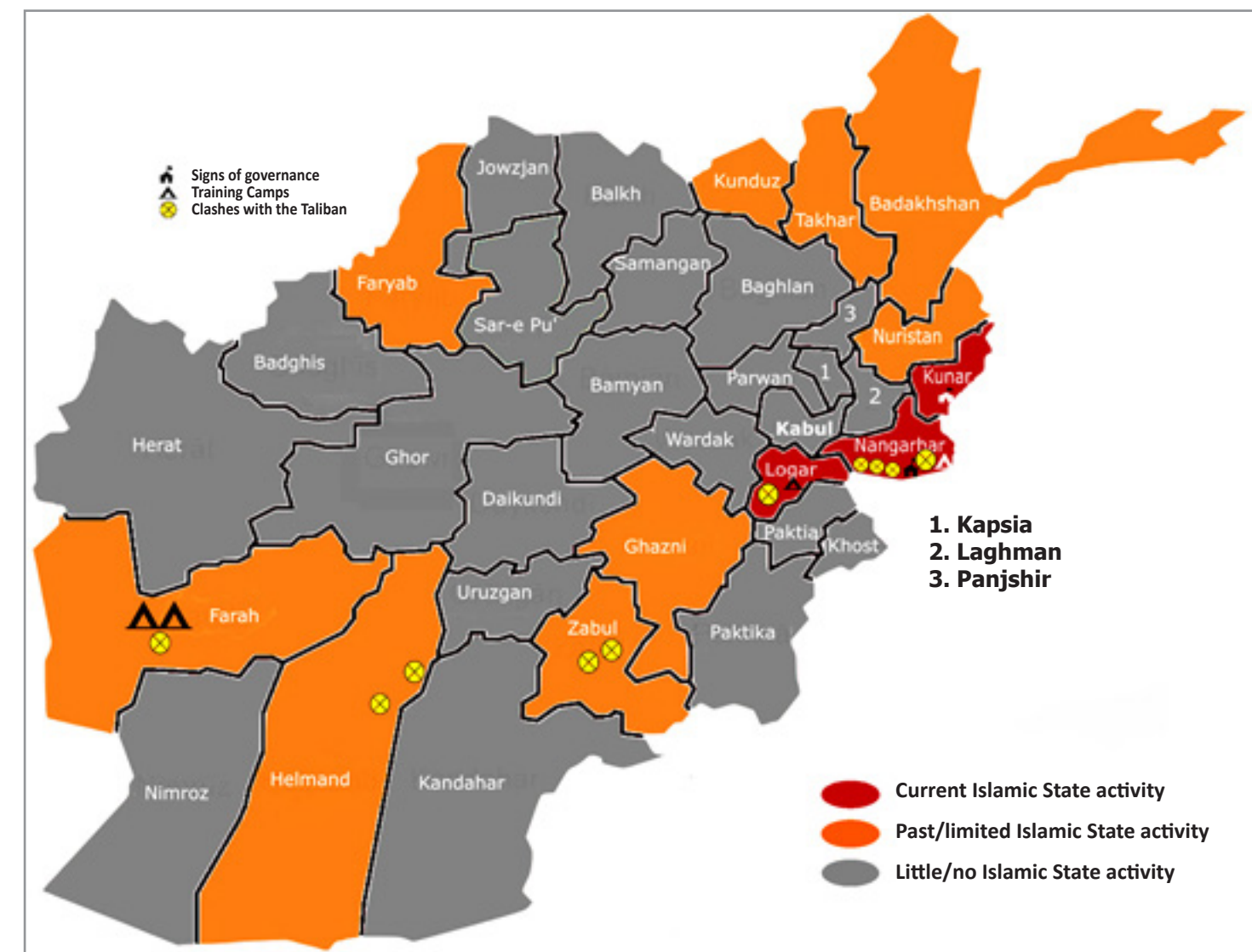
Political infighting and power contestations

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The party has condemned Ghani's decision as "rushed, irresponsible, and against stability and security of Afghanistan." Noor's defiance has been sought to be replicated by another Jamiat-i-Islami leader and provincial governor of Samangan, Abdul Karim Kadam, who too has refused to step down after being dismissed by the President. Ghani had sacked four provincial governors in February 2018.

As the date of elections draw near, power reconfigurations and contestations can aid escalation in violence levels. The present NUG is an experiment which is yet to ratified by the Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLG). The parliamentary elections due five years back have not been held yet. The deteriorating security situation is going to make the conduct of elections difficult which will in turn feed into the insurgent propaganda of the present government being a "puppet regime".

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Source: Activities of the Islamic State summarized by the Middle East Institute

The inability of the Afghan forces to quell the complex insurgency can be attributed to a lack of indigenous counter-insurgency (COIN) strategy. Until 2015, there had been little effort to develop an indigenous Afghan COIN strategy, away from the external advice-based model. But a sense of urgency has emerged after a string of Taliban victories.[9] During 2017, a more coherent approach prioritising internal reform (anti-corruption), defence of cities and highways, tactical offensive operations by special forces, and reliance on militias to challenge Taliban control over rural areas is being formulated, even though this is still marked by lack of widespread consensus.

'New' American strategy

Surge in violence in Afghanistan has followed the announcement of a new strategy for Afghanistan and Asia by US President Donald Trump in August 2017. US officials had claimed that the Taliban were being forced back to the negotiating table by President Trump's strategy of reliance on kinetic operations. The Pentagon looks ready to deploy a further 1,000 US troops to Afghanistan in the spring, bringing the American task force to 15,000. In the absence of concrete actionable strategy, Trump's attempt to make Pakistan amend its destabilising policies in Afghanistan has coincided with the rise in the number of high profile attacks in Kabul. This could very well be Pakistan's last-ditch effort to remain relevant in any US strategy towards the war-torn country.

As the Afghan forces battle to stem the surge in attacks in Kabul, the Taliban have vowed to continue their violence. "The Islamic emirate has a clear message for Trump and his hand-kissers," Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman said. "If you go ahead with a policy of aggression and speak from the barrel of a gun, don't expect Afghans to grow flowers in response", he added.[7] The latest in the series of its innuendoes, the Taliban on 14 February 2018 issued a 3000-word letter urging "the American people, officials of independent non-governmental organizations and the peace-loving Congressmen" to press their government to withdraw from Afghanistan. The letter reminded them that the Afghan war is the longest conflict in which they have been embroiled — and at a cost of "trillions of dollars." It repeated the Taliban's longstanding offer of direct talks with Washington, which the United States has repeatedly refused, saying peace negotiations should be between the Taliban and the Afghan government. The letter promised a more inclusive regime, education and rights for all, including women. However, it seemed to rule out power-sharing, saying they had the right to form a government.[8]

Afghan COIN Strategy

The inability of the Afghan forces to quell the complex insurgency can be attributed to a lack of indigenous counter-insurgency (COIN) strategy. Until 2015, there had been little effort to develop an indigenous Afghan COIN strategy, away from the external advice-based model. But a sense of urgency has emerged after a string of Taliban victories.[9] During 2017, a more coherent approach prioritising internal reform (anti-corruption), defence of cities and highways, tactical offensive operations by special forces, and reliance on militias to challenge Taliban control over rural areas is being formulated, even though this is still marked by lack of widespread consensus.

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Born in Birmingham, England, U.K., Natalie Wood began working in journalism a month before the outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. She emigrated from Manchester to Israel in March 2010 and lives in Karmiel, Galilee from where she writes several blogs, micro-fiction and free-verse. Natalie features in Smith Magazine's *Six Word Memoirs On Jewish Life* and has contributed to *Technorati* and *Blogcritics* along with *Jewish Renaissance* and *Live Encounters* magazines.

A NON-JEW WHO SAVED JEWISH HISTORY

Natalie Wood

Bill Williams, Founder President of the Manchester Jewish Museum, has died barely four months after the museum was awarded a massive [National Lottery grant](#). The £2.89M gift and other large donations will pay for a total renovation and extension planned to double it in size.

Those who knew the highly respected historian of Manchester Jewry must surely view this sad coincidence as a rousing finale to a terrific career that spanned a near half-century.

I was warmly acquainted with Williams from being a young adult and my earliest reporting days coincided with the initial research for his first book, *The Making of Manchester Jewry*, published in 1976.

As a Catholic reared in Nonconformist Wales, Bill empathised with the feeling of minority alienation sensed by many Jewish people. However, it was due largely to his dogged, often frustrated persistence that the museum exists as his ideas and those of his senior lay colleagues were first treated by many Jewish communal leaders with ill-concealed disdain.

The project's first outline was drawn partly in response to the closures and dereliction of the Ashkenazi Great and New Synagogues on Cheetham Hill Road. Williams and his friends were anxiously determined that the nearby Sephardi Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue would not suffer the same fate.

Bill Williams will be equally well remembered for helping to develop work in recording 'oral' social history and for leading on-site walks in areas of historic Jewish interest in north Manchester. Here, he was a disciple of [Professor Bill Fishman](#) of Queen Mary College, University of London who pioneered the method.

I attended the first guided walk that Williams conducted and was also at the last Sabbath morning services of both the Great Synagogue and some years later, the Sephardi synagogue whose roof had so much deteriorated that those of us seated in the ladies' gallery were drenched during a sudden rain storm!

Williams's boundless enthusiasm for local Jewish history never waned. So even aged 81, he was excited when, in September 2015, a [glass tube containing a parchment scroll](#) with details of the development of education for local Jewish children, was discovered in the foundation stone on the site of the first purpose-built Jewish school in Manchester – also on Cheetham Hill Road.

"It is a crucially important historical document...this scroll includes information on those early arrangements which are not known from any source", he said.

Williams's main work aside, he was always happy to discuss the museum's background and activities. So at my request – from memory on the verge of the museum's opening in March 1984 – he gave an address in lieu of the traditional sermon during a Sabbath morning service at Sha'arei Shalom North Manchester Reform Synagogue. He was again generous with his time for a couple of book club events I arranged.

I earnestly hope that the Manchester Jewish community one day learns to value its history as much as this fine non-Jewish historian who did so much to preserve it.

Dreaming dreams and capturing moments of the moving life - small and big, bitter and sweet - through the lens is what I am living for. I, Sourav Jourdar, 32, have been working as a photographer for the North Bengal Bureau of *The Statesman* from 2008 to 2013. Now I am working with *Uttarbanga Sambad*. Born and brought up in Siliguri, a cosmopolitan town in Darjeeling district of Bengal known as the Gateway to the Northeast, I completed my education in 2004. My first love being photography, I somehow carried on to support to my mother. Siliguri played its role in having instilled this passion in me with its exquisite natural charm. I am unshakably convinced that this is the only profession in the world that would never make one bored. My passion is to present the commonplace in a way that makes it look something out of the common for that reason 4 years ago I started my own small photography studio business with a small team named *Flashback - The Memory Makers*. [FACE BOOK PAGE](#)



BRIDES OF BENGAL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
SOURAV JOURDAR
SILIGURI WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER

These photographs are of brides in Bengali weddings. The brides in traditional attire reflect the vibrant ethos of this beautiful place and its people.



Poulami



Arijita



Sneha



Sneha



Aditi



Monalisa



Manisha



Ruchira



Sayantika

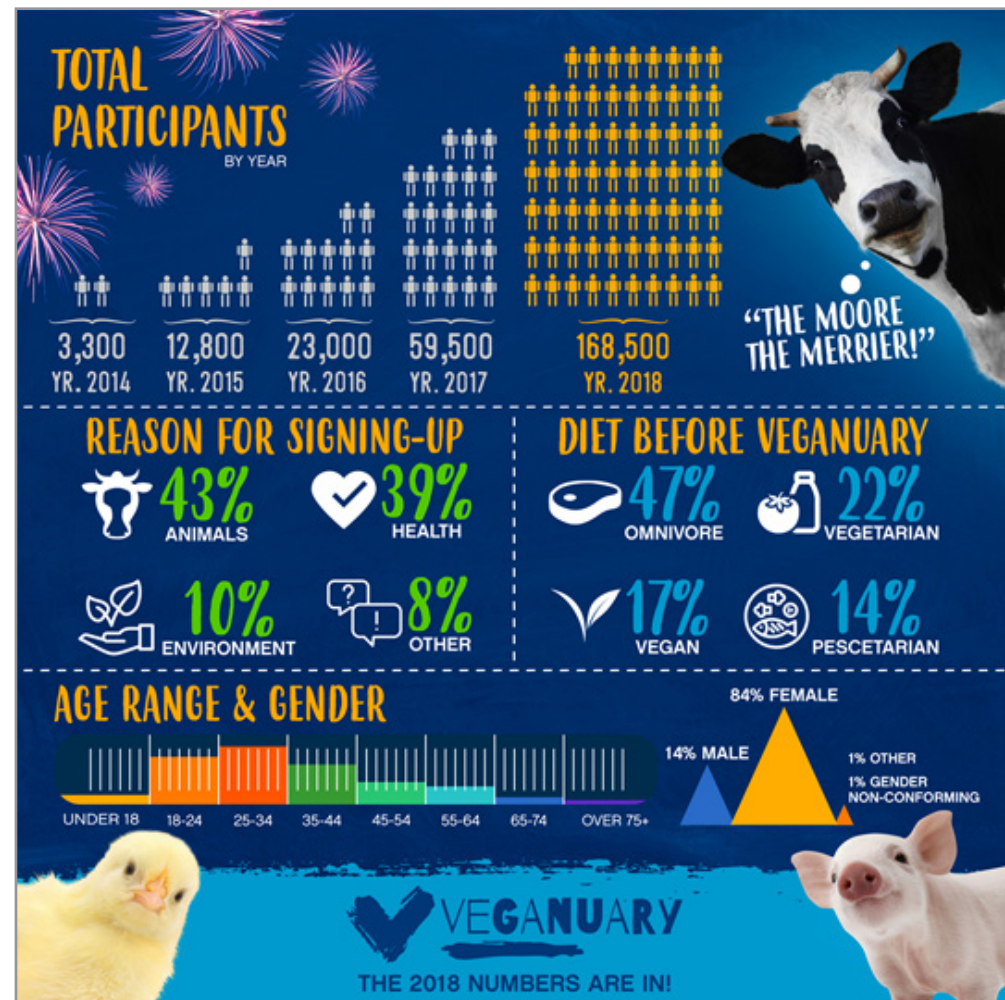
Elizabeth Harrop is a consultant in gender and child rights advocacy, with extensive knowledge of international human rights law and the UN system. Elizabeth is a researcher, writer and editor and produces written and creative multimedia materials for UNICEF and international NGOs, from human-interest stories and whiteboard animations, to literature reviews and qualitative analysis. While passionate about human rights, Elizabeth is equally committed to exploring human responsibility – toward fellow human beings, the environment and animal world. www.libertyandhumanity.com



ELIZABETH HARROP

THE VEGAN PHILOSOPHY:

PROTECTING ANIMAL WELFARE, HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT; BUT BATTLING THE CORPORATE LOBBY.



Veganuary 2018 - [LINK](#)

Veganism received a boost in January 2018 with the Veganuary campaign seeing its biggest take-up yet. The number of vegans in Britain has risen by more than 360% over the past decade to just over 1% of the population. There is a similar story in the USA, with 6% claiming to be vegan, up from just 1% in 2014.

The health benefits of a plant-based diet include reducing the risk of numerous diseases including cancers, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, attention deficit disorder, clinical depression, Alzheimer's, kidney diseases, skin ailments and obesity.

Veganuary was not only aimed at persuading people to become vegan, but to reduce meat and dairy products as "Flexitarians", a movement which is being embraced across Europe and in the USA. In Germany, 44% of consumers follow a low-meat diet, compared to 26% in 2014 and the country is revolutionizing plant-based shopping across the continent with all-vegan supermarkets. Annual meat consumption per person in the USA has fallen by 15% in the past 10 years, and is down by a third since the early 1970s. Over seven million Americans are now vegetarian, and an additional 22.8 million are flexitarian.

As a result of these trends, the global meat substitutes market is estimated at USD \$4.63 billion (2018) and is projected to increase by nearly USD \$ 2 billion in the next five years (USD \$6.43 billion by 2023). The global dairy alternatives market is expected to surpass US\$ 34 Billion by 2024. According to Forbes magazine, animal agriculture businesses globally are now buying or investing in plant-based brands, from Danone, a multinational food company with a focus on dairy, which purchased of plant-based pioneer WhiteWave, to the Campbell Soup Company which left the Grocery Manufacturers Association and joined the Plant-Based Foods Association. The fastest growing market for vegan products is set to be China, with an estimated growth rate of 17% between 2015 and 2020.

The rearing of livestock for meat, eggs and milk generates 14.5% of total global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and utilizes 70% of agricultural land (including a third of arable land, needed also for crop production). Grazing livestock and the production of feed crops are the main agricultural drivers of deforestation, biodiversity loss and land degradation.

Time for sustainable diets

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) supports trends in veganism by encouraging a “substantial worldwide diet change, away from animal products” in order to reduce the equally substantial negative environmental impacts meat and dairy consumption creates. UNEP observes that animal products, both meat and dairy, require more resources and cause higher emissions than plant-based alternatives, and that more than half of the world’s crops are used to feed animals, not people.

In a recent report assessing national Food-based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) which are issued by governments to inform healthy eating, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) urges that food systems jeopardize current and future food production and fail to nourish people adequately, and that if we are to address the multiple associated social, health and environmental challenges, global populations need to move towards dietary patterns that are both healthy and environmentally sustainable. Which means less meat and dairy products.

What is a sustainable diet?

The 2010 International Scientific Symposium “Biodiversity and Sustainable Diets: United Against Hunger”, agreed a definition of sustainable diets as

“those diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations. Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimizing natural and human resources.”

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The production of animal products has an inherently low resource use efficiency, due to the limits of the metabolism of the animals concerned, despite the barbaric interventions used in intensive

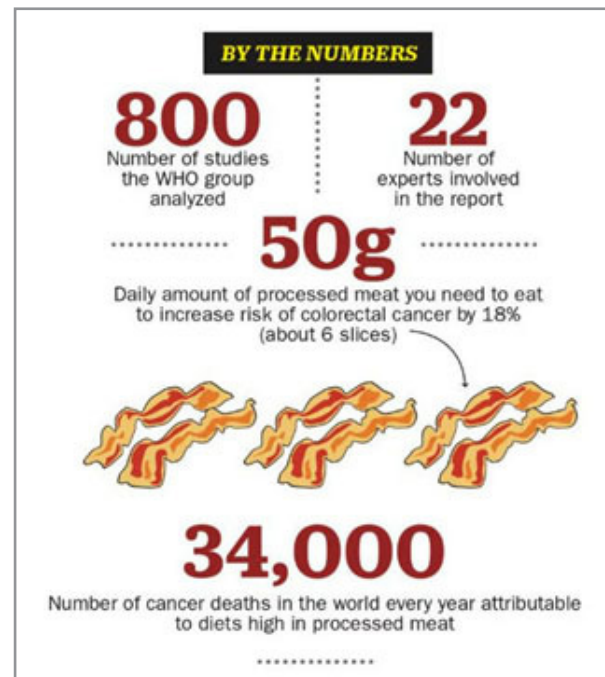
Only four countries have so far included sustainability in their FBDGs - Brazil, Sweden, Qatar and Germany - and all highlight that a largely plant-based diet has advantages for health and for the environment. Sweden provides more detailed advice on which plant-based foods are to be preferred, recommending for example root vegetables over salad greens.

animal (factory) farming which aim to override this, whereby animals are crammed by the thousands into filthy, windowless structures, are stuffed into wire cages, metal crates, and other torturous devices, which become the only home they know, and are crippled and injured as a result of unnatural weight gain, self-harming from stress, and maltreatment. Cows, pigs, chickens and other animals are denied the ability to meet their basic natural urges such as nurturing their young, rooting around in soil, building nests and even being outdoors. This is despite the fact that according to UNEP “the production of agricultural biomass, especially animal products, is and will remain an inefficient transformation process compared to most industrial processes.”

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The food industry however, is homogenizing crop production leading to serious declines in agrobiodiversity. An important feature of a sustainable and healthy diet is diversity yet ‘elite’ strains of high-producing crop varieties cover relatively large areas, with many highly dependent on fertilizers and pesticides which are detrimental to ecosystems. According to the FAO, Since the 1900s, 75% of plant genetic diversity has been lost as farmers all over the world opt for genetically uniform, high-yielding varieties. Locally diverse food production systems are under threat along with local knowledge, culture and skills of the food producers. In India, for example, varieties of rice grown have reduced from over 42,000 to a few hundred.

The Brazilian FBDGs emphasize the social and economic aspects of sustainability, advising people to be wary of advertising, and to avoid ultra-processed foods that are bad for health but which also undermine traditional food cultures. Brazil positively contrasts with the largely environmental definition of sustainability adopted in other national guidelines.



Time magazine infographic from the WHO IARC study

Vegans and environmental and human health

According to a 2014 study published in the journal of Climatic Change, dietary greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are approximately twice as high in meat eaters as those in vegans. Moving from a high meat diet to a vegan diet would reduce an individual's carbon footprint by 1,560 kgCO₂e (carbon dioxide equivalent)/year. To put this into context, an economy return flight from London to New York adds 960kgCO₂e to an individual's carbon footprint; A family running a 10-year-old small family car for 6,000miles has a carbon footprint of 2,440 kgCO₂e.

Previous analyses of the same cohort have demonstrated lower BMI and fewer ischaemic heart disease events in diet groups with lower intakes of animal products.

Industry not science determining what is deemed "healthy"

Scientific studies have noted the correlation between eating meat and cancer. Positive associations are seen between consumption of red meat and cancers of the pancreas and the prostate, and between consumption of processed meat and cancer of the stomach.

In 2015, the World Health Organization's (WHO's) International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) therefore classified the consumption of red meat (defined by the IARC as all types of mammalian muscle meat, such as beef, veal, pork, lamb, mutton, horse, and goat) as probably carcinogenic to humans, finding "strong mechanistic evidence supporting a carcinogenic effect". Processed meat (transformed through salting, curing, fermentation, smoking, or other processes) was classified as carcinogenic to humans.

While meat consumption has been relatively static in the developed world, world meat production is projected to double by 2050, most of which is expected in developing countries. In 2013, meat and poultry industry sales in the USA totalled \$198 billion, and the export value of beef and beef variety meat exports reached a record \$807 billion in 2014.

Despite the research, powerful industry lobbies remain intent on promoting food known to cause ill-health, including dairy, sugar and processed meat. Coca-Cola for example, is providing financial and logistical support to a new non-governmental organization (NGO), the Global Energy Balance Network,

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which promotes physical activity to offset a bad diet, despite evidence that exercise has only minimal impact on weight compared with what people consume or that the relationship between weight and exercise is controversial. According to a study in the American Journal of Preventative Medicine, between 2011 to 2015, the Coca-Cola Company and PepsiCo sponsored 95 national health organizations, including institutions whose specific missions include fighting the obesity epidemic. During the same period, the corporations lobbied against 29 public health bills intended to reduce soda consumption or improve nutrition. The USA's largest trade group of nutrition professionals, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, is accused of undermining the integrity of those professionals most responsible for educating Americans about healthy eating due to its links with food companies. The Academy has failed to support controversial nutrition policies that might upset corporate sponsors, such as limits on soft drink sizes, soda taxes, or GMO labels. Coca-Cola withdrew its financial sponsorship of the Academy after critics accused it of trying to downplay the role of sugary drinks in obesity.

In the UK, the promotion of meat and dairy products by business and government is widespread, including milk in schools, despite numerous studies showing adverse health effects, such as the association between high animal protein diets with liver cancer in children. "If anything, cow's milk and its products appear to be even more problematic than other animal-based foods", comments T. Colin Campbell, Jacob Gould Schurman Professor Emeritus of Nutritional Biochemistry at Cornell University. Despite many of the studies reviewed by the IARC dating back over 10 years, the US Government's FBDGs - the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) - contain no reference to reducing processed and red meats in its key messages and does not explicitly urge reduction of these products in its protein foods section, talking instead about varying protein sources and limiting sodium intake in relation to processed meats. "We are pretty disappointed the report doesn't recommend limiting red and processed meat because of the link to cancer," said Katie McMahon of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) comments that the 2015 DGA process has been under a major, sustained attack by the meat and other aspects of the food industry and some Members of Congress. For example, in assessing the proposed DGAs, one Member of the US Government's House Agriculture Committee, Glenn Thompson, the U.S. Representative for Pennsylvania's 5th congressional district, asked "what can we do to remove policies that are hindering milk consumption or promote policies that could enhance milk consumption?" and then "went on to wonder out loud about the impact of the Guidelines on commodity markets".

Protein – also assumed to be lacking in a vegan diet – can be found in multiple plant-based sources. Meanwhile, consumers of meat, eggs and dairy products – often eaten on the basis of being the only perceived reliable source of protein and B12 - will also be unwittingly absorbing antibiotic-resistant bacteria, hormones and toxins, which can increase the risk of cancer in humans and lead to other adverse health effects.

What about protein and vitamin B12?

The vegan diet is criticized for lacking vital nutrients, most notably B12. Indeed, the Vegan Society states that the only reliable vegan sources of B12 are foods fortified with B12 and B12 supplements. However, vegans following this advice are much less likely to suffer from B12 deficiency than the typical meat eater: It has been demonstrated that vitamin B12 from fortified foods is better absorbed than B12 from meat, poultry and fish.

Protein – also assumed to be lacking in a vegan diet – can be found in multiple plant-based sources. Meanwhile, consumers of meat, eggs and dairy products – often eaten on the basis of being the only perceived reliable source of protein and B12 - will also be unwittingly absorbing antibiotic-resistant bacteria, hormones and toxins, which can increase the risk of cancer in humans and lead to other adverse health effects. While organic meat and dairy are healthier (banning routine antibiotic administration for example) and have higher animal welfare standards, meat and dairy – whether organic or not – are widely linked to health problems in humans; plant-based diets with protection against those very same diseases.

Industry profits from curing the ill-health it creates

In the face of the obesity crisis, the food industry instead of creating healthy food, created a new market in diet foods which continued to promote unhealthy eating: “By creating the ultimate oxymoron of diet food – something you eat to lose weight – it squared a seemingly impossible circle. And we bought it”, comments Jacques Peretti in the Guardian.

Meanwhile in the USA, food companies (whose products may be associated with disease and ill health) and pharmaceutical companies (which benefit from the ill health) were found to be funding health organizations such as American Diabetes Association (ADA), the American Cancer Society (ACS), and the American Heart Association (AHA).

In 2000 the International Obesity Task Force (IOTF) drafted a report for WHO which defined the global obesity problem as an epidemic and which paved the way for the pharmaceutical industry to create obesity “cures”. Significantly, the IOTF was funded by drugs companies.

Research sponsored by the drug industry is more likely to produce results favouring the product made by the company sponsoring the research than studies funded by other sources. The results apply across a wide range of disease states, drugs, and drug classes, and research types, over at least two decades suggesting systematic bias to the outcome of published research funded by the pharmaceutical industry. Similar accusations are levelled at the food industry. Between March and October 2015, in research conducted by Marion Nestle, of 76 food industry-funded studies, 70 reported results favourable to the sponsor’s interest.

The author of the report Professor Philip James, commented in the Guardian that “if you have a drug that drops your weight and doesn’t do you any other harm in terms of side-effects, that is a multibillion megabuck drug.”

This lack of transparency around entrenched corporate vested interests is compounded by bias in research studies. Research sponsored by the drug industry is more likely to produce results favouring the product made by the company sponsoring the research than studies funded by other sources. The results apply across a wide range of disease states, drugs, and drug classes, and research types, over at least two decades suggesting systematic bias to the outcome of published research funded by the pharmaceutical industry. Similar accusations are levelled at the food industry. Between March and October 2015, in research conducted by Marion Nestle, of 76 food industry-funded studies, 70 reported results favourable to the sponsor’s interest.

The opportunity in plant-based diets

Plant-based diets present an opportunity for better health, respect for animal welfare and protecting the environment. They also represent an opportunity to reclaim personal agency in a world in which personal choices about diet and health are made by corporations, without the average person even being aware of it.

The FAO observes that the focus over recent decades has been on improving the environmental efficiency of production. However three additional approaches have been suggested: 1) Addressing power imbalances in the food system such as price and subsidy distortions, supporting and empowering smallholder farmers and landless workers, and agreeing better working conditions (while food production contributes to the economy, many of the world’s 1.3 billion smallholders and landless agricultural workers live on or below the poverty line); 2) Reducing the amount of food that is lost or wasted (one third of all food produced); and 3) the role of healthy and sustainable eating patterns in addressing both health and environmental challenges.

It is this latter point – healthy and sustainable eating patterns in support of positive change for the planet, and human and animal wellbeing - that can be championed by a plant-based diet. In the face of corporate and political opposition, veganism appears to be a tide that is not about to turn.

Andrea Lamberti has used a vegan diet to address long standing health issues, and to create a more ethical relationship between person and planet. As well as supporting his physical health, Andrea found veganism is naturally aligned to his philosophy of living simply and minimally, allowing less packaging, chemicals and processing, and avoiding the unnecessary commodification of animals. A keen photographer of nature and the underwater world, Andrea is a quiet advocate of humanity inhabiting the world as a curator rather than as a consumer.



ANDREA'S RAINBOWL RECIPE

Exploding with taste and nutrients,
this plant-based meal is delicious,
simple and full of vitality

RECIPE & PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ANDREA LAMBERTI

Andrea's vegan rainbowl recipe uses readily available staple foods for a balanced vegan diet. The bowl is layered with incredible taste combinations and is perfect for sharing with a friend. The ingredients use the whole colour spectrum of plants and vegetables to maximize vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients. Phytonutrients naturally occur only in plants and are thought to work synergistically with the vitamins, minerals and fibre in fruits and vegetables, to regenerate essential nutrients and protect against the risk of some chronic diseases¹.

You can adapt the recipe using local, seasonal produce, to make an eye-catching, eye-watering, nutritious feast any time of the year.



The ingredients:

Top row: Chickpeas, Andrea's rich tomatoe dip (see below), fresh tomatoes, walnuts and apricots, rocket and spinach.

Middle row: Tumeric, paprika, chia seed, red cabbage, carrot, aubergine (egg plant), peppers (capsicum), cucumber, onion, garlic, date syrup, mustard, in the mortar and pestle - chia seeds, hemp hearts, turmeric.

Bottom row: coriander and parsley, beetroot, sweetcorn, sugar snap peas, orange and lemon.

**Layer 1: Spicy and sweet chickpeas**

Pan fry chickpeas with chopped onions, garlic, smoked paprika, coriander and date syrup, mix with the mortar and pestle ingredients - chia seeds, hemp hearts, turmeric.

**Layer 2: Pan-fried Aubergines**

Aubergines pan fried in turmeric and almond oil.

**Layer 3: Mixed green salad**

Spinach, rocket, parsley, walnuts, dried apricots, almond oil, grated lemon zest.



Final layer: Vegetable medley and Andrea's rich tomatoe dip

Clockwise – sugar snap peas; grated carrots; beetroot and sweetcorn; pepper battons; tomato, onion, cucumber, shredded red cabbage, almond oil. Andrea's rich tomatoe dip (tomato puree, sun dried tomatoes, garlic, paprika, dried chilies, cumin, turmeric, smoked paprika, almond oil, mustard – chop and mix to your taste). A squeeze of fresh orange. Ready to eat!

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. <http://jillgocher.com/> <https://www.amazon.com/Jill-Gocher> Instagram Jill Gocher



PICTURES FROM AN EXHIBITION

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JILL GOCHER

Something strange happened on my last trip to India. I fell in love and my vision of the country, the people and the life changed. These are pictures from Rajasthan - the most wondrous and wonderful state in the whole of Mother India which can only begin to do justice to the majesty and history that make it. They will be featured in my forthcoming exhibition and book titled *Iconic India*.



The Dark majesty of the golden Fort of Jaisalmer is reflected in this picture. Centuries old sandstone and granite worn smooth, with the patinas of age shining through.

© Jill Gocher



A pigeon alights on a parapet of the golden fort. All day their billing and cooing adds another dimension to the stone while each day kind folk scatter grain for them to eat. Swirls of pigeons can be seen wheeling and turning against the blue skies.



Day. An ancient cupola? Makes the perfect place to sit and contemplate the beauties of Lake Gadisar in Jaisalmer.



Night.



Out in the desert the fingernail sliver of the new moon can be seen in the desert sky while a lone dog wanders, seeking.



jill gocher

The supermoon lights up the desert skies near Jaisalmer.



A desert nomad wanders through the desert, leading his camel home lit only by the light of the moon.

Mikyoung Cha is a graduate in Oriental Painting from Hyosung Women's University, Daegu, South Korea. She has participated in a number of group art exhibitions in South Korea and Japan. In 2016 she took up photography – the camera becoming her paint brush. This globe trotting photographer is a regular contributor to Live Encounters Magazine.



POSTCARDS FROM CHANG MAI

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MIKYOUNG CHA

The following photographs are fleeting images of
a vibrant tourist destination in north Thailand.

Enjoy.



Welcome to Chiang Mai.



Chang Mai Flower Festival.



Northern Thai style Hors d'oeuvre at *Tong Ten Toh*.



Wat Phra That Doi Suthep.



Chang Mai Night Safari.

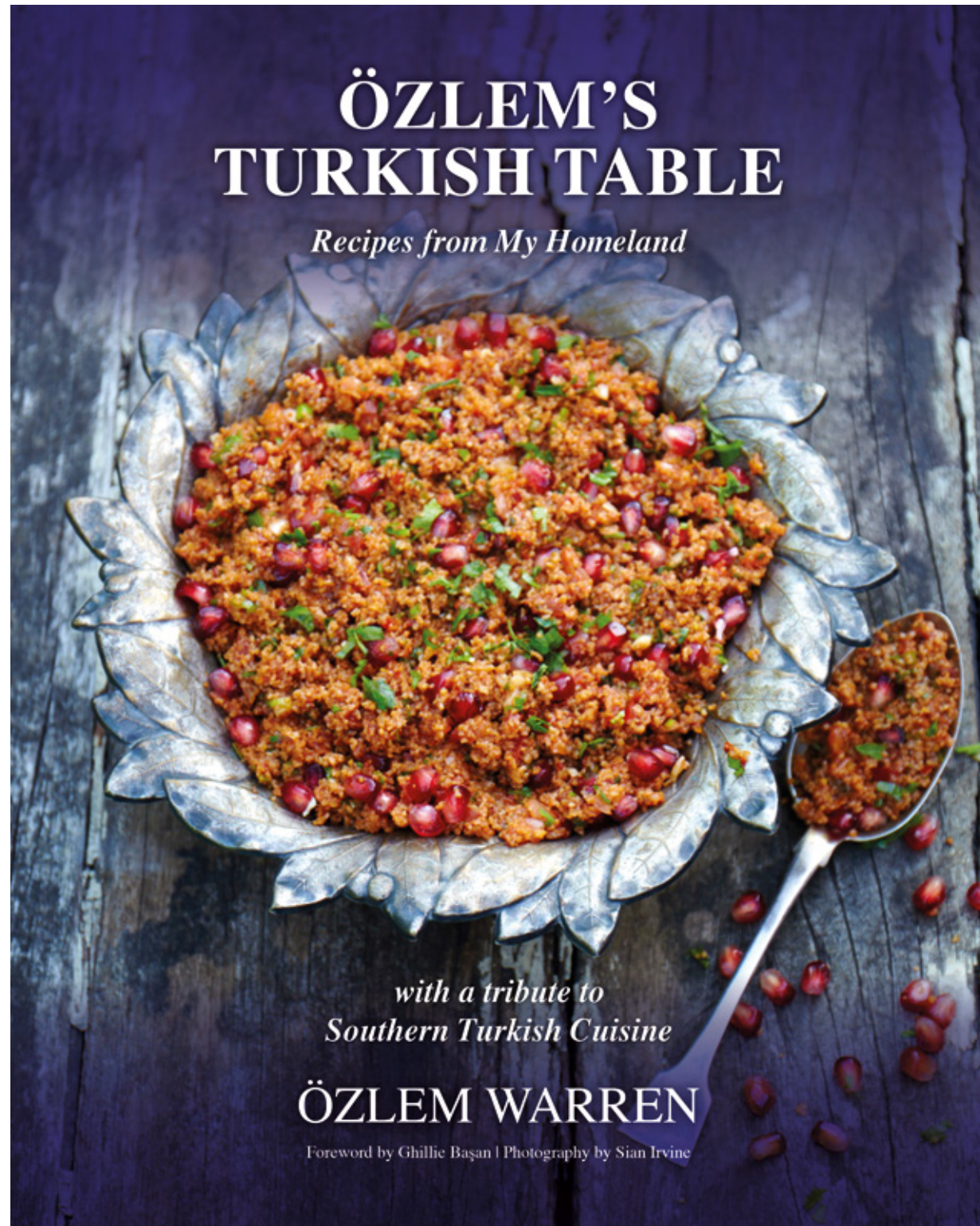


Night out on a bike.



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 by Ozlem Warren is available for pre-orders at
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Etli Pilav

Rice with Chunks of Meat (lamb or beef) and Onion

One of the dishes we made at our Aegean style Turkish cooking class at Hanimeli, near Sirince was this very delicious & impressive Etli Pilav – Rice cooked with chunks of meat and onions. It is common to incorporate meat and vegetables into the rice and flavors change in different regions, with the use of different spices. It has been very interesting to see how Etli Pilav is made in the Aegean region.

We greatly enjoyed this delicately flavored Etli Pilav, the Aegean style; the marriage of sauteed onions and meat was so delicious cooked with rice.

The cooking of rice is regarded as an art (and traditionally an important test for the bride-to-be to master before marriage!); the grains must be soft but still have a bite to them.

Afiyet Olsun,

Ozlem

Serves: 4 - 6

Preparation time : 15 minutes

Cooking time: 35-40 minutes

Ingredients:

- 350gr/12oz/1 ¾ cups long grain or wholegrain basmati rice, rinsed and drained
- 450gr/1 lb. beef or lamb, cut in small chunks
- 2 medium onions, quartered and sliced thinly
- 30ml/2 tablespoon butter
- 1lt/4 cups of the meat's cooking liquid reserved
- 15ml/1 tablespoon olive oil
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste



Instructions

Non-stick pan works best for this dish

Place the meat in a heavy pan, pour in the water (enough to cover the meat and some more) and cover. Cook for about 20 minutes or until tender at low to medium heat. Season with salt and ground black pepper and make sure to reserve and keep the cooking liquid.

In a separate pan (non-stick pan works best), stir in 1 tbsp. butter and olive oil and sauté the onions for 2-3 minutes. Then take out the cooked meat from the other pan and spread them evenly over the onions. Over the meat, stir in and spread the rinsed rice. Add the cooking liquid, the remaining 1 tbsp. butter and salt to taste. Cover and cook on low heat for about 15 minutes or until the rice is cooked and the liquid absorbed.

Once cooked, turned the heat off and place a paper towel over the pan and cover with the lid. Rest the rice for about 10 minutes, this will help all the moisture to be absorbed and rice to settle.



Before serving, turn the rice upside down on a wide serving tray, onions and the meat will appear as layers at the top, looking like a delicious savory cake. The delicious flavors of the cooked meat and onion blend in with the rice and make it very flavorful.

Season with ground black pepper and serve hot. This dish can be a meal on its own, or you can complement it with eggplants cooked in olive oil with vegetables, Zeytinyagli Patlican or how about with refreshing Purslane with garlic yoghurt, Yogurtlu Semizotu?



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MARCH 2018



COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY SOURAV JOURDAR