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COOKING ON SLOVENE NATIONAL TELEVISION DURING SOCIALISM: AN OVERVIEW OF COOKING PROGRAMMES FROM 1960 TO 1990

ABSTRACT

This article gives a brief historical overview of cooking programmes broadcast on TV Ljubljana between 1960 and 1990 that were mainly produced in Slovenia. From the famous chef Ivan Ivačič in the early 1960s through "Vegeta's kitchen" in the 1970s to a children's cooking show, Lonček, kuhaj [Little pot, cook!] in 1990, I analyse the contents of these shows and demonstrate their thematic variation. I also place them in their historical context, especially in terms of socialist television. Cooking shows, which were not only a source of knowledge about new equipment, ingredients and cooking techniques, also revealed to the audience during socialism a different lifestyle, tastes and manners, making television one of the important contributors to the idea of the community, either as a class or nation. Despite this, compared to contemporary cooking shows, the genre of the time remains directed towards education, a feature generally not dissimilar to cooking shows in non-socialist contexts.

KEYWORDS: cooking shows, socialism, television, Ivan Ivačič, Vegeta

Kuhanje na slovenski nacionalni televiziji v socializmu: pregled kuharskega programa med 1960 in 1990

IZVLEČEK

Članek prinaša krajši zgodovinski pregled kuharskih oddaj, ki so bile predvajane na TV Ljubljana med 1960 in 1990 in večinoma producirane v Sloveniji. Od slavnega kuharja Ivana Ivačiča v začetku 1960-ih, prek "Vegetine kuhinje" v 70-ih do otroške kuharske oddaje Lonček, kuhaj leta 1990 vsebinsko analiziram in prikažem tematsko raznovrstnost teh oddaj ter jih umestim v njihov zgodovinski kontekst, tudi v smislu socialistične televizije. Kuharske oddaje, ki niso bile le vir novega znanja o pripomočkih, sestavinah in tehnikah kuhanja, so gledalstvu v socializmu predstavljale drugačen življenjski slog, okuse in obnašanje, s čimer je televizija hkrati soustvarjala tudi zavednost skupnosti, tako razreda kot naroda in nacije. Kljub temu gre v primerjavi z današnjimi kuharskimi šovi za bolj v

izobraževanje usmerjen žanr, v glavnem podoben tistim, predvajanim v nesocialističnih kontekstih v istem časovnem obdobju.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: Kuharske oddaje, socializem, televizija, Ivan Ivačič, Vegeta, TV Slovenija

1 Introduction¹

Today, television cooking lurks from our television screens every hour of the day; as we increasingly have an opportunity to watch global TV channels such as Food Network with 24 hours broadcasting of celebrity chefs, cooking shows and food advertising, Signe Rousseau's (2012: xix) question – "Do you remember when chefs just cooked?" – may be more pertinent than ever. Many will still remember the days when television cooking show came once a week and, due to lack of recording devices, those interested to watch had to adjust their lives to fit around the TV schedules. TV chefs entertained, but primarily taught audiences how to cook, how to behave and, most importantly, how to be modern; in the post-war time when television screens spread across Europe, watching TV became a way of acquiring (petit-bourgeois) distinction (Bourdieu 1984) especially in light of the power of television in stirring social, cultural and political change (Williams 1974).

Yet, as Rousseau (2012) aptly argues, despite such educational beginnings, television cooking from the 1990s onward tended to turn from being educational towards being entertaining as food has increasingly become cooked – and represented – "for your viewing pleasure" and for satisfying the audience's insecurities, fantasies, and desires (Adema 2000: 114). This is not to say that today's cooking shows no longer offer its audiences education about food and cooking – de Solier's (2013) study shows that this is not the case as many of those who cook for leisure do so based on knowledge they gain through television. Rather, it may be argued, today's food media is not so much about satisfying our desire for education about the everyday; instead, it is mostly an industry that offers escape from the everyday.

From the perspective of contemporary Slovene mediascape, especially television, which has undergone major changes since the late 1980s and today includes, similarly to other European contexts, a public broadcaster and a number of private television stations that offer viewers a range of imported as well as locally produced cooking shows with characteristics not dissimilar to those noted in other contexts, it may be salient to look back to the TV cooking of the 1960s, 70s and 80s, when cooking was largely educational, in particular within the context of socialist television. In line with much of recent studies that demonstrate the broader interlinking between the Western and Socialist televisions and the programme (cf. Mihelj 2012; 2014 and the references cited there) the Yugoslav cooking shows that were broadcast on the Slovene television form an important part of European television (cooking) history, which – while broadly studied in some Western countries such as the UK and US – have been largely, if not entirely, overlooked in the socialist,

1. This overview would not be possible without the kind assistance of the personnel of RTV Slovenia's Archive section, in particular Jožica Hafner and Jožica Leskovar, who offered invaluable help and advice during my research there. I am thankful for their time and assistance.

including Slovene, academic contexts. Some of this has to do with – until recently – a relative lack of interest in food-related research in the Slovene social sciences (although see, interesting but not TV oriented work on food by, e.g., Mlekuž 2008; Zevnik and Stanković 2011; Jezernik 2012; Slapšak 2013 to mention only those not cited elsewhere in this paper). This might have to do with, as some literature suggests, a perception of the topic as rather ‘feminine’ and, consequentially, a rather pejorative perception of food as an object of scientific study.²

Most of the data presented in this paper were gathered in the archives of RTV Slovenia in Ljubljana and, where published, also online. Not much recorder data remains from the early periods because a large part of broadcasting was live. Where recordings existed, tapes were later often reused because of cost and lack of recording materials; thus, the tracks that contained seemingly less important material were used for other recordings (Dušan Hren, personal communication, April 2015). The overview therefore also relies on other material, such as the filming notes and archive records, which are more readily available.

Despite these methodological limitations, the paper brings forward a modest attempt at an overview of material dedicated to television cooking education in the Slovene national television in socialism. The aim is to start a discussion about not only Slovene but also Yugoslav and broader socialist cooking on television from the perspective of not only its role in educating the nation, but also in terms of nation, class and taste-building as salient factors in shaping the post-war socialist consumers and, indeed, whole societies. Television cooking shows, as much recent literature demonstrates but cannot be reviewed here due to lack of space, has been much researched in terms of its potential to promote class lifestyle and provide cultural capital for the aspiring middle classes, where chefs are seen as ‘cultural intermediaries’ (Bourdieu 1984). That is, they are considered to be cultural authorities who shape their audience’s tastes (Strange 1998; Lewis 2008; Jontes 2014; Piper 2015, among others). Also, seeing food as an important part of the identity of the imagined community, i.e., nation, (Anderson 1983) such shows at the same time also build an idea of a broader community. For example, the audience could learn about the food that is not only supposed to be characteristic for “us” (i.e., “our national/regional dishes”), but also for “them” (“Serbian cuisine”) (cf. Volčič 2006; Mlekuž 2015). Hence, a question that may be asked in this paper is how did these shows on one hand educate the audience about new foods, dishes and techniques of cooking, while at the same time, promote an idea of a class lifestyle and, in some cases, build a national consciousness via food?

2. Cf. a media outcry at the topic of BA dissertation of Bojana Rudovič Žvanut in 2011, where even some members of the larger academic community suggested that to graduate on a topic of ‘burek’ is a “degrading of academic study” (Gruden 2011).

2 The beginnings: Home economics programme on TV Ljubljana

TV Ljubljana, which started its regular programme in October 1958, formed a common Yugoslav television (*Jugoslavenska radiotelevizija*) together with TV Zagreb and TV Belgrade until 1990, when it was renamed into RTV Slovenia (Pušnik 2010: 231). In the beginning, large percentage of production was imported from the West, a consequence of lack of experienced staff and funding. More programmes were produced at home during the 1970s and 1980s; however, through-out the socialist period, influence of Western television in Yugoslavia was significant (Mihelj 2012). While there are many similarities with Western television during this time, some differences remain; for example, non-gendered day slots with programmes which consisted of news, educational and children's programmes. Evening prime programmes were mainly meant for news and entertainment, programmes that could attract the widest audience (Mihelj and Huxtable 2015).

At the core of post-war public broadcasting – be it in the European West or the East – was the idea of television as an educator; for example, the Italian RAI and the British BBC, where Reithian values underpinned much of the programming as a means of enlightenment of the masses. Socialist authorities similarly saw this new technology as a pedagogic tool that could help with “mass cultural elevation”, where people's preferences were not necessarily at the centre of programming choices (Mihelj 2012). Hence, in this vein, early TV Ljubljana dedicated much of its programme to topics related to cooking and home economics in general with an intention to improve not only homes, but also – in line with socialist ideology of gender equality – to “help the employed wife and (dis)unburden her of many home duties” (RTVSLO Archive 1959, N24/8). Much of this food programming functioned as a promoter of new, western middle class styles of life, behaviours and tastes: shows included topics like how and what to eat, how to be a good hostess, including, for example, how to present cutlery at the table or how to use newly introduced home appliances (e.g., an electric mixer, a vacuum cleaner), which started to become widely available in the early 1960s. From the mid-sixties, a special show entitled *Malo za vsakogar, nekaj za vse* [A little bit for everybody, something for all] was aired on TV Ljubljana featuring advice on such issues, for example, how to make sauerkraut, how to use juice maker and the special kind of glasses for preservation of fruit (the so called *patent kozarci*). The show offered also advice on other aspects of home maintenance and decoration: installation of radiators, cleaning of carpets, decorating the New Year's tree, washing the laundry in a machine, furnishing a modern kitchen and much more. Looking at these archive records from today's perspective, it is striking to learn how many new techniques, products and behaviours there were to get acquainted with in a relatively short span of time; it should not be surprising, then, that people at the time saw these new appliances that television introduced for the first time as “wonders of the modern household” (Pušnik and Starc 2008: 783). In a sense then, television offered “daydreaming consumerism”, as it shaped desires for certain new objects, therefore fuelling socialist - but also foreign - industry (*ibid.*: 784).

Apart from introducing novelty, television also reported about events that took place across the country; therefore, it acted as a device of symbolic unification, providing to the

people a 'story of themselves'. Suddenly, via news or reportages from other parts of the country, audiences were now aware of their fellow citizens and "fellow viewers", including the ones they never would have been aware of before (Morley and Robins 1995: 66; Pušnik and Starc 2008: 785). Places that acted as centres of modernisation, such as schools and hotels, became popular venues for reporting about new (or simply newsworthy) food-related practices: a culinary exhibition of Hospitality School and Hotel in Ljubljana (1964) or Maribor (1967), and a reporting about community work, such as youth organisation of cooking courses (for example, in Gorečja vas on Dravsko polje in 1966), including those for "Gypsy women and girls" in 1963 (RTVSLO Archive 1963, N11/1).

3 Master Ivačič's Cooking advice: the first cooking show on the Slovene TV

The first chef to cook in a cooking show on the Slovene television was Ivan Ivačič, who, as Collins (2005: 73) finds for Julia Child cooking in the US at the same time, was "one of the first to present purely food-centred cooking show as opposed to homemaking show and /.../ a host-centred cooking show." In this sense, then, TV Ljubljana was entirely comparable to trends in the West. He sprang from one of the early TV family shows entitled *Družinska oddaja* [A Family Show], where he appeared occasionally as a food expert. As an "in-house chef" he also appeared in TV *Obzornik* in 1962, advising holidaymakers about holiday food on the Adriatic coast or what to cook when we "are not in a mood to cook" (RTVSLO Archive 1962, KF 1033).

In 1961, he started a show entitled *Kuharski nasveti* [Cooking advice]. This show, broadcast once a week live in the evening prime time at 6pm,³ was, like himself, hugely popular as he influenced and inspired a generation of women – and perhaps even men – in the kitchen. He prepared simple dishes, such as mashed potatoes, demonstrated more complex techniques, such as cooking and compiling of *aspiks*, and introduced dishes from other Yugoslav republics and from abroad, for example *sarma* and *vareniki* often to audiences who have never before seen how to prepare them 'correctly'. In the beginning, the shows were broadcast live from the TV Ljubljana's radio studio, which meant that despite two rehearsals, Ivačič, who was a professional chef, did not have much room for mistake. This, however, had its own advantages. Since he was forced to improvise at the unpredictability of live cooking, he, at the same time, demonstrated to the audience that he, like them, had to do with limitations of the available equipment. For example, as the water boiled over the pot or aspic would not go out of the mould as expected, he managed to control the situation well.⁴ In one of the shows, for example, where he prepares the Rus-

3. The programme of the 1960s during the week was organized in two blocks: the most of the week, except Tuesdays, when it was the day off, the morning programme was broadcast between 9am and 12pm while the afternoon block started between 3pm and 6pm and went on until 10pm or 11pm (Mihelj in Huxtable 2015).

4. In the US, Julia Child faced similar limitations of live cooking with similar (positive) consequences for the construction of the TV persona (cf. Collins 2009: 71-80).

sian dish *vareniki*, he uses a part of the walnut mill as a square model to cut *vareniki* in a square shape, specifically acknowledging and commenting upon this simple adjustment that anyone could use at home (RTVSLO Archive, 1966, P 25/7).⁵

A comparison between the screenplay text and one of the actual recordings of the shows suggest that he mostly improvised, responding to situations as they occurred, despite having prepared the text in advance. In a rather conversational (unscripted) style, not common for the television of the time, he came across as the understanding cooking mentor who strived to chat through the many silences of the live transmission. In one of the shows, as he commented on having to wash dishes in a large bowl, he asked about availability of water in his viewers homes: "Today, we don't have any water here. Does this happen sometimes in your house too?" (RTVSLO Archive 1968, P 153/7). In another episode, he pioneered – rather daringly for the time, but in line with socialist vision for the gender equality – the help of the husband in the kitchen, challenging gender roles and encouraging change (RTVSLO Archive 1968, P77/6). While demonstrating preparation of a Russian dish 'vareniki', which appears to be a lengthy process, he says that this may be better done in a pair; hence "if your husband finds happiness in cooking, do not take this happiness away from him. Let him help you, right? When he gets used to it, he might start doing it himself."

In many ways, Ivačič was endearing, and his television persona communicated a sense of care for an average housewife who, he must have been aware of this through numerous letters he must have received, would have been carefully writing down his recipes in front of the television screen. This, however, was not always necessary, as similarly to modern chefs, Ivačič's relationship with his audience extended also to other platforms, and his recipes were published in *Tedenska tribuna* newspaper as a regular feature from 1961. In 1965, he also published a cookbook, which in its tenth reprint (2004) is still in circulation today. Despite such similarities to contemporary celebrity cheffing, he and the later chefs who became famous through the medium of television, should not be seen as "celebrity chefs". As Frances Bonner (2009) notes, such nomination may appear anachronistic, as the way celebrity is understood today in many ways differs from the 1960's media multiplatform. Also, ways in which cookbooks as spin-offs of TV cooking show were envisaged did not yet function as much in terms of celebrity branding and maximizing profit (Bonner 2009: 348), but perhaps rather as a response to the interest shown by the viewers in need of accessible new recipes.

5. Because of live broadcast, only a photograph exists of his early shows (1960), which illustrates him posing in front of a very elementary kitchen, mainly consisting of a cooker and a tray containing two roast chickens. For this photo, see the webpage of the project EU Screen (2015).

Image 1: Script for the show "Two kinds of sarmas" aired on 25 October 1961 with the chef's text on the left, notes for the camera (K) on the right and director Marija Šeme's notes in pencil. The screenplay starts with Ivačič's reference to the presenter Helena Kordaš, who announced the show prior to its airing: "As you've heard, today we have in our programme *sarma*. I have decided to prepare it because our housewives still have problems with rolling and cooking it. They help themselves with toothpick and tread etc. None of this is required, if we know how to prepare it correctly." Courtesy of the Archive of the Radio Television Slovenia.

AUDIO	VIDEO
<p>A v i z o</p> <p><u>I. Ivačič:</u> Kot ste slišali, imamo danes na programu sarmo. Odločil sem se, da jo bom pripravil, saj imajo naše gospodinje še vedno težave pri zavijanju in kuhanju. Pomagajo si z zobotrebcji, s sukancem itd. Vse to pa ni potrebno, če jo znamo pravilno pripraviti.</p> <p>Nadev sem že izgotovil in bom samo povedal iz česa sestoji.</p> <p>Umešal sem pol govedine, pol svinjine, oboje mleto vendar ne predrobno. Na 1 kg. mesa damo 2 dkg soli, malenkost popra, zarumenjeno čebulo, tolčen česen, sekljan peteršilj, prgišče zbranega, opranega, vendar ne kuhanega riža in 1 dcl vode. Sarmi lahko dodamo tudi jajce /na 1 kg nadeva 2 jajci/. Meso dobro premešamo in mesimo toliko časa, da postane vlaknasta. Za sarmo v trsnem listu, nadev imam v manjši posodi, pa sem dodal tudi nekoliko teletine, ter na koske narezano slanino.</p> <p>Sedaj sledi to, kar je najbolj važno, namreč, zavijanje pravilno, zavijanje.</p> <p>Najprej sarma iz sladkega zelja. Glavo svežega zelja, ki pa ne sme biti preveč žilnata takole zarezemo, nabodemo na vilice in v okisani vreli vodi vrtimo. Liste, ki odpadejo, sproti pobiramo in zlagamo na desko. Listom porežemo rebra, jih polnimo</p>	<p>T - Dve vrsti sarme</p> <p><i>kg - detajle meso</i> <i>ts - total</i></p> <p><i>K</i> - posoda z nadevom <i>manjša posoda z nadevom za sarmo v trsnem listu</i></p> <p><i>K1 stabilnik</i> <i>03</i></p> <p>K - govori in dela</p> <p><i>kg</i> <i>02</i></p> <p><i>Mizo ne kovan</i> <i>- 2 -</i></p>

4 Cooking on TV in the 1970s and 1980s

As the sixties turned into the seventies, television was already becoming a usual part of the Slovene households. If there were 3,444 televisions in the 1960 in Slovenia, by 1968 the number was almost 176,000 (Statistical office of Slovenia, 1991, in Pušnik and Starc 2008: 791), at a population of around 1.7 million. TV Ljubljana continued to broadcast numerous short films related to home economics and especially food; however, through the two decades, these remained relatively focused on food preparation, rather than host-centred.

At the same time, food started to become linked to obesity. While diet and health have been interlinked before, overweight issues started to dominate the media discussions from the late 1960s on and finally made it to the TV screens in a programme *TV brez trebuha* [TV without the stomach] in 1979. By this time, other media, such as women's magazine *Naša žena* [Our Woman] presented a similar shift in attitude, as "demonizing food rich in fat and sugar and glorifying vegetables and fruit had become the prevailing approach to writing about healthy eating, and weight control was gradually incorporated into an ethical obligation" (Tivadar and Vezovnik 2010: 393). As a show designed to tackle obesity, *TV brez trebuha* aimed to address the "problems of the fat people" (*težave debelih*), as its presenter Mito Trefalt explained in the first in the series of shows, which were not only dedicated to cooking, but also featured food preparation as a large part of such advice. The show was not focused on the chef; rather, it included ten participants from various towns around Slovenia wanting to lose weight under the guidance of two experts, a medical doctor professor, Dr. Andreja Kocjančič from the University Medical centre Ljubljana, and a different guest-chef every time, who, over the course of ten shows, demonstrated preparation of dishes "with little calories" designed to help reduce weight. Hence, the dishes were not only low in fat, but they were also low in any other ingredients that could have added some taste, for example, herbs and spices or sauce. In the opening show, for example, the menu entitled *Kosilo dobre gospodinje* [A lunch of a good housewife], included the dishes: soup, poached filleted trout, cooked potatoes, grilled beef steaks (with fat trimmed), and cooked vegetables (RTVSLO Archive, 1979, P1954). Almost no fat was used in the preparation of this dish, which demonstrates the conviction which came to the forefront of health discussions at the time and which maintains that fat is one of the major foods that are to be blamed for obesity.⁶

Trefalt's hyper-correct use of standard Slovene aside (cf. Luthar 1992), it may be interesting to note that commenting from today's perspective, both the expert and the presenter talk of overweight people in what may seem to be derogatory vocabulary (*debeluhi, požeruhi, debeli*). However, this may not be surprising given the shift in perception around the 1970s. Certainly, in women's magazine *Naša žena*, it is clear that in the late 1960 such people were described in terms of *debelušnost* (chubbiness) and inclination to be corpulent rather than fat/obese since the connection between health and slimness has not yet been made. In the late 1970s, however, *Naša žena*, like Trefalt in his show,

6. Apart from this, the programme also shaped a new understanding of what a "good housewife" meant, as it reinforced female behaviour that gave preference to a light, non-caloric diet.

already feels obliged to tell the audience what has to be done in order to lose weight in order to achieve the ideal of health (Tivadar and Vezovnik 2010: 393).

5 Vegeta's five minutes per week: Podravka's promotional cooking show for all Yugoslavia

In 1974, TV Ljubljana started to air a new cooking show, similar to Ivačič's *Cooking advice*, where the chef himself leads the programme and maintains the relationship with the audience. While it was not produced in Slovenia, Vegeta's kitchen, as it also became known, was very popular through-out Yugoslavia, including Slovenia. The show, which was produced by the Croatian TV Zagreb in collaboration with the Yugoslav food company Podravka, promoted a new glutamate based food seasoning, Vegeta. The show was overseen by Ivanka Biluš, the Head of Market Insight Centre in Podravka, who was also "the mother of the recipes", as this was the food company Podravka's promotional show for Vegeta (Sinovčić 2010). This was a series of short, less than five minute videos in which a Croatian chef, Stevo Karapandža, teamed with either the presenter Ivo Serdar and later on, Oliver Mlakar, or other famous personalities from the Yugoslav cultural, political or sports life, and presented a dish using Vegeta as a seasoning. In the late 1980s, for example, in each show the chef hosted a famous personality from the Yugoslav cultural life, for example, Macedonian singer Violeta Tomovska, Serbian (children's) poet Ljubivoje Ršumović and even the legendary singer Tereza Kesovija, who would then suggest and cook a dish of their choice. Ivo Daneu, a Slovene basketball player, for example, proposed to cook *idrijski žlikrofi* (Idrija potato dumplings with filling) which was then cooked with the help of Karapandža, who adjusted each recipe so that it could also include Vegeta, the seasoning whose (Serbo-) Croatian announcement *I jednu žličicu Vegete!* (And one tea spoon of Vegeta!) became widely known and remembered part of the cooking instruction (for some examples, see videos available on the website from footnote 7).

Like Ivačič, Karapandža started as a relatively unknown young chef, but, as a result of the TV appearance, became famous. The show, officially entitled *Male tajne velikih majstora kuhinje* [Little secrets of great chiefs of cuisine], which, as Karapandža remembers, was designed to bring "joy to cooking", proved so popular that it run for nearly 25 years, well into the independence of states created after the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991. To Karapandža, it brought celebrity-like status, while at the same time Podravka's Vegeta become one of the most recognizable food products in Yugoslavia (Bracewell 2012: 178).⁷

Its popularity is perhaps not surprising since not many cooking shows were available at the time, but it mainly has to do with Podravka's skilful marketing strategy. In terms of style of performance, the shows followed the same genre as Ivačič. However, while his audience was Slovene, Vegeta was a pan-Yugoslav brand so the show aimed to be inclusive

7. In 2009, at the 50th anniversary of Vegeta brand, Podravka created an anniversary show, see Vegeta (2015). The page also includes samples of TV shows from the late 1980s.

and representative of the various nationalities and cultures of Yugoslavia, hence including dishes from all Yugoslav federal republics: from Slovenia in the North to Macedonia in the South. For example, the 1984 season presented a number of Yugoslav specialities, "18 popular dishes from the whole of our land" such as *zimski paprikaš* (winter *paprikaš*) from Vojvodina and the codfish with potato from Dalmatia (RTVSLO Archive, 1984, P1585/1, P1585/2, P 1585/3). Hence, if TV Ljubljana provided symbolic unification and orientation towards specific narratives of the nation for the Slovenes, shows broadcast in the whole of Yugoslavia, such as this one, aimed to similarly function on the level of Yugoslavia as the recipes, personalities and languages of all federal states were brought together.⁸ At the same time, like other shows, it also provided the required culinary capital and the cultural education for the aspirational classes.

As these *Vegeta* shows promoted the idea of one common country through its culinary delights, and included many features generally similar to those found in the West at the time, they also reflected a distinctly socialist vision of the world since they promoted a secular worldview (Mihelj and Huxtable 2015). As "the rhythm of festive programming, tied to major holidays, was set to a distinctly socialist tune" (*ibid.*) Karapandža's cooking had to promote – and suggest recipes for – non-religious holidays, such as New Year's, rather than Christmas, reflecting the specifically socialist context of these shows. Hence, at the end of December 1984, three days before New Year's holidays, Karapandža and Sardar prepared a dish which "you thought was sarma", but "it isn't sarma" but goose with cabbage to accompany the audience into 1985 (RTVSLO Archive 1984, P1584).

6 A grain of a film: many but short

From 1980, short education films about home economics, common for the whole period, continued under the title *Zrno do zrna* [Grain to grain], a series of educational films dedicated to food and other home economics novelties. The specifically food-related topics contained in *Zrno do zrna* – from 1982 they were called *Kulinarično zrno* [A culinary grain] – were not very different from those seen in the 1970s; some still discussed planning and the management of the weekly food stock and similar, but most were films about how to prepare various dishes. Their style somewhat diverged from a host-centred cooking show, as they were more of a documentary, since the instruction was given by the voice over while the viewers observe the chef's cooking skills and procedures. Chefs seen in these short films – in 1986, for example, Viktor Premk – were often at the same time promoting the hotel or the restaurant from where they came, as they often cooked in its premises wearing the uniform with its name and sometimes even served food on plates with a clearly visible logo (RTVSLO Archive 1986, 2798/90811). Food industry also had a profound interest in these series; for example, a number of films exist where their

8. Bracewell (2012) finds that, in general, cooking instruction in cookbooks published during the time of socialism did not demonstrate much of such unifying tendencies. Relying on cookbook data, limited to only Serbia and Croatia, she generalises for the whole Yugoslavia that not many cookbooks promoting Yugoslav cooking were available during this time.

sponsorship is explicitly mentioned: *Slovin – Slovenija Vino*, for example, sponsored a film about wine culture and *Mlinotest Ajdovščina* a recipe for pasta made with soy flour (RTVSLO Archive, 1986, 2798/90811). In a sense, much of the cooking instruction from the 1970s and 80s is directly linked to the advertising interests of either food or hospitality industry (Podravka, various restaurants and hotels), and later even kitchen brands (such as Lipa Ajdovščina that sponsored the children's show *Lonček, kuhaj* discussed in the section below).

While presenting novelty (e.g., soy, snails, Japanese tea), the films also presented a number of Slovene regional dishes as a way to introduce to the audience the variety of Slovene regional cooking. This, at the same time, offered a lens into the past (e.g., how people used to eat before World War II in Slovenia), and especially in the 1980s, signified another turn in the discourse about food with a clear focus on the local and regional food. In these shows, recipes of the past started to surface: the audience could learn about vegetables from the historic perspective (1983, Damijan Ovsec), old dishes of Primorska region (1983, Anton Vencelj), how to make *škofjeloške smojke* (1984), a speciality from Škofja Loka, *solčavski masunek* (1984), *štruklji* and *ajdovi žlikrofi* (1984), *ričet* (1985), *prekmurski bograč* and *gibanica* (1985), all regional Slovene dishes.⁹

The interest in the regionality of the Slovenia's cuisine and, in particular, a deeper interest in the historic justification for the existence of 'self' as a nation coincides with the political developments in Yugoslavia and the rising Slovene nationalism of the 1980s. Such a turn towards the regional foods and traditions in the 1980s, also found in a study of food advertising industry (cf. Kamin and Vezovnik 2014), was nevertheless in line with the move away from the industrial foods cherished during the 1970s and towards a movement that today resulted in a (middle class) foodie praise of local, organic and fair-trade produce (Johnston and Baumann 2015), clearly represented by the numerous celebrity chef shows not only globally, but increasingly also in Slovenia.

7 Cooking for children

7.1 Music, stories and food with Rifle

While all the shows examined until now have been designed as an educational – and also entertaining – means for adults with a focus to shape taste, cooking also featured as part of children's programme, although in a very limited manner. Given Mihelj and Huxtable's (2015) claim that in socialism, television was understood more than in other Western countries in terms of its educational potential, it is perhaps surprising that so little

9. At the same time, *Zrno do Zrna* still included preparation of various dishes from other parts of Yugoslavia, hence building on the audience's sense of the national Yugoslav as well as regional Slovene identity. However, interestingly, it was slowly turning away from recognition of these dishes as belonging to the nations constituting Yugoslavia. In 1986, for example, Premk showed how to make *džuzlema* and *tufahija*, sweets of Ottoman origin; yet, they are also eaten in regions of Yugoslavia, such as Bosnia. In the film, however, these sweets were represented as Turkish and Greek rather than Bosnian (RTVSLO Archive 1986, 2798/90881).

attention was given to children's culinary education on television. This may be because cooking was seen to be a skill that can be acquired at home in the circle of a family rather than provided by the media. Both examples presented here demonstrate the attention given to children learning about food (including vocabulary) and about manners via fun shows such as these; thus, these shows also helped to acquire cultural capital in the young.

In 1973, a show with a meaningful title, *Kuhinja pri violinskem ključu* [Kitchen at the treble clef] was aired in black and white on TV Ljubljana featuring Janez Hočevar Rifle and a number of children. At its core, this was a music show, introducing its young viewers to the classics, such as Mendelsohn, Brahms and Tokarev, which were played by the pupils of various Ljubljana music schools, aged up to 15, who participated in the show. While this was not a cooking show *per se*, cooking was used as a metaphor through which the show was structured, borrowing its vocabulary and procedures. Hence, through the role play, children could learn how to prepare food, including recipe and the required body movements, expand vocabulary while at the same time develop imaginative thinking since they were required to speak of music in terms of cooking. This example demonstrates how this was achieved. As children were selecting which instrument is to be played next by rotating the handle of a magic machine, a picture of a piano showed (RTVSLO Archive 1973, P633):

Children: It's piano!

Rifle: Piano!

One of the children: I would like to knead (zamesil) this, if I can.

Rifle: Well, go on, go on. I am sure it must be some kind of imported speciality.

Child: Yes, from America [As the piece he was about to play was American, comment A.T.]

At this point, the child starts playing the instrument, while Rifle and other children simulate baking pancakes.¹⁰ Following performance of several children, each playing a different instrument (flute, trumpet, violin), the show concludes with a music tale for the youngest of all children, entitled *Daddy* by request (*Očka po želji*). While the main educational purpose of this tale is to convey a moral message, there was also an explicit aim to expand children's vocabulary, in the case of this fairy-tale, *melancana* (aubergine), which must have been a relatively unknown vegetable at the time (*ibid.*):

"I can believe that after all this, Nikolai must have been very offended and was crouched in the corner, like a broken aubergine and spoke silently: kahfabrv (murmuring). Well, if you don't know what an aubergine is, I will show it to you (drawing), in summer you can see it in the market at the costermonger."

While *Kitchen at the treble clef* may not have been a usual cooking show, it did serve a similar educational function as it introduced children to the world of food preparation via the back door of music and storytelling.

10. Earlier on, one of the children was asked to tell Rifle the recipe for pancakes and how to make them.

7.2 Cat Pika and chef Janez in *Lonček, kuhaj!*

As the eighties turned into the nineties, the news of political and economic uncertainty of the time started to appear on the television screens. While in 1989, Yugoslavs could watch the fall of the Berlin wall from the safety of their living rooms, the troubled reality soon came to their neighbourhoods: in April 1990, Slovenes could first vote in multiparty elections, an event which paved the way for a referendum of independence held in December of the same year. In June 1991, as the independence was declared following a positive outcome of the popular vote, a brief war broke out in Slovenia, and later on, in other Yugoslav federal republics leading to a violent dissolution of Yugoslavia through-out the whole 1990s.

In this context, a new children's cooking show, entitled *Lonček, kuhaj!* [Little pot, cook!], was broadcast in 1990. Borrowing its title from a popular Czech tale where *lonček* cooks on its own, providing food to an old and poor woman as an act of gratitude for her good heartedness, the show continued television's role as an educator and entertainer of its young audiences. During eight episodes, the chef Janez Vinšek and his pet, an orange cat named Pika who was animated by the actress Ava Lokošek, presented relatively simple – but mostly sweet – dishes that children could either prepare themselves (*jabolčna pena* – apple foam, *mlečna juha* – dairy/milky soup) or with the help of their parents (*ocvrte miške* – deep fried 'mice'/small doughnuts, *biskvitna rulada* – roulade, *rižev narastek* – rice pudding). Set in an environment that resembled a home kitchen, Vinšek and Pika provided not only a set of recipes, but educated its viewers in terms of food in general, and, most importantly, manners.

The first episode of this well thought-through show presents Janez and Pika preparing *ocvrte miške* (deep fried 'mice'), a dish that must have been chosen intentionally because of its language play; in the opening scene, Pika sits near the mousetrap waiting for her 'lunch'. But since, as the chef explains to Pika, "there are no mice in my kitchen", he offers to make her some. As the discussion about mice progresses and Pika insists – as Janez makes fun of her inability to catch anything, never mind mice – that she can indeed catch mice, children learn about uses of various kitchen appliances (mixer, deep-fryer), qualities of ingredients (yeast causes the dough to rise) and manners, such as a need for hand washing before food preparation (RTVSLO Archive 1990, IMX 504399). In the third show about *mlečna juha* (milky soup), where the cat refuses to eat the new dish, she has all the characteristics of a child, who is sceptical about new dishes. In order to demonstrate the desired behaviour, she then surrenders and tastes the new dish.

The cat – and with her, children – also learn specialised culinary vocabulary. In both extracts below, Janez uses established expressions for culinary actions, though, as in this example, attention is brought to these expressions either as a result of misunderstanding (similarity of *zadušiti* (to suffocate) and *zdušiti* (to roast)) (*ibid.*):

Janez: *The apples will roast (zdušila)*

Pika: *Suffocate? (Zadušila?)*

Janez: *Not suffocate (zadušila), this means to soften.*

While Pika and Janez's cooking show follows all the characteristics of the genre, it is in its essence not so much a show where a child will learn how to cook; rather, this is

Image 2: Pika the cat and the chef Janez Vinšek in *Lonček, kuhaj* photographed by Stane Sršen in 1989. Here, Pika appears white, while in the show, she is orange. Courtesy of the Archive of Radio Television Slovenia.



a carefully scripted exchange, completely lacking spontaneity of Ivačič's moonologues, with an aim to teach children about desirable behavioural norms; in this sense, of course, it performs a similar functions to its adult-targeted variant: to educate in order to elevate and improve taste, shape ways of behaving and achieve distinction.

8 Conclusion

I have started this article with a reference to the contemporary celebrity shows where food has become a vehicle of entertainment and fantasy, rather than an object of nourishment. While both socialist and contemporary cooking shows educate for distinction, learning how to cook was certainly at the forefront of such shows until at least 1990, although with different emphases. From Ivačič, whose shows resembled real cooking classes with a dedicated master, to a more advertisement oriented teaching-cum-marketing of Podravka's Vegeta, and the concerns related to obesity of "TV without the stomach", the late 1980s already displayed a global emerging distinction that refused uniformity, globalization, and the industrial agriculture.

But while the food discourse of the 1990s Slovenia turned towards nationalism, food media in the West increasingly started to package TV food primarily as entertainment. One such early example was BBC's Keith Floyd, a "flamboyant, energetic presenter" un-

like any other before with extravagant cooking style. He was followed by Gary Rhodes in the early 1990s and then Jamie Oliver (Humble 2005:240). This meant a different kind of cooking, further away from what the Slovene TV audience was used to seeing on the screens until then. When, in 2001, Jamie Oliver appeared for the first time on the Slovene screens, he represented a new way of cooking which was also the main reason why his shows were bought by the national television (Mojca Pengov, personal communication, April 2015). More than any chef before, Oliver represented a new kind of lifestyle show where his own personality, intimate family life, style of being and talking mattered more than what he cooked. At the forefront was now ordinariness, likeability, and celebrity rather than cooking expertise, skill and procedure.

If in the 1960s, the national television quickly adopted the Western new models of TV cooking, it struggled to find its place through the liberalisation of the media space of the 1990s: faced with increasing competition, most strongly from a private POPTV that took over Oliver's cooking shows after 2001, it aired the only home-produced food-only show in 1999, entitled *Čari začimb* [The Charm of Spices]. Featuring two actors, Bojan Emeršič and Gregor Baković, this was a type of culinary television that started to treat food as entertainment, but the content was still largely education and, as a result of the presenters being actors, the performance seemed scripted. Cooking has also found place as part of general weekend entertainment programme (e.g., *Cooking with Damijan in The Saturday afternoon*, 2007-12), but the majority of home-produced lifestyle cooking today was aired on the various commercial channels, such as POPTV, with *Ljubezan skozi želodec* [Love through the stomach], *Ana kuha* [Ana cooks] and the *Masterchef*, being just a few examples (see Meršak 2014; Tominc 2014 for analyses).

This article is no doubt but a starting point for, hopefully, further research in food television history in Slovenia. Albeit limited in its sources and scope it demonstrates how through these shows television acted as a vehicle of modernisation not only in the material sense, but also in terms of taste and distinction for its viewers. In this sense, contemporary television shows remain very similar as they educate us about global tastes and food fashions.

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