

MEDITERANSKA PREHRANA 3.0

Od tradicijske kuhinje do održivih politika

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Ovaj će rad nastojati u kratkim crtama opisati konceptualne transformacije mediteranske prehrane od druge polovine 20. stoljeća do danas. Ovaj nesumnjivo popularni prehrambeni model, koji objedinjuje različite prehrambene kulture Sredozemlja, isprva je prepoznat kao zdravstveno blagotvoran, nudeći pomoć u prevenciji kardiovaskularnih bolesti. Početni impuls globalne popularnosti prehrambene kulture Sredozemlja, koji dolazi iz medicinskih i nutricionističkih znanosti, dugoročno je pripomogao pojednostavljenju složenih prehrambenih sustava Sredozemlja koji se od 2000-ih počinju prepoznati kao homogeni kulinarski i kulturni obrazac. Nakon što je mediteranska prehrana 2010. godine upisana na UNESCO-ovu Reprezentativnu listu nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva, razumijevanje ove prehrambene kulture nesumnjivo se promijenilo. Danas mediteranska prehrana dobiva svoje nove artikulacije unutar politika održivog razvoja, očuvanja bioraznolikosti i ekosustava koje dugoročno nastoje razviti nove političke i ekonomske modele u okviru nužne transformacije trenutnih prehrambenih sustava prema zelenijim i održivijim rješenjima.

Ključne riječi: tradicijska kuhinja, Sredozemlje, mediteranska prehrana, nematerijalna kulturna baština, održive prehrambene politike, održiva prehrana

Uvod

Ove se godine obilježava deset godina od hrvatskog pridruženja upisu *mediteranske prehrane* na UNESCO-ovu Reprezentativnu listu nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva, gdje se nalazi uz Italiju, Portugal, Grčku, Španjolsku, Maroko i Cipar.¹ Mada je nominirana 2008. godine, upisana je tek dvije godine kasnije, zajedno s *francuskim gastronomskim obrokom*² (The gastronomic meal of the French) i *tradicijskom kuhinjom Meksika*³ (Traditional Mexican cuisine). Dvije se godine možda ne čine mnogo, no 2008. prehrambene prakse još uvijek nisu nalazile svoje mjesto na UNESCO-ovim listama. Iako pri stvaranju Konvencije o zaštiti nematerijalne kulturne baštine (2003) njezini autori nisu na umu imali kulinarstvo kao jedan od nematerijalnih izraza kulture (Bortolotto i Ubertaini 2018), proces *kulturizacije* prehrambenih praksi, odnosno proširivanje shvaćanja prehrane kao složena sustava

1 *Mediteranska prehrana* upisana je na spomenutu listu 2010. godine na sjednici u Nairobiju kada su Italija, Španjolska, Maroko i Grčka predstavljali ovu nematerijalnu kulturnu baštinu. Godine 2013. popis zemalja je proširen, pa se upisu pridružuju Portugal, Cipar i Hrvatska.

2 <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/6.14> (pristup 1. 2. 2023.).

3 <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/6.30> (pristup 1. 2. 2023.).

značenja ili totalne društvene činjenice, otvorio je put hrani prema listama nematerijalne baštine. Isprva bi se moglo pomisliti da su etnolozi i kulturni antropolozi, koji su se najviše bavili kulturom prehrane,⁴ mogli biti prilično zadovoljni takvim ishodom. No, slijedeći Hafsteinovo razmišljanje (2018) da prodor folklorističkih i etnoloških znanja, perspektiva i koncepata u javnu sferu predstavlja značajan dio modernističke refleksivnosti, moguće je preuzeti također njegovu ideju *folklorizacije*, shvaćene kao proces koji označava uspjeh spomenutih disciplina koji se prvenstveno očituje u promjeni načina na koji ljudi doživljavaju svoju kulturu, kako je definiraju te prakticiraju (2018: 128) što dugoročno donosi značajne promjene kulturnih praksi koje se nastoje zaštititi.⁵ Kulturnoantropološko razumijevanje prehrane kao odraza identiteta, kulture i svakodnevne zajednice danas se nalazi u temeljima UNESCO-ova shvaćanja. No, što je još značajnije, ovakvo shvaćanje prehrane također je omogućilo konceptualno povezivanje ljudi i krajolika što će se pokazati ključnim u najnovijim artikulacijama mediteranske prehrane, o kojima će biti riječ nešto kasnije.

Obljetnice, osobito okrugle, dobra su prilika da se osvrnemo i s potrebnim odmakom pomnije promotrimo mediteransku prehranu, ne samo kako je ona opisana i upisana nego i što ona danas predstavlja. Što to točno nastojimo očuvati kada je prehrana u pitanju? Kako se ona oblikuje u kulturni obrazac vrijedan zaštite i brige? Te posljedično, je li ovaj upis utjecao na shvaćanje mediteranske prehrane i ako jest, jesmo li sami pridonijeli njezinoj transformaciji? Od kraja 1960-ih, kada je stvoren koncept mediteranske prehrane, o čemu će biti riječ nešto kasnije, do danas ovaj je prehrambeni obrazac doživio različite transformacije i konceptualizacije. Prošao je put od zdravog modela tradicijske prehrane do modela održive prehrane (Dernini et al. 2017; Medina 2021a, 2021b), postavši pritom i nematerijalna kulturna baština. Ovaj će rad, bez kritičkog sagledavanja fenomena nematerijalne kulturne baštine i prijedora koji iz njega proizlaze (primjerice, Kirscheblatt-Gimblett 2006; Hameršak i Pleše 2018; Brulotte i Di Giovine 2014), nastojati ukazati na konceptualne transformacije mediteranske prehrane u njezinoj dinamičnoj povijesti tijekom proteklih sedamdesetak godina.

4 Etnološka i kulturnoantropološka istraživanja prehrambenu kulturu definiraju kao sustav praksi, stavova, vjerovanja, ali i široku mrežu zajednica, pojedinaca i institucija uključenih u proizvodnju, distribuciju i konzumaciju hrane (Long 2015), naglašavajući društveno-kulturne i simbolične aspekte pripremanja hrane i jedenja. Recentniji pregled različitih pristupa antropologije i sociologije prehrane vidi u, primjerice, Aktas-Polat i Polat 2020.

5 Valdimar Tr. Hafstein (2018) pojam folklorizacije koristi donekle ironično, preuzimajući ga iz rasprava o pitanju autentičnosti, kao krajnju posljednicu uspjeha etnoloških i kulturnoantropoloških znanja u suvremenom razumijevanju fenomena nematerijalne kulturne baštine i njezine zaštite. Folklorizacija, tako shvaćena, za Hafsteina predstavlja uspjeh spomenutih disciplina koji se očituje u promjeni načina na koji ljudi razumijevaju svoju kulturu, kako je definiraju i prakticiraju. No, ona ujedno predstavlja i temelj procesa baštinizacije društvenih praksi i odnosa koji proširuje prostor cirkulacije zaštićenih kulturnih dobara, uvodi nove (institucionalizirane) nositelje i posljedično nameće pitanje objektivizacije, komodifikacije i egzotizacije elemenata kulturne baštine izvan njezina izvorna habitusa. Rasprava o folklorizmu nije nova u domaćoj etnologiji gdje se osobito nalazi u kritikama pojmovne izvornosti i autentičnosti. Primjerice, vidi Ceribašić 2003: 259, 264 i dalje.

Što je uopće mediteranska prehrana?

“*Dieta mediterranea non c'è!*” tako je svoje predavanje o konceptu mediteranske prehrane u proljeće 2017. godine na Hvaru započeo talijanski antropolog Ernesto di Renzo. Mediteranska prehrana ne postoji!, tvrdio je publici na okruglom stolu o mediteranskoj prehrani, koji su organizirali Institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku i Ministarstvo kulture i medija nastojeći *popularizirati* ovu nematerijalnu kulturnu baštinu u amblematskoj⁶ zajednici otoka Hvara. Objašnjavajući ležernost kojom su kuhinje i kulinarske prakse Sredozemlja svedene na jedninu, odnosno proces nekritičkog pojednostavljenja kulinarskih sustava i praksi Sredozemlja koji prati razvoj koncepta mediteranske prehrane, Renzo je ukazao na jedan od osnovnih problema. Naime, mediteranska prehrana upisana je na UNESCO-ovu listu u jednini, čime se, donekle, pretpostavlja ideja homogenosti kulinarskih praksi tamo gdje se već u regionalnim prehranbenim praksama nalazi nepregledno mnoštvo sitnih lokalnih varijacija i osobitosti, kako u receptima tako i u kulinarskom leksiku, da spomenemo tek najočitije primjere.

Kako onda odrediti što je mediteranska prehrana? Je li to talijanska, marokanska, dalmatinska, libanonska ili portugalska kuhinja? Čine li je jela ribara, seljaka ili ona bliža građanskom i plemićkom ukusu? Pripada li ona antičkom ili modernom svijetu? Je li to kuhinja kršćanstva, židovstva ili islama, jer sve su te religije ostavile svoj pečat na Sredozemlju i stvorile međusobno isprepletene kulinarske sustave? Je li dovoljno reći da je to skup prehranbenih praksi, receptura i tipičnih proizvoda što se nalaze na stolovima diljem Sredozemlja? Svako simplificirano objašnjenje mediteranske prehrane donosi manje ili više tipični nutritivni model prehrane temeljen na velikom udjelu biljne hrane, maslinovom ulju kao osnovnoj (iako ne jedinoj) masnoći i malom unosu namirnica životinjskog porijekla, no ostaje neosjetljivo za društveni okvir, složen sustav praksi, znanja, izbora i vjerovanja vezanih uz proizvodnju, pripremu i konzumaciju hrane. Jer ako je mediteranska prehrana skup namirnica i receptura, može li onda danas biti poništena njezina veza sa specifičnim prostorom Sredozemlja? Globalna je potrošačka kultura omogućila da se proizvodi Sredozemlja, poput maslinovog ulja, vina, tjestenine (koji se nesumnjivo prepoznaju kao tipični mediteranski) jednako lako dobavljaju u Hrvatskoj kao i na Islandu, u Švedskoj ili u Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama. Zašto je onda uopće potrebno stavljati određene jelovnike na liste nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva? Iza sredozemnih jelovnika, što zapravo vrijedi i za svaku drugu lokalnu ili regionalnu kuhinju, stoji duga povijest razvoja proizvodnje, pripreme i konzumacije određene hrane, povijest kulturnih kontakata, preuzimanja i prilagođavanja. Materijalna i sim-

⁶ *Mediteransku prehranu* na Reprezentativnoj listi nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva predstavljaju sljedeće tzv. amblematske zajednice: Cilento (Italija), Soria (Španjolska), Chefchaouen (Maroko), Koroni (Grčka), Agros (Cipar), Tavira (Portugal) i otoci Brač i Hvar (Hrvatska). O problematici participacije zajednica, grupa i pojedinaca u zaštiti nematerijalne kulturne baštine te implementaciji Konvencije o nematerijalnoj kulturnoj baštini (2003) vidi primjerice Blake 2019.

bolična dimenzija upisane su u svaku namirnicu, svako jelo i obrok koji na osobit način reprezentiraju iskustvo svakodnevice na Sredozemlju.

Upravo je ta problematična samorazumljivost mediteranske kuhinje, kada je gledamo izvana, bila okosnica međunarodnog skupa *Mediteranska hrana i njezin utjecaj izvan Sredozemlja* održanog 2004. godine u Dubrovniku.⁷ U vrijeme kada su etnologinje Nives Rittig-Beljak i Mirjana Randić organizirale ovaj skup mediteranska je hrana bila globalno prepoznata i popularna. Bila je to kuhinja bosiljka, šalši i tjestenine, češnjaka i maslinova ulja, kakvu je primjerice kuhao Jamie Oliver u nizu kulinarskih serijala. Ranih 2000-ih uspjeh ove globalne kuhinje revno su podupirale nakladničke i televizijske kuće ponavljajući hedonističku maštariju Sredozemlja, imaginarnog prostora bogato prostrtih trpeza za kojima sjede razdragani jelci, a koju primjerice u britanskom kulturnom krugu možemo pratiti još od 18. stoljeća kada Sredozemlje postaje “referentna točka i ideja koja definira ono što se smatra lijepim ili poželjnim”⁸ (Burning 2018: 4). Tih godina diljem televizijskih ekrana krčkali su se rižoti, a u svakom kutku svijeta mogla se kupiti *pizza* ili tjestenina. Osim što je bila ukusna i, navodno, jednostavna za pripremu, istraživanja su pokazivala blagotvornost mediteranske prehrane u prevenciji bolesti srca i krvnih žila (Trichopoulou 1997). Dubrovačka je konferencija otvorila raspravu o mediteranskoj hrani gotovo deset godina prije UNESCO-ova priznanja, prepoznajući je kao značenjsko čvorište različitih *konceptata i trendova*, kako čitamo u podnaslovu zbornika. Konrad Köstlin (2006) će tako podsjetiti da mediteranska kuhinja nastaje tek nakon što je koncept jedinstvenosti kulturnog prostora Sredozemlja, koji u velikoj mjeri dugujemo istraživanjima francuskog povjesničara Fernanda Braudela (Braudel 1997–1998; Köstlin 2006), postao općeprihvaćen pa je posljedično ona rezultat pogleda izvana na kompleksan sustav prehrambenih praksi različitih društvenih skupina i zajednica diljem Sredozemlja. No, pogled na mediteransku kuhinju iznutra, kakav nam je ponudila jedna od urednica zbornika u uvodnom poglavlju, isticao je brojne mikrolokacijske razlike u kulinarskim izborima, praksama i ukusima, slične, ali opet različite recepture koje se provlače Sredozemljem (Rittig-Beljak 2006). Poput bračkog *vitalca* koji u različitim varijacijama nalazimo na Kreti i Rodosu (gdje ga začinjavaju origanom, limunom i paprom) ili pašticide koja se osim u Dalmaciji priprema i na Krfu ili u pokrajini Veneto. Što je još važnije, ovaj pionirski pokušaj kritičkog sagledavanja fenomena mediteranske hrane koji su organizatorice skupa nastojale potaknuli u humanističkim znanostima među prvima je ukazao na problematičnost privida homogenosti mediteranskih kuhinja u njezinim medijskim i popularnim artikulacijama izvan Sredozemlja. Hedonistička slika obilja sredozemnih kuhinja, koju u njezinim medijskim prikazima uglavnom predstavlja talijanska kuhinja, razotkriva se kao izum novije povijesti i barem dio svoga uspjeha duguje uspjehu turističke ideje Sredozemlja. Zbog svega navedenog, moramo zaključiti da je koncept mediteranske kuhinje tijekom zadnjih pola stoljeća bio oblikovan pogledom izvana (Köstlin 2006: 79). Svođenjem kompleksnih

⁷ Međunarodna konferencija *Mediterranean food and its influence abroad*, 15th International Ethnological Food Research Conference, Dubrovnik, 27. rujna do 3. listopada 2004.

⁸ Svi prijevodi su autoričini.

kulinarskih sustava i prehrambenih praksi u jedninu (*mediteranska kuhinja, mediteranska prehrana*) stvoren je novi prehrambeni krajolik, nastao na metafori Sredozemlja kao jedinstvenog kulturnog prostora. No, promatran iznutra taj je prehrambeni krajolik neusporedivo kompleksniji od svih popularnokulturnih prikaza koji pokazuju, uz sve ostalo, neosjetljivost prema društvenim i ekonomskim kulinarskim razlikama unutar samih kuhinja Sredozemlja. Sve one rezultat su kontakata, preuzimanja i prilagođavanja namirnica i recepata. Nives Rittig-Beljak (2006: 15, 20–21) smatrala je da je kulinarstvo Sredozemlja iznimno heterogeno i da se jedinstvo ili zajednička potka mediteranskih kuhinja može pronaći tek u siromašnoj prehrani, primjerice u jelima od slanutka, ječma i boba. U jednostavnim i skromnim sredozemnim recepturama koje najčešće svjedoče o ekonomičnosti i gladi kao konstanti iskustva života na Sredozemlju kroz povijest. Notorna juha od kamena za Rittig-Beljak bila je odmjerena metafora mediteranske kuhinje koja ukazuje na glad kao stalnu i često ostvarenu prijetnju, a zbog koje su, na kraju, kuhinje Sredozemlja toliko maštovite i bogate.

Kada je ni deset godina nakon skupa, 2010. godine na sjednici Međuvladinog odbora za zaštitu nematerijalne kulturne baštine UNESCO-a u Nairobiju 17. studenog 2010. godine mediteranska prehrana upisana na Reprezentativnu listu nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva,⁹ činilo se da je, barem naizgled, postignut konsenzus oko toga što ovaj pojam podrazumijeva. Mediteranska prehrana predstavlja “ukupnost vještina, znanja, rituala i tradicija, koje se protežu od krajolika do stola, koja na Sredozemlju uključuje i usjeve, berbe, ribolov, držanje životinja te preradu, pripremu, a osobito dijeljenje i konzumiranje hrane” (UNESCO 2010).¹⁰ U to je vrijeme iza nje stajalo barem pola stoljeća medicinskih, nutricionističkih, a od kraja 1990-ih i društvenih i humanističkih istraživanja koja su međusobnom dijalogu postavila temelje UNESCO-ova upisa, stavivši u njegovo središte važnost društvenih praksi, a osobito zajedničkog jedenja (Medina 2021a). Mediteranska prehrana sada nije više predstavljala zbir jela raznolikih kuhinja s neznatno različitim spiskom namirnica, nego ukupni način (stil) života koji se odvija u ne osobito lakim klimatskim i geografskim uvjetima, u prostoru koji karakterizira manjak plodnog tla i vode i čiji su ljudi nužno okrenuti moru kao prostoru trgovine, kulturne razmjene, izvoru hrane, ali i opasnosti. Sezonski jednolične i ekonomične kuhinje Sredozemlja prikrivene su u hedonističkoj utopiji obilja kakvu nam (i dalje) pružaju medijske, popularnokulturne, ali i kulturnopolitičke slike sredozemnih kuhinja gdje jedenje predstavlja dijeljeni društveni užitek, ritualno povezan s običajima godišnjeg ili životnog ciklusa.¹¹ Kulturnoantropološka definicija prema kojoj mediteranska prehrana predstavlja *skup znanja i vještina povezanih s proizvodnjom, preradom i konzumiranjem hrane*, a koja je u središtu baštinskih politika vezanih uz hranu, postavlja veoma širok kulturni okvir *tradicijske prehrane i ekonomije* kao polazište razvoja, ali i način očuvanja tradicijskog načina života odre-

9 <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/6.41> (pristup 17. 5. 2023.).

10 <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00884> (pristup 30. 3. 2023.).

11 Već površan pogled na promotivni video o *mediteranskoj prehrani* kao nematerijalnoj kulturnoj baštini čovječanstva pokazuje romantiziranu sliku Sredozemlja u kojoj nema mjesta problemima gladi, ruralne nerazvijenosti, degradacije krajolika, turističkog pritiska ili međunarodnih migracija, da spomenem tek neke. Video je dostupan na: <https://www.unesco.org/archives/multimedia/document-1680-eng-2> (pristup 20. 5. 2023.).

đenog prostora. Mediteranska prehrana u tome se kontekstu predstavlja kao način života koji novinar i pisac Siniša Pavić (2017) točno opisuje govoreći da je ona “i okoliš, i tehnika uzgoja hrane, i očuvanje eko sustava, tradicijske poljoprivredne kulture, način pripreme, način blagovanja uz smijeh, hladovinu, obitelj, [...] balote i picigin, zdravlje na koncu”.¹²

Mediteranska prehrana i zdravlje

Spomenutim, kulturnoantropološko utemeljenim definicijama ove prehrane prethodila su brojna medicinska istraživanja te njih valja smatrati početnim impulsom koji je omogućio globalnu popularnost ovog prehrambenog obrasca. Ne smijemo zaboraviti da je sam termin mediteranska prehrana (engl. *Mediterranean diet*, *dieta* – način života i prehrana koju propisuje liječnik)¹³ skovao dr. Ancel Keys.¹⁴ Početkom 1950-ih kada Keys započinje svoja istraživanja, stopa smrtnosti od kardiovaskularnih bolesti u SAD-u bila je dva do tri puta veća nego u južnoj Europi. Taj predani istraživač, prozvan u javnosti gosp. Kolesterol (Dhami i Vaidya 2015), najveći dio svojih istraživanja posvetio je odnosu između kolesterola u krvi i kardiovaskularnog zdravlja, a činjenica da je smrtnost od srčanih i moždanih udara bila iznimno rijetka na Sredozemlju tih godina bila mu je neodoljiv istraživački izazov. Sredinom 1950-ih godina Keys je započeo istraživački projekt koji se danas smatra ishodištem prepoznavanja zdravstvenih blagodati mediteranske prehrane. Znamenita, ali i kontroverzna, *Studija sedam zemalja* uključivala je 12 000 ispitanika iz Grčke, Italije, Jugoslavije, Japana, Danske, Nizozemske, Finske i SAD-a. Keys je imao uvid u rezultate prethodnih istraživanja prehrane otoka Krete¹⁵ koja će nešto kasnije postati prehrambeni obrazac koji danas prepoznajemo. Prehrana temeljena na sezonskom povrću, grahoricama i žitaricama, s niskim udjelom namirnica životinjskog porijekla prvi je put dovela u izravnu vezu konzumiranje određenih masnoća i razine kolesterola u krvi. Paradoksalan zaključak Keysova istraživanja bio je da su bogatije nacije bez obzira na bolji pristup zdravstvenoj zaštiti bile bolesnije od zemalja poratnog Sredozemlja. Svakodnevno konzumiranje maslinovog ulja, raznovrsnog voća i povrća, poštujući sezonalnost, te razmjerno malen unos namirnica životinjskog porijekla (osobito mesa) osnova su Keysove mediteranske prehrane. Kao živa reklama modela prehrane i življenja koji je propagirao cijeli svoj dugi život (doživio je, naime, stotu), Keys je veći dio proveo živeći u Pi-

¹² Pavić, Siniša. “Mediteranska prehrana zahvaća više od same hrane – to je način života”. *Novi list*, 6. lipnja 2017., dostupno na <https://www.novilist.hr/life/gastro/mediteranska-prehrana-zahvaca-vise-od-same-hrane-to-je-nacin-zivota/> (pristup 20. 3. 2023.).

¹³ Klaić, Bratoljub. 2002. *Rječnik stranih riječi*. Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske.

¹⁴ Zahvaljujem kolegici Moro na podatku o dvama doktoratima, iz oceanografije i biologije, koje je stekao dr. Ancel Keys.

¹⁵ Godine 1948. grčka vlada sa Zakladom Rockefeller provodi prvo epidemiološko istraživanje koje je uključivalo proučavanje prehrane otoka Krete, dugoročno namijenjeno poboljšanju životnih uvjeta stanovništva u poratnom razdoblju (Nestle 1995). Rezultati tih istraživanja objavljeni su 1953. godine u knjizi Lelanda G. Allbaugka *Crete, a Case Study of an Underdeveloped Area*.

oppiu na jugu Italije gdje su mu, prema njegovim riječima, najveći učitelji bili njegova kuharica Delia Morelli i vrtlar Angelo. Temelj Keysove mediteranske prehrane bila je raznolika, jednostavna prehrana, temeljena na lokalnim i sezonskim proizvodima zemlje i mora. Iako se Keysov model zasniva na ograničenom zemljopisnom području (Grčka, Italija, jug Francuske i sredozemna obala Španjolske), te u obzir ne uzima povijesne, ekonomske, društvene i kulturne aspekte prehrane, on ipak naznačuje društveni karakter jedenja, odnosno dijeljenje hrane kao presudan faktor u razumijevanju *kulture* mediteranske prehrane.

Na temeljima Keysova istraživanja, migracijskih tijekova (što hranu doma odnose sa sobom i prilagođavaju novom prostoru) i već spomenute medijski građene popularnosti Sredozemlja u anglosaksonskom svijetu od 1950-ih godina (Jones i Taylor 2001), mediteranska prehrana postala je globalni fenomen koji su istovremeno podržavali i medicinske znanosti i medijska industrija. Kao što je već rečeno, ali nije naodmet ponoviti, gledana izvana mediteranska je prehrana homogeniji pojam no što je to tako u realnosti brojnih lokalnih i regionalnih kuhinja na Sredozemlju. Popularnokulturnoj proizvodnji značenja ionako ne smeta pojednostavljivanje kao načelo konstruiranja univerzalne kuhinje Sredozemlja u kojoj dominiraju maslinovo ulje, riba, bosiljak i rajčica i koju tako revno pripremaju brojne kulinarske i putopisne televizijske zvijezde. U prilog popularnosti mediteranske kuhinje (koja bi uistinu trebala stajati u pluralu) ide i činjenica da je medicinske znanosti i nutricionizam prepoznaju kao iznimno zdrav model prehrane. Jedan od načina prevencije bolesti srca i krvnih žila (De Lorgeril i Salen 2006), ali i niza drugih zdravstvenih problema poput demencije, depresije i sl. (Yin et al. 2021; Shafiei et al. 2019).

Mediteranska prehrana kao životni stil

Već nam sam pogled na slikovne prikaze, piramide mediteranske prehrane, pruža uvid u sasvim različita shvaćanja i svojevrsnu evoluciju prehrambenog modela u poželjan stil života. Od devedesetih godina naovamo piramide mediteranske prehrane proširivale su se dodajući slojeve koji odražavaju ne samo razvoj shvaćanja ovog prehrambenog obrasca nego i sam razvoj istraživačkih interesa koji danas pridonose razumijevanju prehrambene kulture i prehrambenih sustava. Ako je piramida mediteranske prehrane devedesetih godina¹⁶ još uvijek bila rezultat isključivo medicinskih istraživanja, nudeći tako nutritivnu preporuku pravilne prehrane, ona to danas svakako više nije. Prehrana je tijekom proteklih dvadesetak godina izašla s margine usputnih interesa etnologa, antropologa, sociologa i povjesničara te postala zasebno tematsko polje unutar različitih znanstvenih disciplina. Zbog toga su današnje piramide mediteranske prehrane podjednako rezultat istraživanja prirodnih te društvenih i humanističkih znanosti. Tako je, primjerice, godine 2008. na skupu posveće-

¹⁶ Spomenimo primjerice piramidu razvijenu na Međunarodnoj konferenciji o mediteranskoj prehrani, održanoj u Bostonu 1993. godine. Vidi više u Matalas 2006: 92; Dernini et. al. 2012.

nom mediteranskoj prehrani¹⁷ predstavljena piramida koja je uključivala nove znanstvene spoznaje, prvenstveno one što su ih usporedo s liječnicima razvijali etnolozi, antropolozi i sociolozi. Baza piramide pokazuje da su temelj mediteranske prehrane društvene prakse (zajednički obroci, šetnje, ples...) koje tek naizgled nemaju veze s prehranom.¹⁸ No, dotada je hrana već prepoznata kao medij kojim društvo komunicira svoje vrijednosti, a ne tek puko održavanje života što nagoni ljude da proizvode i konzumiraju svoju hranu. Spomenuta piramida iz 2008. godine nije sadržavala samo prijedlog zdravstveno poželjnog modela prehrane nego je također vodila računa o društvenom okviru i društvenim praksama. Točnije, uzela je u obzir spoznaje društvenih i humanističkih istraživanja, koja su u to vrijeme promatrala simboličke i identitetske prakse mediteranske prehrane. Prijelaz sa suhoparnih liječničkih preporuka i nutricionističkih savjeta na režim prehrane temeljen na društvenosti i užitku dijelom je rezultat kulturnoantropoloških istraživanja prehrane koja su, računajući na hedonistički pomak u medijskoj slici ove prehrane, nadogradila sve iduće piramide mediteranske prehrane naglasivši da je ona mnogo više od same hrane. Ona je stil života!

Mediteranska prehrana – od životnog stila do recepta za spas planete

Iako se kulturnoantropološko usidrenje mediteranske prehrane unutar politika zaštite nematerijalne kulturne baštine isprva ne razotkriva kao povratak narušenoj ili izgubljenoj sezonalnosti i lokalizaciji prehrambenih obrazaca, već kao pitanje kulturnih identiteta zajednica, njihova osnaživanja i (samo)reprezentacije, u desetak godina od upisa svjedočimo konceptualizaciji osnovnih ideja mediteranske prehrane¹⁹ u novim okvirima, primjerice onima ruralnog razvoja, zaštite kulturnih krajolika, važnosti sezone prehrane i lokalne, male proizvodnje te zajedništva oko stola kao jamca prijenosa znanja i vrijednosti koje iz nje proizlaze. Iako je potonje nesumnjivo dio institucionalne brige i zaštite nematerijalne kulture u okviru, načelno, kulturnih politika, možemo vidjeti da se danas naglasak vrlo često stavlja na lokalizaciju mediteranske prehrane, odnosno na važnost zaštite kulturnih krajolika kao njezina prirodnog habitusa. U tom smislu, lokalna proizvodnja i potrošnja razumijevaju se kao osnova razvoja uglavnom depopuliranih i slabije razvijenih područja, temeljenog na konceptima *održive prehrane* i *održivog razvoja*. Temeljeći ovaj put narativ o mediteranskoj prehrani na pojmu *održivosti*, ovaj prehrambeni sustav, u realnosti narušen i često napušten (Nestle 1995), nada se kao panaceja brojnih gorućih, globalnih problema. Mediteranska prehrana se

17 Godine 2008. u Cambridgeu u Massachusettsu održana je 15. konferencija o mediteranskoj prehrani u organizaciji Oldwaysa, neprofitne nevladine organizacije posvećene promociji zdravih prehrambenih izbora, te udruge The Mediterranean Foods Alliance.

18 Novi grafički prikaz piramide mediteranske prehrane iz 2008. godine vidi na: <https://oldwayspt.org/news-media/press-releases/oldways-releases-updated-mediterranean-diet-pyramid> (pristup 29. 3. 2023.).

19 <https://mediterraneanheritage.org/about/messages/> (pristup 20. 3. 2023.).

tako, ovisno o gledištima i razini aktera koji se njome bave, nudi kao rješenje problema kardiovaskularnog zdravlja ili epidemije pretilosti, ili pak predstavlja kao alat ruralnog razvoja koji štiti lokalnu proizvodnju, pridonosi jačanju zelenih prehrambenih politika i/ili zaštiti biološke raznolikosti.

Trenutne globalne prehrambene politike, one koje možemo pratiti u aktivnostima Organizacije za hranu i poljoprivredu Ujedinjenih naroda (FAO), zadnjih godina daju značajnu i kontinuiranu podršku mediteranskoj prehrani. Raspon tema koje se danas vezuju u nju možemo, primjerice, pratiti u dokumentu "Mediterranean food consumption patterns. Diet, environment, society, economy and health" iz 2015. godine, što ga potpisuju FAO i CIHEAM Bari,²⁰ a koji je nastao slijedeći ideje razvijane tijekom izložbe EXPO održane u Milanu 2015. godine koja je bila posvećena temi *hranjenja planeta*. Osnova bavljena prehranom na ovoj razini bila je:

[...] naglasiti ulogu što je trenutni prehrambeni obrasci imaju u okviru prehrambene sigurnosti, javnog zdravstva, zaštite okoliša i socioekonomskog razvoja Sredozemlja. Krajnji je cilj potaknuti multidisciplinarni dijalog među znanstvenim zajednicama Europe i Sredozemlja o održivosti trenutne potrošnje hrane i proizvodnih obrazaca na Sredozemlju i šire, kao i identificirati istraživačke aktivnosti i politike nužne za postizanje održivosti sredozemnih prehrambenih sustava. (CIHAEM/FAO 2015: 1)

Osnovna namjera toga dokumenta, kako možemo u njemu pročitati, bila je dakle dati poticaj multidisciplinarnom dijalogu znanstvene zajednice o održivosti trenutnih prehrambenih obrazaca, podjednako vezanih za proizvodnju kao i za konzumaciju hrane. Zato upravo i ne čudi da danas raspon novih tema koje se vežu uz mediteransku prehranu ide od trenutnih prehrambenih praksi ljudi Sredozemlja (koje ih smještaju u vrh europskih statistika o debljini), održavanja zdravlja, održivosti prehrambenih sustava s obzirom na planirani rast svjetske populacije, do ekološkog otiska agroindustrijskih sustava ili problema bacanja hrane. Zahtjev za transformaciju globalnih prehrambenih sustava sadržan je pojmu održive prehrane koji je predstavljen u zborniku *Sustainable Diets and Biodiversity: Directions and Solutions for Policy, Research and Action* nekoliko godina ranije. Održive proizvodne i potrošačke prakse one su koje imaju:

[...] nizak utjecaj na okoliš i koje pridonose prehrambenoj sigurnosti i zdravom životu sadašnjih i budućih generacija. Održive prehrane pridonose očuvanju okoliša i poštuju bioraznolikost i ekosustave, kulturno su prihvatljive, dostupne, ekonomski pravedne i pristupačne; nutritivno prikladne, sigurne i zdrave; ujedno optimizirajući prirodne i ljudske resurse. (Burlingame i Dernini 2012: 7)

20 CIHAEM The International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (Međunarodni centar za napredne poljoprivredne studije Sredozemlja), Bari, Chania, Montpellier, Zaragoza. CIHAEM je osnovan 1962. godine s namjerom jačanja suradnje u području visokog, poljoprivrednog obrazovanja Sredozemlja te ratificiran sporazumom između sedam zemalja (Portugal, Španjolska, Francuska, Italija, Jugoslavija i Turska).

FAO je već 2012. godine, tek dvije nakon UNESCO-ova upisa, zauzeo stav da je mediteranska prehrana jedna od najodrživijih koje poznajemo (Burlingame i Dernini 2012; Petrillo 2012; Dernini i Berry 2015), što je dugoročno omogućilo sasvim nov pristup ovoj nematerijalnoj kulturnoj baštini. Mediteranska prehrana tako sada dobiva novo usidrenje u okviru *savjesnih* politika, zelenih ekonomija ili razvoja ruralnih područja izvan masovnog turizma ili velike poljoprivredne proizvodnje (Moro 2016: 656). Elisabetta Moro mediteransku prehranu vidi kao antropološki obrazac koji proizlazi iz kulture prehrane, ali priznaje da su “retorike i društvene politike transformirale jednostavnu hranu u simbolički zamašnjak, u čimbenika zajednice i identitetsku oznaku” (2016: 656), a stol u metaforičko polje u kojem se zajednice konstantno izgrađuju. Tradicijska je prehrana tako kroz kulturne politike zaštite nematerijalnih kulturnih dobara ponudila svoj društveni, ekonomski, kulturni i simbolički potencijal globalnim prehrambenim politikama usmjerenima prvenstveno novim okolišnim izazovima. Sasvim je jasno da u vrijeme (pre)sporog prepoznavanja klimatskih prijetnji prehrambeni sustavi također moraju proći transformaciju prema održivijim i zelenijim rješenjima, a korak unatrag, prema lokalnijim i sezonalnijim prehrambenim navikama, čini se kao logičan početak. Zato danas mediteransku prehranu ne treba prakticirati zbog vlastita zdravlja ili vrijednosti kulturne baštine, već zbog dobrobiti ekosustava, bioraznolikosti i planete. Promotrimo li sada mediteransku prehranu kao dogovoreni jelovnik za spas, ili makar pomoć planeti, lako se složiti da se zapravo ne radi o hrani, nego o intelektualnom proizvodu, koji je rezultat ponekad vrlo različitih lokalnih prehrambenih kultura i praksi (Moro 2016: 657). Smjestivši mediteransku prehranu između mita i stvarnosti (Moro 2016), između imaginarnog prehrambenog krajolika i onoga koji će do 2050. godine morati hraniti više od devet milijardi ljudi,²¹ shvaćanje uloge ove prehrambene kulture nužno se mora proširiti, osobito zbog njezina transformativna potencijala što ga može imati u smanjivanju utjecaja prehrambenih modela i praksi na okoliš. Kreatori politika vezanih uz pitanje održavanja sigurnosti i dostupnosti hrane preuzimaju nematerijalnu kulturnu baštinu mediteranske prehrane kao vrstu osobita, *kulturalno prihvatljivog* ekonomskog resursa stavljajući je tako u središte recentnih globalnih prehrambenih preporuka. Tako, simplificirani i kulturnopolitički validirani, prehrambeni obrasci Sredozemlja danas nužno nadilaze okvire (prehrambene) kulture, predstavljajući “stil života, obrazovni obrazac i daleko-sežni ekonomski razvoj”, kako naglašava Moro u svome pregledu tendencija i konceptualizacija mediteranske prehrane (2016: 660).

Cum grano salis

Ne gubeći čvrsto kulturnoantropološko uporište u baštinskim, UNESCO-ovim politikama, mediteranska prehrana danas se predstavlja kao alat održivog razvoja čiju

²¹ Projekciju rasta svjetske populacije do 2050. godine vidi na: <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/population> (pristup 5. 4. 2023.).

ćemo uspješnost moći pratiti tek u godinama koje slijede. Život ove prehrabene kulture ne odvija se više unutar svakodnevice stanovnika Sredozemlja, koja svjedoči eroziji tradicijskih prehrabnenih modela i posljedičnom rastu zdravstvenih problema. Statistički podaci iz godine u godinu neslavno stavljaju stanovnike Sredozemlja među "najdeblje" Europljane (WHO 2022a i 2022b),²² a akcijski planovi vezani za razvoj sredozemnih zemalja naglašavaju da su "poljoprivredni i ruralni modeli Sredozemlja, koji su u temelju sredozemnih identiteta, značajno ugroženi prevlašću uvezenih prehrabnenih obrazaca. Ovaj trend osobito je vidljiv u napuštanju mediteranskih prehrabnenih modela bez obzira na njihov pozitivan utjecaj na zdravlje" (UNEP/MAP 2005: 16). Zbog svega spomenutog, ne čudi da u zadnjem desetljeću svjedočimo pomicanju naglasaka s pitanja kulturne vrijednosti ili zdravlja na problematiku očuvanja ekosustava, bioraznolikosti, zaštite krajolika i održivosti naših prehrabnenih sustava. Mediteranska prehrana danas svoje usidrenje pronalazi u okviru globalnih izazova održivosti i zelene tranzicije, odnosno prehrabnenih i ekoloških politika. Tako danas mediteransku prehranu trebamo promatrati prvenstveno kao vremenu vješto prilagođenu nematerijalnu kulturnu baštinu koja pokazuje lakoću transformacije pod novim uvjetima i novim zahtjevima.

Sudjelujući u hrvatskom procesu nominacije od 2010. godine te, kasnije, u radu neformalne mreže amblematskih zajednica od 2014. do danas, mali tim Instituta za etnologiju i folkloristiku bio je znanstvena i stručna podrška Ministarstvu kulture i medija te je dobio iznimnu mogućnost praćenja aktivnosti vezanih uz mediteransku prehranu iznutra, različitih pristupa i dobrih praksi kojima se ona nastoji popularizirati, revalorizirati i zaštititi u svih sedam zemalja. Smatrajući sudjelovanje u radu ove neformalne mreže kontinuiranim terenskim istraživanjem, omogućeno nam je praćenje razvoja i dvojbi oko samoga koncepta mediteranske prehrane, ali i uvid u različite razine na kojima se odvija njezin suvremeni život. Svaka od zemalja ima svoj pristup i svoje naglaske, svoje planove zaštite i popularizacije, kao i projekte razvoja i upravljanja ovom nematerijalnom kulturnom baštinom. Upletenost u rad mreže doprinijela je, također, uvidu u često neproničnu mrežu lokalnih inicijativa i institucionalne podrške na kojoj se odvijaju različita nastojanja širenja osnovnih ideja mediteranske prehrane. Naime, mediteranska prehrana se u okviru baštinskih i kulturnih politika nada je kao mobilizirajući narativ jedinstva kulturnog prostora što ga obilježava tisućljetna povijest međusobnih kontakata i utjecaja, a koji barem načelno nastoji ponuditi okvir za razumijevanje različitih lokalnih, regionalnih i nacionalnih identiteta (Quiroz 2015), no njezina "konceptualna transformacija" (Medina 2021a), odnosno smještanje u (nove) okvire prehrabnenih politika zelene tranzicije, zahtijeva dodatne kritičke i analitičke napore usmjerene dubljem razumijevanju suodnosa hrane, krajolika i pojedinaca, kao i suštinske isprepletenosti kulturnih, političkih i ekonomskih pitanja.

22 WHO. 2022. *Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI) Fact sheet highlights 2018–2020*, dostupno na: <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/m/item/childhood-obesity-surveillance-initiative-cosi-fact-sheet-highlights-2018-2020> (pristup 31. 3. 2023.) ili WHO. 2022. *Report on the fifth round of data collection, 2018–2020: WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI)*, dostupno na: <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2022-6594-46360-67071> (pristup 31. 3. 2023.).

Legitimacija mediteranske prehrane koju donosi UNESCO-ova zaštita dugoročno predstavlja i izazov za razumijevanje odnosa između ciljeva globalnih politika, poput UN-ove Agende 2030 (UN 2015) u kojoj su sadržani glavni ciljevi održivog razvoja i lokalnih praksi, odnosno značajne uloge lokalnih zajednica koje Konvencija o zaštiti nematerijalne kulturne baštine (2003) stavlja u svoje središte. Slučaj mediteranske prehrane pokazuje značajan odmak od praksi zaštite nematerijalnih kulturnih dobara odozdo kakvu bismo očekivali, već predstavlja uspjeh široko postavljene mreže aktera na različitim razinama. Godišnji sastanci neformalne mreže zemalja mediteranske prehrane, na kojima sudjeluju predstavnici nadležnih ministarstava te predstavnici amblematskih zajednica, a na kojima sudjelujem od 2015. godine, pružaju priliku za bolji uvid u različite razine aktivnosti zaštite i promocije ove nematerijalne kulturne baštine, ali, što je još značajnije, omogućuju razmjenu dobrih praksi između sedam zemalja. Zaštiti ove nematerijalne kulturne baštine pridružuju se različiti institucionalni i izvaninstitucionalni akteri na nacionalnoj i lokalnoj razini. Tako se, primjerice, u Španjolskoj zaštiti i popularizaciji mediteranske prehrane pridružuju resorno Ministarstvo kulture, predstavnici UNESCO-a, znanstvena zaklada Fundación Científica Caja Rural, ali i lokalni politički akteri u suradnji s lokalnom zajednicom, obrazovnim i kulturnim institucijama. Popularizacija mediteranske prehrane u Sorii, prvenstveno shvaćene kao temelj preventivnih javnozdravstvenih politika, provodi se, među ostalim, i osnivanjem gradskih vrtova²³ te imenovanjem ulica nazvanih prema elementima i zajednicama ove nematerijalne kulturne baštine.²⁴ Slučaj Portugala, također, pokazuje široku partnersku mrežu javnih i privatnih inicijativa, lokalnih udruga, obrazovnih i kulturnih institucija uključenih u popularizaciju, revalorizaciju te upravljanje mediteranskom prehranom. Lokalna politička razina u Taviri u Algarveu iznimnim mobilizacijskim djelovanjem povezuje, primjerice, Sveučilište u Algarveu,²⁵ Muzej grada Tavire,²⁶ lokalne proizvođače hrane i ugostitelje, kao i kulturne djelatnike i udruge koje okuplja na Festivalu mediteranske prehrane koji se održava svake godine u rujnu u Taviri od 2013. godine.²⁷ Osim svega navedenog, godine 2014. vijeće ministara Portugala osnovalo je Grupu za očuvanje i promicanje mediteranske prehrane²⁸ te 2018. Centro de Competências para a Dieta Mediterrânica čime je ova nematerijalna kulturna baština postala nacionalno, strateško pitanje Portugala.²⁹

Zahtjev za odbacivanjem ideje apolitičnosti naših prehrambenih praksi, što ga nerijetko artikuliraju kulturnoantropološka istraživanja prehrane, danas se pokazu-

23 https://cadenaser.com/emisora/2018/04/25/ser_soria/1524653680_391819.html (pristup 22. 5. 2023.).

24 <http://fundacioncajarural.net/en/fundacion.html> (pristup 22. 5. 2023.).

25 Tijekom portugalske koordinacije neformalnom mrežom zemalja upisnica mediteranske prehrane, godišnja koordinacija mrežom obaveza je svake od zemalja te se sve zemlje rotiraju na tom zadatku, organizirana je međunarodna znanstvena konferencija "The Cultural Heritage of the Mediterranean Diet" koja se održala 9. i 10. svibnja 2017. u Faru. Program konferencije vidjeti na: <https://www.minhaterra.pt/wst/files/112967-PROGRAMAXPT.PDF> (pristup 22. 5. 2023.).

26 O aktivnostima toga muzeja u zaštiti i popularizaciji mediteranske prehrane vidi: <http://museumunicipaldetavira.cm-tavira.pt/?q=dm> (23. 5. 2023.).

27 Više o festivalu vidi na: <http://www.dietamediterranea.pt/?q=pt/node/759> (pristup 22. 5. 2023.).

28 https://inovacao.rederural.gov.pt/images/imagens/GTInovacao/17-Protocolo_CentroCompetenciasDietaMediterranica.pdf (pristup 22. 5. 2023.).

29 <http://www.dietamediterranea.pt/?q=pt/ccdm/quem-somos> (pristup 22. 5. 2023.).

je osobito opravdanim u pokušaju razumijevanja suodnosna koncepata i praksi koje proizlaze iz mediteranske prehrane. Dovoljno je samo pogledati najnoviju piramidu mediteranske prehrane objavljenu 2020. godine da bismo vidjeli nove preokupacije koje se danas upisuju u ovaj temeljno kulturni obrazac.³⁰ Piramida danas, uz sve prethodno spomenute slojeve, uvodi pitanje održivosti prehrambenog sustava, ističući tako ulogu sezonalnosti, očuvanja bioraznolikosti, lokalnu proizvodnju i potrošnju hrane te razumno korištenje prirodnih resursa, osobito tla i vode. Tradicijske kuhinje Sredozemlja sada mogu predstavljati nužni korak unatrag prema boljoj budućnosti, a ne samo mogućnost zajednica da predstavljaju same sebe ili pak dobiju na tržišnoj vrijednosti.

Krajem prošle godine mediteranska prehrana bila je glavna tema panela održanog u Ujedinjenim narodima u New Yorku pod naslovom *Mediterranean Diet – Lifestyle for a sustainable future*.³¹ Taj događaj, organiziran u sklopu prošlogodišnje talijanske koordinacije aktivnostima neformalne mreže amblematskih zajednica, uz pomoć talijanskog Ministarstva poljoprivrede³² te stalnih misija Italije i Maroka pri UN-u, pokazao je širinu pristupa, političkih i ekonomskih agendi koje danas postaju proaktivni nositelji mediteranske prehrane. Izmještena iz svakodnevice Sredozemlja, mediteranska prehrana postavlja ambiciozne, globalne ciljeve, no istovremeno i paradoksalno pokazuje nemoć u borbi s globaliziranim, industrijaliziranim prehrambenim sustavima i promjenom prehrambenih navika. Transformacije koncepta mediteranske prehrane, od tradicijske prehrane preko nematerijalne kulturne baštine do održivog prehrambenog modela, mnogo više govore o preokupacijama današnjice nego o samim prehrambenim obrascima, svakodnevnim prehrambenim praksama i izborima. Ostavljajući ovom prilikom otvorenima pitanja međusobne isprepletenosti kulturnih i prehrambenih politika, složena i narušena odnosa između okoliša i ljudi, trebali bismo se također upitati u kakvom su odnosu trenutna popularnost mediteranske prehrane i ideja tjeskobe modernih jelaca, kao najčešćeg izraza prehrambenih strahova sitog Zapada (Jackson 2015), koji se nerijetko iskazuju razvojem i jačanjem etičkih potrošačkih praksi, favoriziranjem kratkih opskrbnih lanaca, lokalne konzumacije hrane i pitanja prehrambene suverenosti. Holistički pristup prehrambenoj kulturi, kakav je u srži mediteranske prehrane, svoju suvremenost, također, gradi poigravajući se (kulinarskom) nostalgijom i komodifikacijom (uljepšana) iskustva svakodnevice Sredozemlja. No ta je svakodnevica danas podjednako imaginarna koliko i utemeljena u stvarnosti.

30 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7728084/> (pristup 7. 4. 2023.).

31 Više o samom događaju, koji se održao 18. studenog 2022., kao i integralnu snimku, vidi na: <https://media.un.org/en/search?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A387&f%5B1%5D=topic%3A556&f%5B2%5D=topic%3A718&f%5B3%5D=topic%3A963&f%5B4%5D=topic%3A1077&f%5B5%5D=topic%3A1148&f%5B6%5D=topic%3A1240&f%5B7%5D=topic%3A5878> (pristup 29. 3. 2023.).

32 Ministero delle Politiche Agricole, Alimentari e Forestali – MiPAAF.

KOMENTARI

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Jelena Ivanišević: Mediteranska prehrana 3.0 – od tradicijske kuhinje do održivih politika

Jelena Ivanišević u svojoj sveobuhvatnoj analizi ističe tri važne točke u vezi s mediteranskom prehranom” i načinima na koje je poimamo. Prvo postavlja pitanje jednoznačnosti opisa mediteranske prehrane i pokazuje kako ta prehrana, koju je UNESCO 2010. godine uvrstio na svoju Reprezentativnu listu nematerijalne kulturne baštine, nije *samo* prehrana. To se postiže, kako tvrdi, “svođenjem kompleksnih kulinarskih sustava i prehrambenih praksi u jedninu” koja se pak temelji na “metafori Sredozemlja kao jedinstvenog kulturnog prostora” (polazni tekst str. 6–7). Takav “imaginarni prehrambeni krajolik” posljedica je desetljeća zapadnjačkog shvaćanja Sredozemlja kao prostora lagodnog života, često praćenog romantizacijom njegova krajolika i veličanjem njegova siromaštva. To je doprinijelo, kako autorica tvrdi, redukcionističkom prikazu mediteranske prehrane kao hrane jednostavnih, siromašnih i iskrenih ljudi. Primjere nije teško naći, dovoljno je pogledati televizijske emisije o Italiji Jamieja Olivera ili Ricka Steina kako kuha u malim grčkim i turskim selima, pa tako Oliver u prvi plan stavlja *le nonne* kao čuvarice talijanske kulinarske kulture i tradicije koje svojim načinima života nude rješenje za probleme suvremenog svijeta. Kako Joanne Hollows (2022: 142) ističe, ovakva romantična idealizacija seoske prehrambene kulture, ne samo na Sredozemlju već i drugdje, ide ruku pod ruku s općenitom zapadnom *foodie* kulturom koja (v. Johnson i Baumann 2015) u sklopu ideje o napuštanju industrijalizacije i vraćanja prirodi slavi siromaštvo. Ta je težnja nastala na predodžbama predmodernog Sredozemlja iz 19. stoljeća kao odredišta na koje su putovale više klase, u Italiju i Grčku, pritom posjećujući prekrasne, ali siromašne, suhe i puste krajeve u kojima su susretali ljude s “egzotičnim” navikama o kojima će izvijestiti po povratku kući. Ako krenemo proširivati kritiku koju predstavlja Ivanišević, možemo se zapitati kako se suvremeno zapadnjačko razumijevanje mediteranske prehrane povezuje s tim ustaljenim kulturnim predodžbama Sredozemlja kao prostora za odmor, romantiku i zdravlje, istodobno zanemarujući (brišući, zaboravljajući) njegove reprezentacije u potpuno drugačijem diskursu koji također

nastoji definirati Sredozemlje i njegovu hranu, ali u kontekstu siromaštva, migracija i mora kao “grobља migranata”, o čemu se često negativno izvješćuje s europske strane Sredozemlja, a drugdje ignorira.

Ivanišević kao posljednje pitanje navodi promjenjivost, i to ne toliko same prehrane koliko načina na koji se ona opravdava. Iako je isprva bila definirana kao zdrava prehrana u sklopu određenog stila života, mediteranska se prehrana danas više doživljava kao održiva prehrana koju “ne treba prakticirati zbog vlastita zdravlja ili vrijednosti kulturne baštine, već zbog dobrobiti ekosustava, bioraznolikosti i planete” (str. 12). To je zanimljiv pomak u diskursu, no ne i neočekivan, te je dobro prikazan u članku koji pojašnjava kako se savjeti o prehrani utvrđuju, funkcioniraju i na kraju transformiraju kao dio većih diskurzivnih cjelina s kojima su povezani. Time se prelazi iz univerzalnosti (mediteransku prehranu trebali bi slijediti svi jer je zdrava) u lokalnost (mediteransku prehranu trebali bi konzumirati ljudi sa Sredozemlja jer je lokalna i stoga njezina primjena smanjuje ekološki utjecaj).

Tijekom proteklih je dvadeset godina na Zapadu među diskursima povezanim a hranom koji su naslijeđeni iz 20. stoljeća potreba za ekološkom održivošću zasjenila usredotočenost na zdravlje. S obzirom na to da se mediteranska prehrana sada doživljava kao održiva prehrana, pretpostavlja se da bi se osobe na Sredozemlju trebale pomaknuti “unatrag prema boljoj budućnosti” (str. 15) i odbaciti napredak postignut u prošlom stoljeću: nema više uvoza hrane izdaleka, nema više multinacionalnih kompanija i njihovih globalnih brendova, nema više rajčica u prosincu! Bake, *nonne*, koje su oduvijek jele namirnice iz svojeg vrta, zimi rajčice samo u obliku šalše koju su same konzervirale ljeti, to smatraju očiglednim; nije im potrebno da njihova kuhinja bude nazivana mediteranskom prehranom; to je njihova obiteljska kuhinja, regionalna i jedinstvena. Što se tiče ostalih, što s tom mediteranskom prehranom? Ivanišević s pravom pretpostavlja da je ovaj pomak u diskursu još jedan prolazni trend globalnih političkih elita koji “mnogo više govori o preokupacijama današnjice nego o samim prehrambenim obrascima, svakodnevnim prehrambenim praksama i izborima” (str. 15) ili o praktičnostima hranjenja obitelji na sredozemnom području, gdje njihov prehrambeni sustav ulazi u interakciju s interesima globalnih multinacionalnih kompanija i gdje se UNESCO-om zaštićene “tradicije” žestoko sudaraju s potrebom za napretkom i očuvanjem uspostavljenih i dokazanih stilova života na lokalnoj razini diljem Sredozemlja. Sveobuhvatna analiza postojeće literature o tome što ljudi na Sredozemlju danas jeđu, na primjer, upućuje na to da se mediteranska prehrana trenutno tek umjereno primjenjuje, uz značajne varijacije među regijama, kao što je vidljivo na primjeru industrijaliziranog sjevera i ruralnog juga Italije, da ne spominjemo očite razlike između europskog Sredozemlja u usporedbi s njegovim afričkim ili azijskim dijelovima (Obeid et al. 2022). Takvo odstupanje od tradicionalnih prehrambenih navika pronalazimo i na drugim mjestima, budući da stanovništvo nadopunjuje tradicionalne jelovnike dostupnim međunarodnim namirnicama, uključujući one koje su proizvod globalnih prehrambenih lanaca. U takvim okolnostima nema mnogo prostora za politički motiviran povratak u prošlost, pogotovo ako su ta vremena lokalno povezana sa siromaštvom, glađu i migracijom. Umjesto toga,

održiva prehrana (bilo gdje, a ne samo na Sredozemlju) može biti uspješna samo ako uzme u obzir trenutne prakse stanovništva i prilagodi ih budućnosti, prema održivijem modelu koji proizlazi iz mogućnosti lokalnog okruženja i tradicija, a pritom ne zanemaruje trenutne okolnosti, ukuse i težnje svojih populacija.

Komunikacija, uključujući onu vlada i međunarodnih organizacija, nedvojbeno će imati utjecaja na uspješnost tih pomaka prema održivijim prehranama (Johnston et al. 2014; Culliford, Bradbury i Medici 2023). Međutim, teme kao što su održiva prehrana i problemi suvremenih prehrambenih sustava su kompleksne, a publika je raznolika. Istraživanje učinaka promocije mediteranske prehrane, na primjer, zorno prikazuje te dileme i to kako pokušaji uvjeravanja ljudi da se pridržavaju ove prehrane ovise i o pozitivnosti poruke i jasno utvrđenoj ciljnoj koristi (Carfora, Morandi i Catellani 2022; Rowe i Alexander 2018). Promoviranje mediteranske prehrane podrazumijeva, među ostalim, i smanjeno konzumiranje mesa – luksuzne namirnice koja je stoljećima povezana s bogatim i lagodnim načinom života viših klasa i koja je ključna za duboko ukorijenjene predodžbe ne samo o klasi već i o rodu, budući da se konzumacija mesa stereotipno povezuje s muškosti. Ove se ideje, barem u zapadnom svijetu, sada polako mijenjaju kako se vegetarijanska i posebno veganska hrana sve više promoviraju među muškarcima (v. npr. Hollows 2022; Contois 2020). U proturječnoj kakofoniji glasova koji dolaze iz različitih izvora (vlada, oglašavanja multinacionalnih kompanija, medija koji pišu o načinu života itd.) i pritom nude neku vrstu prehrambenih savjeta, ideja mediteranske prehrane kao homogene metafore za složeni skup stvarnih životnih praksi možda nije idealno sredstvo kroz koje bi se održivija prehrana mogla razvijati.

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Mediteranska prehrana – odgovor na tekst

Prije razvoja moderne medicine teorija prehrane bila je u središtu većine fizioloških sustava. Osim toga, bila je podložnija trendovima i hirovima. Dok se šire medicinsko djelovanje polako mijenja s postupnom primjenom najnovijih terapijskih otkrića koju provode stručni liječnici, nutricionistički savjeti mogu se mijenjati brzo i naglo jer je njihova provedba relativno jednostavna, a javnost često željna savjeta o prehrani. To dovodi do toga da su prehrambene teorije dobar pokazatelj promjene kulturnih ideala. Drugim riječima, kada bi veliko i snažno tijelo bilo kulturni ideal, dominantna prehrambena teorija odražavala bi takav ideal u konkretnim preporukama, promicanjem konzumacije mesa i mliječnih proizvoda, višeg unosa kalorija i masti. Kako su kulturne i društvene norme idealizirale mršavije tijelo bez previše mišića za uredske radnike, najčešći savjeti danas uključuju smanjenje unosa kalorija te izbjegavanje masnoća i še-

ćera. To vrijedi čak i kada u obzir ne uzimamo dijete za mršavljenje, dijete za izgradnju tijela i druge prehrambene subkulture. Savjeti o prehrani društveno su konstruirani i mijenjaju se prema vrijednostima određenog društva koje ih stvara.

Prehrambeni savjeti često i osciliraju između potpunog povjerenja u napredak i znanost tijekom nekih razdoblja, recimo od kasnog 19. stoljeća do sredine 20. stoljeća kada su otkriveni vitamini, osmišljene prehrambene piramide, a ljudi su vjerovali u sve što su stručnjaci tvrdili, te s druge strane razdoblja u kojima vlada nepovjerenje prema znanosti. Sjetite se samo svake takozvane “prirodne” prehrane koja se temelji na povratku jednostavnoj i neprocesuiranoj hrani, kako god ona bila kulturno definirana. Jean-Jacques Rousseau je u 18. stoljeću smatrao da su to kruh, mlijeko i povrće. Za pristaše paleo dijete to podrazumijeva velik unos bjelančevina i izbjegavanje ugljikohidrata na temelju pretpostavke da je to bio ljudski način prehrane prije neolitske revolucije. U svakom se slučaju smatra da je “prirodna” prehrana ona koju su ljudi konzumirali prije nego što je sve krenulo po krivu.

Mediteranska prehrana, od trenutka kada ju je Ancel Keys 1948. godine prvi put osmislio pa do vrhunca njezine popularnosti u kasnijem 20. stoljeću, bila je u suprotnosti s konvencionalnim prehrambenim savjetima. Ova se prehrana oslanjala na jednostavnu i neprocesuiranu prehranu s Krete, iz Grčke, južne Italije i kasnije cijelog sredozemnog područja. Prehrana se temeljila na biljkama, s naglaskom na žitarice, voće i povrće, vrlo malo mesa i masti, uz izuzetak maslinovog ulja, uz čašu vina dnevno i gotovo bez slatkiša ili prerađene brze hrane. I pritom se uglavnom ignoriralo činjenicu da se radilo o prehrani nastaloj u poslijeratnom siromaštvu koja će se promijeniti kada dođu relativno prosperitetnija vremena. Mnogo je važnije bilo to da su ljudi na tim područjima živjeli do 100 godina, nisu obolijevali od kardiovaskularnih bolesti, puno su se kretali i činilo se da vode jednostavne i sretne živote. Za zapadnu medicinu to je bio romantičan ideal kako smo se svi hranili prije industrijske revolucije, prije nego što su bolesti modernog života počele uzimati danak. Budući da su ciljevi zapadne medicine bili izričito i gotovo isključivo dugovječnost i niska pojavnost bolesti srca, nutricionisti su imali konkretne dokaze da je to bila idealna prehrana za sve.

U promicanju ove prehrane zanemarena je činjenica da su ljudi diljem svijeta preživljavali konzumirajući raznoliku hranu tijekom povijesti. No unatoč tome, ova se specifična prehrana smatrala znanstveno superiornom. S vremenom su i druge prehrane za dugovječnost počele dobivati pozornost, poput prehrane u japanskoj prefekturi Okinawa i prehrane adventista sedmog dana u gradu Loma Linda u Kaliforniji te prehrane u tzv. “plavim zonama” gdje ljudi nisu došli u kontakt s modernom industrijskom hranom s naglaskom na mesu. S vremenom je mediteranska prehrana postupno utjecala na dominantne prehrambene smjernice, a razlog je ponovno bio isticanje ciljeva dugovječnosti i izbjegavanja bolesti srca.

Ne smijemo zaboraviti ni da je u svojoj srži ovo bio gastronomski ideal jednostavne i iskrene seljačke hrane, kulturni ideal koji je potaknuo ljude poput samog Ancela Keysa da posjete Sredozemlje te da se čak presele tamo, a najvažnije od svega, izazvao promjene u prehrambenim savjetima, kojima se počelo preporučivati manji unos masnoća, slatkiša, jeftine prerađene hrane i svega što moderni industrijski prehrambeni

sustav može ponuditi. To su, inače, bili upravo oni proizvodi koji su bili ograničeni tijekom oba svjetska rata kako bi se slali vojnicima – pšenica, govedina i šećer bili su prehrambeni ideali. Mediteranska prehrana bila je njihova potpuna suprotnost.

Ne smijemo zaboraviti ni da je uspjeh mediteranske prehrane u popularnoj predodžbi uvelike bio posljedica uspješnog marketinga određenih proizvoda poput maslinovog ulja, vina i europskih sireva. Ti su proizvodi bili u najboljem slučaju marginalne namirnice početkom 20. stoljeća, ako zanemarimo određene etničke skupine, ali su postali ključni kulinarski sastojci tijekom kasnog 20. stoljeća.

Ti su prehrambeni ideali, naravno, bili idealizirani izvana, većinom iz SAD-a i sjeverne Europe, čime se sa sredozemnim načinom života povezivao sretan život, opuštenost i stil uzgoja i prerade hrane te društveni objedi koje je moderni život izvan Sredozemlja onemogućio. UNESCO je ovoj prehrani dodijelio status nematerijalne kulturne baštine i tako pokušao očuvati, inače vrlo heterogen kada se detaljnije sagleda, prehrambeni sustav iznutra, ne kao prehrambeni ideal, već kao način života kojem prijeti nestajanje.

Rasprava o mediteranskoj prehrani očekivano se sve više usmjerava prema održivosti, sezonalnosti i društvenim prednostima konzumiranja lokalnih namirnica, kako se navodi i u polaznom tekstu. To predstavlja još jednu iteraciju kritike svega što je krivo s modernim industrijskim prehrambenim sustavom koji šalje hranu po cijelom svijetu bez obzira na ekološku cijenu takvih postupaka ili na njihov utjecaj na klimatske promjene. Tradicionalni sredozemni prehrambeni sustavi u opreci su s industrijaliziranim poljoprivredom, primjenom pesticida i gnojiva te posebno sa suvremenim čudovištem mesne i mliječne industrije. Ovo je još jedno romantično evociranje prošlosti ili pokušaj usporavanja snage promjene i preusmjeravanje s nepromišljene i destruktivne ovisnosti o globalnim razmjerima, učinkovitosti i korporativnoj dobiti.

S druge strane, moglo bi se reći i da ovo nije tek puki povratak u prošlost. Riječ je o nastojanju da se sačuvaju pozitivni elementi prehrambenih sustava prošlosti dok se restrukturiraju najodrživije prakse sadašnjosti. Hoće li to biti moguće ili ne sasvim je drugo pitanje. Ali ako pogledamo kako je mediteranska prehrana utjecala na način na koji razmišljamo o hrani, nema sumnje da je cijeli niz novih sastojaka postao osnovna hrana, da se biljne prehrane smatraju idealima, iako u praksi konzumacija mesa i dalje raste na globalnoj razini. Ironično, mediteransku si prehranu možda mogu priuštiti samo relativno imućni ljudi.

No, i dalje preostaje glavno pitanje: postoji li uopće nešto što se može nazvati mediteranskom prehranom? Ne mislim na jednu pojednostavljenu homogeniziranu prehranu, za koju nitko nikada nije ni tvrdio da postoji. Moje je pitanje postoje li još uvijek ljudi koji žive i jedu na taj način, i ako postoje, koliko će dugo još postojati? Čak i ako prehrana načelno ostaje nutritivno ispravna, može li ona realno odoljeti napadima moderne industrijske hrane?

Smatram da je odgovor “ne”. Možda ćemo zadržati određene elemente. Sofisticirano buržoasko nepce i dalje će plaćati visoke cijene za ulje malih proizvođača, rijetke sireve, konzerviranu ribu, što god bila posljednja gastronomska pomama.

No, hoće li moći rekreirati društveno i kulturno okruženje koje je bilo temelj mediteranske prehrane? Hoće li ih ograničavati siromaštvo i izolacija koji su očuvali te prehrambene obrasce sve donedavno? I, možda najvažnije pitanje, hoće li ljudi odvojiti vrijeme, ili čak imati dovoljno vremena, da prošeću do lokalne trgovine s namirnicama, da spremaju jela od sirovih sastojaka u opuštenom tempu i da redovito dijele hranu s obitelji i prijateljima uz bocu vina? Ako je to istinska srž mediteranske prehrane, onda su možda ovo važniji sustavni problemi od većeg unosa povrća i upotrebe maslinovog ulja.

Moj cinizam prema prehrambenim hirovima mnogo je slabiji od moje vjere u moć društvenog okupljanja oko hrane, kuhanja s lokalnim sastojcima i razumijevanja toga odakle dolazi naša hrana. Sve je to puno važnije od uvoza luksuznih mediteranskih proizvoda. To znači i da ako narodi Sredozemlja mogu sačuvati svoje prehrambene sustave, izvrsno. Međutim, nemoguće je jednostavno prenijeti te nematerijalne kulturne značajke na druge prostore bez pravog konteksta. Trebamo li razvijati slična prehrambena rješenja koja uključuju te elemente? Naravno da trebamo. Također vjerujem da proizvođači hrane svjesno potiču društvenu anomiju. Njima je jednostavnije prodati više proizvoda ako ljudi nisu povezani, ako jedu hranu "s nogu", konzumiraju brzu i praktičnu hranu, punu jakih okusa i kada ih potiču da jedu više. U konačnici to dovodi do globalnog porasta pretilosti, šećerne bolesti u kasnijoj životnoj dobi i drugih bolesti povezanih s prehranom kojima svjedočimo. To je cijena koju plaćamo kada dopustimo da nas hrane korporacije.

Stoga ovdje ne pozivam ljude da prakticiraju određeni mediteranski način prehrane, već da jedu hranu koja je prilagođena mjestu i vremenu, napravljena od sastojaka koji rastu lokalno i koju uzgajaju ljudi koji žive u njihovoj zajednici te koju ljudi kuhaju za druge, da bi se ta hrana podijelila na načine koji odgovaraju lokalnoj kulturi. Ako pritom možemo voditi računa o okolišu, dobrobiti ljudi i životinja te dugoročnom zdravlju planeta, još bolje. Ovo je veliki izazov, ali mislim da rješenje počinje u kuhinji: kuhanjem i hranjenjem drugih.

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Mediteranska prehrana. Od zdravlja do održivosti kroz kulturu ili o kulturalnim modelima tumačenima kroz goruće probleme današnjice

Danas znamo da je Sredozemlje društveno-kulturni i politički konstrukt temeljen na geografskom entitetu. Svaka rasprava o hrani na Sredozemlju uključuje i društvenu i kulturnu konstrukciju. Hrana i prehrambeni obrasci općenito spadaju u okvire

društava koja su ih stvorila i koja ih iznova stvaraju, a stoga i u određene društveno-kulturne sustave.

Dok stvaramo svoju predodžbu o Sredozemlju na temelju određenih parametara koji su čvrsto određeni geografijom i klimom, oni su također i definirani kulturnim projekcijama i stereotipima koje je teško izbjeći. Njima se služimo da bismo utvrdili razlike i sličnosti te ih definirali u odnosu na poljoprivredu, stočarstvo i hranu. To znači da možemo reći da su, unatoč geografskoj blizini, određene kulture i/ili regije, poput sjevernog i južnog ili istočnog Sredozemlja, vrlo različite ili čak u konfliktu; ili, s druge strane, da nisu toliko različite i da imaju neku vrstu obiteljskog odnosa koji im daje identitet te ih u konačnici povezuje (Caro Baroja 1956).

Međutim, Sredozemlje je oduvijek bilo mjesto komunikacije i kontakta. Kako je primijetio Fernand Braudel (1981), rute na ovom *unutarnjem moru* mogu se naći na kopnu i na moru, povezane su u sustavu cirkulacije koji je potaknuo razne vrste odnosa između različitih društava koja su se razvila na njegovim obalama. Sredozemlje je stoga, s jedne strane, važno raskrižje i ogroman centar integracije i redistribucije utjecaja, ne samo u prehrani, koji dolaze iz četiri osnovna smjera; s druge strane, on je i izvanredno područje aklimatizacije gdje su proizvodi, od kojih većina i danas postoji, iz drugih bliskih i udaljenih mjesta naišli na povoljno okruženje za kultivaciju ili uzgoj, tako da su njihovo prihvaćanje i implementacija u lokalne prehrambene sustave logičan slijed događaja.

No, ova mogućnost integracije sastojaka nije slučajnost. Treba imati na umu da su mnoge naše kuhinje proizvod procesa, a ne receptata. Stoga imaju mogućnost prihvaćanja novih sastojaka u metode koje su oduvijek primjenjivane. Na primjer, kako je primijetila Isabel González Turmo (1993), tijekom vremena su u mnogim andaluzijskim gulašima svoje mjesto našli povrće ili meso koje se ranije nisu koristili, a da pritom nisu mijenjali njihove osnovne karakteristike.

Meditranska prehrana 3.0, 4.0 ili čak i više...

Kao što ističe Sandro Dernini (2008), mediteranska se prehrana danas promatra kao cjeloviti način života koji čini vidljivim kulturne identitete i različitosti te donosi izravnu mjeru vitalnosti kultura u kojima se prakticira. U tom je kontekstu mediteranska prehrana izraz mediteranskog stila života koji se neprestano razvija kroz vrijeme, stalno ga iznova stvaraju zajednice i grupe ovisno o promjenama u njihovu okruženju i povijesti. U sklopu različitih kultura mediteranska prehrana predstavlja identitet (lokalni, regionalni, nacionalni ...) i kontinuitet za sredozemna društva.

Osim toga, s modernizacijom poljoprivrede i globalizacijom prehrambenih proizvoda koja se odvijala u drugoj polovini dvadesetog stoljeća, koncepti poput održivih prehrana ili ljudske ekologije zapostavljeni su u korist intenziviranja i industrijalizacije poljoprivrednih sustava. Tijekom protekla tri desetljeća sve veća zabrinutost za sigurnost hrane ponovno je potaknula zanimanje za organsku hranu (Herrin i Gussow 1989) i lokalno proizvedene i održive prehrambene proizvode. Ova je činjenica posebno zanimljiva na sredozemnom području (Medina 2015), gdje se

međunarodni pokreti poput *Slow fooda*, među ostalima, temelje na obrani lokalne proizvodnje, biološke raznolikosti i održivosti i gdje su uključeni i sociokulturni i biološki aspekti.

Unatoč tome, mediteranska se prehrana još uvijek smatra politički neovisnom, kao da nije dio značajnog društvenog i kulturnog mediteranskog prehrambenog sustava. Zdravlje ili konzumacija hrane još uvijek se promatraju odvojeno od poljoprivredne ili ribolovne proizvodnje, ekonomije (prodaja, uvoz-izvoz itd.) ili održavanja tradicionalnih struktura distribucije i trgovine (González Turmo i Medina 2012). U tom kontekstu, dok bi dobra prehrana trebala biti cilj poljoprivrede, od presudne je važnosti da se u procesu ne izgubi briga za održivost. Mnogi prehrambeni obrasci mogu biti zdravi, ali se mogu i znatno razlikovati, na primjer u pogledu troškova resursa ili ekološkog utjecaja.

Godine 2011. FAO i CIHEAM (Međunarodni centar za napredne poljoprivredne studije Sredozemlja) odabrali su mediteransku prehranu kao zajedničku studiju slučaja za karakterizaciju i procjenu održivosti prehrambenih obrazaca u različitim agroekološkim zonama, s posebnim naglaskom na održivost mediteranskih prehrambenih sustava. Pod pokroviteljstvom FAO-a i CIHEAM-a, mediteranska se prehrana danas promatra kao "održiv prehrambeni sustav" na mediteranskom području. Trenutačni okvir (4.0) uključuje sljedeće točke: 1) Prehrambeno adekvatan, siguran i zdrav sustav; 2) Niski ekološki utjecaj – zaštita i poštovanje biološke raznolikosti i ekosustava; 3) Kulturno prihvatljiv; 4) Dostupan, ekonomski pravedan i pristupačan.

Jelena Ivanišević spominje "3.0", makar samo u naslovu. Pretpostavljam da ova tri elementa uključuju kulturu, ekonomiju i održivost (uz pretpostavku da je zdravlje već dio tog sustava). Verzija 4.0 koju navode Dernini i suradnici (2017) uključuje zdravlje u svoju koncepciju. Iako ne znamo što bi mogli uključiti u budućnosti. Hoćemo li eventualno razgovarati o "5.0" ili "6.0" kako uključujemo nove elemente u analizu?

Unatoč tome, unutar tri stupa održivosti – društvene, ekološke i ekonomske – utvrđene su i četiri međusobno ovisne tematske dimenzije održivosti mediteranske prehrane: prehrana i zdravlje, okoliš uključujući biološku raznolikost, sociokulturni čimbenici i ekonomija. Kao rezultat ovog interdisciplinarnog i višedimenzionalnog pristupa održivosti istaknute su četiri koristi unutar jednog sveobuhvatnog okvira mediteranske prehrane 4.0, s varijacijama za svaku zemlju: značajni ishodi za zdravlje i prehranu, nizak ekološki utjecaj i bogata biološka raznolikost, visoke sociokulturne prehrambene vrijednosti i pozitivan ekonomski učinak na lokalnoj razini (ibid.).

Ovim se metodološkim pristupom mediteranskoj prehrani 4.0, koji u obzir uzima specifične varijacije u pojedinim zemljama i regijama unutar sredozemnog područja, nastoji doprinijeti razumijevanju toga što čini održivu prehranu u različitim agroekološkim zonama. Međutim, kao što je to često slučaj, kulturni su aspekti uvelike zanemareni. Što se tiče kulture, jedini je uvjet da bude "prihvatljiva" (a ne "koherentna", na primjer) za uključene populacije, a to podrazumijeva da se s vreme-

nom implicitno dopuštaju prisilne promjene ili modifikacije za kulturne promjene u korist drugih glavnih elemenata, kao što su prehrana ili okoliš (Medina 2019b).

Kamo idemo?

Kao i same kulture, kuhinje na Sredozemlju su različite, raznolike, povezane i promjenjive; neprestano se razvijaju i neprestano su pod vanjskim utjecajima koji prate njihov unutarnji razvoj. Jasno je koliko je teško “izgraditi” ideju o zajedničkoj hrani (ili prehrani) za sve zemlje ili kulture Sredozemlja.

Teško je pronaći zajedničke elemente među njima (što je također svojevrsna konstrukcija). Očito je da, budući da se radi o zajedničkom prostoru poput Sredozemlja, sa snažnim interakcijama i dugom zajedničkom poviješću, možemo doći do nekih pozitivnih rezultata. Međutim, ti rezultati ne mogu biti redukcionistički i ne možemo očekivati da se različite situacije podudaraju s našim prethodno zamišljenim ili željenim modelima.

Stoga nije moguće govoriti o zajednici zajedničkih sastojaka u svim zemljama sredozemnog područja ili o identičnim kuhinjama i jelima. Međutim, možemo govoriti prvenstveno u smislu zajednice zajedničkih kulinarskih tehnika i priprema, lokalnih prilagodbi koje su u nekim slučajevima slične, struktura proizvodnje i prodaje koje imaju neke zajedničke karakteristike te čak nekih načina konzumacije. Kada sve to promotrimo kao cjelinu, možemo prepoznati više ili manje zajednički mediteranski kulinarski sustav (Contreras et al. 2005) koji stvara neku vrstu *obiteljskog odnosa* među različitim kuhinjama oko Sredozemnog mora, a naziva se *mediteranskom prehranom* otkako ju je UNESCO proglasio nematerijalnom kulturnom baštinom 2010. godine.

Međutim, moramo uvijek imati na umu da je mediteranska prehrana dio međusobno ovisnog društvenog i kulturnog sustava i nikada se ne smije smatrati odvojenim elementom, što se često događalo, osobito iz zdravstvene sfere i u vezi s nekim odabranim proizvodima. Ovaj je prehrambeni sustav složena mreža međusobno ovisnih kulturnih aspekata i moramo zapamtiti da se sve karike u tom lancu moraju zaštititi (Medina 2015), od proizvodnje do jela, uključujući distribuciju, prodaju, tehnike kuhanja, ponašanje potrošača itd. Kao što Ivanišević ističe u svome tekstu, “konceptualna transformacija” mediteranske prehrane, “odnosno smještanje u (nove) okvire prehrambenih politika zelene tranzicije, zahtijeva dodatne kritičke i analitičke napore usmjerene dubljem razumijevanju suodnosa hrane, krajolika i pojedinaca, kao i suštinske isprepletenosti kulturnih, političkih i ekonomskih pitanja” (str. 24).

Ono što danas znamo o mediteranskoj prehrani prošlo je kroz razne promjene koje su od koncepta povezanog isključivo sa zdravljem (u svojim počecima i tijekom nekoliko desetljeća) napravile element kulture, način života nakon što ju je UNESCO proglasio nematerijalnom kulturnom baštinom 2010. godine (i nakon njezina proširenja na tri nove zemlje 2013. godine, što je prilično poseban događaj u kontekstu nematerijalne kulturne baštine UNESCO-a). Od tog je trenutka mediteranska

prehrana krenula novim putem, koji je utirao FAO, kao održiva prehrana, s fokusom na održivost i lokalnost kao temeljne stupove svojeg novog identiteta. Tako možemo vidjeti da je mediteranska prehrana prošla kroz konceptualnu transformaciju tijekom godina koja ju je putem kulture odvela od zdravlja do održivosti (Medina 2019).

Međutim, očito je i da usredotočenost na zdravlje zapravo nikada nije postala manje važnom, nego se prilagodila vremenima i modificirala ne bi li odgovarala novim prehrambenim trendovima. Ipak, zdravlje ostaje primarni fokus. S druge strane, često zaboravljamo da je za svaki prijelaz prema održivosti potrebna prizma različitih lokalnih kultura i posebna pažnja prema čitavom prehranbenom lancu da bi on bio moguć. Obično se fokusiramo samo na okoliš, a zaboravljamo socijalne i kulturne aspekte (Medina 2023). Kao što Ivanišević također ističe (vrlo mudro, usput rečeno) u svom tekstu, te “transformacije koncepta mediteranske prehrane, od tradicijske prehrane preko nematerijalne kulturne baštine do održivog prehranbenog modela, mnogo više govore o preokupacijama današnjice nego o samim prehranbenim obrascima, svakodnevnim prehranbenim praksama i izborima” (str 13).

No mediteranska se prehrana trenutačno suočava s velikim izazovom: obavezom očuvanja za koju je odgovorno sedam zemalja koje su predstavile tu deklaraciju ili joj naknadno pristupile, a koja daleko nadilazi područje javnog zdravstva ili puke sektorske politike. Taj je izazov u samom središtu zaštite prehranbenih sustava kao kulturne baštine. A to nije lak zadatak.

Elisabetta Moro **Sveučilište u Napulju “Suor Orsola Benincasa”**

Komentar na tekst Jelene Ivanišević “Mediteranska prehrana 3.0. Od tradicijske kuhinje do održivih politika”

U tekstu Jelene Ivanišević prikazuju se konceptualne transformacije mediteranske prehrane od druge polovine 20. stoljeća do danas.

Njezin nam rad pruža priliku da se prisjetimo svih glavnih povijesnih i teorijskih informacija o priznavanju mediteranske prehrane kao nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva (2010). U pristupu je od samog početka svjesna svih teorijskih implikacija koje prehranbene kulture imaju za zajednice i institucije. Naime, autorica razlikuje mediteransku prehranu kao prehranbeni model osmišljen na temelju znanosti od mediteranske prehrane kao zajedničke prehranbene kulture i prakse zemalja Sredozemlja.

Završni je cilj rada ispitati ulogu mediteranske prehrane “unutar politika održivog razvoja, očuvanja bioraznolikosti i ekosustava koje dugoročno nastoje razviti

nove političke i ekonomske modele u okviru nužne transformacije trenutnih prehrambenih sustava prema zelenijim i održivijim rješenjima” (str. 3). Što se tiče ovog pitanja, zahvaljujem autorici što je spomenula moj rad “The Mediterranean Diet from Ancel Keys to the UNESCO Cultural Heritage: A Pattern of Sustainable Development between Myth and Reality” (2016).

Zanimljiva je pritom autoričino referiranje na Hafsteinovo razmišljanje (2018) o tome “da prodor folklorističkih i etnoloških znanja, perspektiva i koncepata u javnu sferu predstavlja značajan dio modernističke refleksivnosti” (str. 4). Isto je tako zanimljiv autoričin prijedlog da je “moguće preuzeti također njegovu ideju *folklorizacije*, shvaćene kao proces koji označava uspjeh spomenutih disciplina koji se prvenstveno očituje u promjeni načina na koji ljudi doživljavaju svoju kulturu, kako je definiraju te prakticiraju (2018: 128)” (str. 4). Doista, antropološka stručnost tijekom izrade Konvencije iz 2003. godine nije bila na razini stručnosti od nekoliko godina ranije, kada je magistar antropologije Claude Lévi-Strauss bio glavni savjetnik UNESCO-a za temu nematerijalne kulturne baštine (Moro 2023; D’Alessandro 2021). No antropolozi su svakako utjecali na primjenu Konvencije iz 2003. godine, posebno što se tiče priznavanja prehrambenih kultura. Naime, posebna komisija od pet antropologa okupila se u organizaciji La Maison des Cultures du Monde u gradu Vitréu u Francuskoj 4. i 5. listopada 2009., po ovlaštenju UNESCO-a, da bi donijela odluku o tome je li prehrambena baština implicitno uključena u službeni definiciju nematerijalne kulturne baštine. Jednoglasna presuda bila je potvrdna (Moro 2014: 81–82, 2023).

Jelena Ivanišević ovim radom nastoji i “ukazati na konceptualne transformacije mediteranske prehrane u njezinoj dinamičnoj povijesti tijekom proteklih sedamdesetak godina” (str. 4). U vezi s tim autorica se referira na izjave talijanskog antropologa Ernesta di Renza iz njegova predavanja o konceptu mediteranske prehrane u proljeće 2017. godine na Hvaru. Njegovi su argumenti vrlo stari i već su zamijenjeni novim pristupom ovoj temi. Negiranje postojanja širokog koncepta mediteranske prehrane, koji u posljednjih sedamdeset godina u međunarodnom leksikonu označava pluralnu baštinu zemalja smještenih oko Sredozemnog mora, danas je tek retoričko sredstvo. To bi bilo kao negiranje postojanja drevne grčke filozofije na temelju argumenta da je Platon imao drugačiji način razmišljanja od Aristotela. Zbog toga je Renzova izjava “La dieta mediterranea non c’è!” po mom mišljenju besmislena. Kao prvo, zato što je povijesno ishodište mediteranske prehrane dobro poznato (Niola 2019). Drugo, ako je mediteranska prehrana više od pukog popisa recepata, mediteranska prehrana kako je definirana u UNESCO-ovom nominacijskom dosjeu mnogo je više od kulinarskih tradicija, a recepti se rijetko spominju. Naime, dosje UNESCO-a naglašava društvene prakse, poljoprivredne tehnike, vjerovanja, obrede, žetvu itd. Osim toga, autor dosjea, profesor Pier Luigi Petrillo, koji je nedavno bio predsjednik UNESCO-ove međunarodne komisije stručnjaka za nematerijalnu kulturnu baštinu, predstavlja ideju o odnosu između krajolika i stola kao središnju točku tog dokumenta (2021, 2019).

U ovom bi dijelu članka bilo dobro jasnije razlikovati mišljenja autorice od izjava kolege Renza. U svakom slučaju, svi su ti posredni citati korisni jer sugeriraju da je došlo vrijeme da se “negiranje mediteranske prehrane” treba analizirati kao pojavu koja zaslužuje posebno istraživanje.

Što se tiče važnog doprinosa Fernanda Braudela u nastanku “koncepta jedinstvenosti kulturnog prostora Sredozemlja”, predlažem da se kao početna točka uzme 18. stoljeće, kada su arheološka otkrića u Italiji, Grčkoj itd. počela privlačiti pozornost svih najvažnijih intelektualaca Europe, iako do nedavno mediteranska hrana, posebno talijanska, uopće nije bila uključena na popis pozitivnih očekivanja putnika na Grand Touru, kao što je nedavno dobro opisao Dieter Richter (2021).

Stoga je zanimljiva analiza procesa na temelju kojeg je autorica napisala da “su današnje piramide mediteranske prehrane podjednako rezultat istraživanja prirodnih te društvenih i humanističkih znanosti” (str. 9). I iznimno je relevantno za novu mediteransku piramidu koja je prošla redizajn 2020. godine.

Nova se uloga dodjeljuje pozitivnom životnom stilu koji se naziva mediteranskom prehranom: “Mediteranska prehrana se tako, ovisno o gledištima i razini aktera koji se njome bave, nudi kao rješenje problema kardiovaskularnog zdravlja ili epidemije pretilosti, ili pak predstavlja kao alat ruralnog razvoja koji štiti lokalnu proizvodnju, pridonosi jačanju zelenih prehrambenih politika i/ili zaštiti biološke raznolikosti” (str. 11). Glavni je promicatelj FAO uz podršku institucija kao što je CIHAEM (Međunarodni centar za napredne poljoprivredne studije Sredozemlja, Bari, Chania, Montpellier, Zaragoza).

Autorica ističe da je veliki međunarodni akademski i politički proces davao primat trenutačnoj ideji da su nove teme relevantne za mediteransku prehranu, uključujući javno zdravlje, održivost prehrambenih sustava, ekološki otisak agroindustrijskih sustava ili problem bacanja hrane. Dodala bih da je još jedna nova tema koju treba uvrstiti na prethodni popis “univerzalno pravo na sigurnu i nutritivnu hranu” putem distribucije demokratskog sustava.

Uloga Instituta za etnologiju i folkloristiku, u kojemu je autorica zaposlena, uz podršku hrvatskog Ministarstva kulture i medija, prilično je relevantna za proizvodnju akademskih mišljenja o mediteranskoj prehrani te, kako piše Ivanišević, “omogućeno nam je praćenje razvoja i dvojbi oko samoga koncepta mediteranske prehrane, ali i uvid u različite razine na kojima se odvija njezin suvremeni život” (str. 13). Autorica navodi i legitimaciju mediteranske prehrane koju donosi UNESCO-ova zaštita i koja predstavlja izazov za razumijevanje odnosa između ciljeva globalnih politika, poput UN-ove Agende 2030 (UN 2015).

Na kraju teksta Jelena Ivanišević postavlja britko i pametno pitanje:

Izmještena iz svakodnevice Sredozemlja, mediteranska prehrana postavlja ambiciozne, globalne ciljeve, no istovremeno i paradoksalno pokazuje nemoć u borbi s globaliziranim, industrijaliziranim prehrambenim sustavima i promjenom prehrambenih navika. Transformacije koncepta mediteranske prehrane, od tradicijske prehrane preko nematerijalne kulturne baštine do održivi-

vog prehranbenog modela, mnogo više govore o preokupacijama današnjice nego o samim prehranbenim obrascima, svakodnevnim prehranbenim praksama i izborima. Ostavljajući ovom prilikom otvorenima pitanja međusobne isprepletenosti kulturnih i prehranbenih politika, složena i narušena odnosa između okoliša i ljudi, trebali bismo se također upitati u kakvom su odnosu trenutna popularnost mediteranske prehrane i ideja tjeskobe modernih jelaca, kao najčešćeg izraza prehranbenih strahova sitog Zapada (Jackson 2015), koji se nerijetko iskazuju razvojem i jačanjem etičkih potrošačkih praksi, favoriziranjem kratkih opskrbnih lanaca, lokalne konzumacije hrane i pitanja prehranbene suverenosti. Holistički pristup prehranbenoj kulturi, kakav je u srži mediteranske prehrane, svoju suvremenost, također, gradi poigravajući se (kulinarskom) nostalgijom i komodifikacijom (uljepšana) iskustva svakodnevice Sredozemlja. No ta je svakodnevica danas podjednako imaginarna koliko i utemeljena u stvarnosti. (str. 15)

S obzirom na to da je u znanosti dobro pitanje bolje od dobrog odgovora jer pruža dugoročnu viziju problema, po mom je mišljenju “konceptualna transformacija” mediteranske prehrane (Medina 2021) logičan i pozitivan aspekt žive kulturne baštine. Možda, kao istraživači, ne bismo trebali tražiti od mediteranske prehrane da spasi planet. Samo bismo trebali u njoj potražiti prijedloge i nadahnuće da bismo razumjeli kako se ideologija hrane (uključujući tradicije, vjerovanja, prakse, strasti i opsesije itd.) razvija. Jedna pouka koju su sredozemne kulture dale svijetu jest da je nerijetko razmišljanje važnije od djelovanja.

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Muzealizacija mediteranske prehrane

Jesu li koncepti globalno i lokalno pomirljivi? Preciznije, je li nešto regionalno, lokalno prepoznatljivo kao jedinstvena vrijednost,³³ pa stoga i označeno na UNESCO-ovoj listi nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva kao baštinska dragocjenost, moguće multiplicirati na svjetskoj razini. I koliko je to, u konačnici, uopće poželjno. Jer “ista veličina ne pristaje svima”, što vrijedi i za mediteransku prehranu. Točnije, ono što se u kontekstu prehrane pokazuje kao korisno na prostoru Sredozemlja možda nije najbolji recept za, primjerice, prehranu stanovnika Kraljevine Švedske, Republike Paragvaja ili Kraljevine Kambodže ili bilo koje druge države koja ne dodiruje obale Sredozemnog mora, pa čak ni za neke koje to doista geografski čine. Polazna

³³ Izostavljamo ovdje raspravu o jedini i/ili množini mediteranske prehrane, o čemu će biti riječ nešto kasnije.

rasprava Jelene Ivanišević "Mediteranska prehrana 3.0 – od tradicijske kuhinje do održivih politika" navedene opservacije uključuje, premda možda pojedine izazove ne razrađuje u očekivanoj mjeri. No to ne umanjuje vrijednost njezine iznimne analize trenutnog stanja mediteranske prehrane kao fenomena nematerijalne baštine koji je prepoznao UNESCO, uključujući sve pozitivne aspekte, ali i iznesene izazove.

Premda je to možda akademski neuobičajeno, no ovdje komparativno vrlo primjerno, svoj komentar polazne rasprave započeo ću parafraziranjem relativno česte, generičke šale koja se tiče sredozemnog pristupa poslovanju / životnom stilu nasuprot onom zapadnoeuropskom. U osnovi doskočica kontrapunktira prosječnog (siromašnog) sredozemnog ribara koji, kako je to činio i desetljećima (ili i duže), tek lovi ribu na obalama Sredozemlja i onda je priprema za potrebe prehrane vlastite obitelji i zapadnoeuropskog gosta³⁴ koji mu sugerira da to nije uspješan način poslovanja. Naime, gost smatra da bi ribar trebao prodati dio ulova ribe, umjesto da sve što je ulovio podijeli s obitelji (i prijateljima), kako bi time dodatno zaradio. Ponovljenim bi postupkom potom osigurao sve više i više novca kako bi mogao kupiti veći ribarski brod te, u konačnici, i svoju flotu ribarica koja će mu jamčiti značajnu zaradu. Domaćin na to uzvraća pitanjem da bi to promijenilo kvalitetu života njega i njegove obitelji. Zapadnoeuropski gost sugerira da bi veća zarada naposljetku dovela do situacije u kojoj bi domaćin mogao svakodnevno provoditi značajan dio vremena u zajedničkom druženju s obitelji i prijateljima. Na to domaćin smireno odgovara da je cijeli taj ciklus bio nepotreban budući da i sada ima upravo to isto. Jasno je da je prenesena šala djelomično utemeljena na stereotipima o prosječnom radišnom zapadnoeuropskom čovjeku usmjerenom na čim veću zaradu i Mediterancu³⁵ koji je prvenstveno fokusiran na kvalitetu, odnosno uživanje u (malim) životnim radostima. Neovisno o generalizaciji, pa i površnosti iznesene šale, ona nam ipak ukazuje na nekoliko segmenata na temelju kojih je ideja mediteranske prehrane označena, ili propuštena da bude uspješnije definirana kao razlikovni (baštinski) fenomen.

S jedne strane, kako to polazna rasprava i pojašnjava, početna fascinacija mediteranskom prehranom u potpunosti je bila određena njezinim (ondašnjim) prepoznatim zdravstvenim učincima koji se tiču višestrukog umanjenja rizika smrtnosti od srčanih i moždanih udara, smanjenja povišenog kolesterola u krvi i njezine sveukupne dobrobiti za kardiovaskularno zdravlje. Upravo je zbog toga mediteranska prehrana, kako autorica ispravno ukazuje, postala globalni fenomen koji su podržavale medicinske znanosti te s vremenom sve više i raznovrsne medijske promocije³⁶ koje su je uočile kao sadržaj za koji su gledatelji zainteresirani. Što zbog promocije zdravog načina života, no (moguće) i istovremenog smanjenja zajamčene kvalitete zdravstvenih usluga u nizu zemalja. No to bi se tek trebalo detaljnije istražiti te ujedno provjeriti je li globalna promocija mediteranske prehrane ponajprije motivirana "nostalgičnim" poimanjem Sredozemlja ili je prevladala njezina medicinska/nutricionistička

34 Ispravno bi ga bilo nazvati turistom.

35 Objе su kategorije – zapadnoeuropski čovjek i Mediteranac – jednako iznimno uopćene.

36 Prvenstveno je riječ o televizijskim emisijama na temu kulinarstva, kasnije prenesenim na društvene mreže i druge medijske kanale.

dimenzija. Neupitno je da uobičajeni (mediteranski) nutritivni model prehrane, koji se temelji na značajnom udjelu biljne hrane, maslinovom ulju kao ključnoj masnoći te smanjenom unosu namirnica životinjskog porijekla, kako navodi autorica polazne rasprave, nije štetan za zdravlje, dapače, upravo suprotno. No ostaje otvoreno pitanje može li se suvremena praksa mediteranske prehrane u potpunosti oslanjati na navedenu argumentaciju kao glavni alat promocije i stečene popularnosti, odnosno mogu li istraživanja isključivo u području zdravlja i dalje biti dovoljno uvjerljiva s obzirom na to da današnji statistički podatci o smanjenju učestalosti istaknutih bolesti konzumacijom mediteranske prehrane ni približno nisu optimistični kao što su nekada bili.

Istovremeno, kako autorica polazne rasprave i napominje, tek se recentno, i to ponajprije zahvaljujući etnološkim i antropološkim istraživanjima, ideja mediteranske prehrane proširuje te osim dotad isključivo medicinsko-nutricionističkog aspekta počinje obuhvaćati i one segmente životne svakodnevnice koji preciznije definiraju elemente na osnovi kojih bi se mediteranska prehrana trebala diferencirati i razumijevati. U tom se kontekstu, primjerice, može promatrati dnevni odmor, uobičajeno popodnevni, koji je nerijetko zaboravljen ili ga se svjesno ignorira. Ljudi na Sredozemlju tradicionalno su prakticirali popodnevni odmor.³⁷ Sjećam se situacije kada sam s kolegama sa Sveučilišta u Barceloni išao u obilazak interpretacijskog centra u blizini grada Manrese.³⁸ Po posjeti, i nakon ručka, ukrkali smo se na lokalni vlak za Barcelonu gdje su u roku od 5 do 10 minuta nakon polaska svi kolege oko mene, a bilo nas je desetak, zadrijemali dok sam ja očekivao nastavak živopisne rasprave koju smo vodili tijekom ručka.³⁹ S obzirom na to da nisam proveo samostalna istraživanja, a ni pronašao rezultate drugih znanstvenih istraživanja koja bi nedvosmisleno pokazala da ljudi koji žive na sredozemnim obalama i otocima imaju neke specifične fiziološke (ili mentalne) potrebe, mogu tek zaključiti da sam prisustvovao situaciji u kojoj se kod mojih kolegica i kolega aktivirala jedna razina arhetipa,⁴⁰ obrasca ponašanja unutar dnevne rutine stanovnika Sredozemlja. Slično kao i kod promatranja mediteranske prehrane isključivo kroz njezine nutricionističke vrijednosti, čini se da i oko pitanja dnevnog/popodnevnog odmora u prvi plan iskaču istraživanja koja ponajprije ukazuju na zdravstvene blagodati takve prakse. Premda one nisu sporne, ono što se pri takvim istraživanjima nerijetko zaboravlja istaknuti jest da suvremeni, užurbani način života velikoj većini stanovnika ni na sredozemnoj obali i otocima više ne dozvoljava prakticiranje popodnevnog odmora.⁴¹ S druge strane, u drugim se okruženjima u svijetu⁴² zbog sasvim drugačijih životnih navika dnevni/popodnevni odmor, kako se tradicionalno običavao prakticirati na Sredozemlju, ni na koji način

37 Koji i danas, kada je moguće (!), koriste u onolikoj mjeri koliko im to suvremeni ubrzani životni stil dozvoljava.

38 Manresa je udaljena otprilike dva sata vožnje vlakom od Barcelone.

39 Premda je i moje porijeklo, doduše kao treće generacije, povezano s obalama Sredozemlja, zbog svog načina života ovu naviku evidentno nisam razvio.

40 Svjestan sam da je ovo pojednostavljeno pojašnjenje te ono služi prvenstveno za ilustraciju ideja koje iznosim.

41 Moji kolege koji su zadrijemali u vlaku pri povratku u Barcelonu ostalim danima u tjednu, kada rade u sveučilišnim prostorima, nemaju priliku za popodnevni odmor.

42 U prvom redu mislim na zapadnu Europu, sjevernoamerički kontinent (posebice SAD), kao i na druge prostore gdje je koncept mediteranske prehrane ostvario popularnost.

ne može primijeniti. U tom svjetlu, vjerujem, postaje jasnije zašto je dugo vremena segment sveukupnog načina života na Sredozemlju bio u drugom planu, a korištenje određenih namirnica⁴³ uvijek istaknuto. Pa tako i nastaje, odnosno opstaje hibridno stanje u kojem atraktivnost mediteranske prehrane na globalnoj razini raste jer su ljudi privučeni propagiranim pozitivnim učincima takve vrste prehrane na njihovo zdravlje⁴⁴ i raskoraka koji proizlazi iz činjenice da su svi ostali segmenti uobičajenog načina života na Sredozemlju nerijetko zanemareni. Uloga etnologa i antropologa u području izučavanja mediteranske prehrane time je nedvojbeno zahtjevnija s obzirom na to da upravo oni moraju ukazati na to da navedena sintagma nije ni približno jasna ni jednostavna kakvom je se najčešće prikazuje. Točnije, da su koristi takve prehrane nedvojbene, no da istovremeno ne nastaju, primjerice, jednostavnom zamjenom suncokretovog ulja s maslinovim ili slično, već sasvim drugačijim promišljanjem sveukupnih životnih navika. Te nastavno, argumentacijom u pravcu zaštite lokalnih zajednica koje su i dalje nosioci izvornih ideja mediteranske svakodnevice, a koje postepeno nestaju. Naime, nesumnjivo je da se suvremeni svijet značajno i velikom brzinom mijenjao tijekom nekoliko proteklih desetljeća. Pa tako (za primjer) i ideja autohtonog lokalnog ribara na europskom dijelu Sredozemlja, koji kao takav u praksi gotovo da više ni ne postoji, odnosno, UNESCO-ovom terminologijom kazano, iznimno je ugrožena vrsta. Nekadašnji ribarski brodovi već se desetljećima užurbano transformiraju u one primjerene turističkoj namjeni ili se rashoduju uz relativno izdašne subvencije Europske komisije kako bi se ostvarila zamišljena (premda ne dovoljno promišljena) agenda oko deklariranog održivog ribarstva. Pritom je ribarstvo samo jedna od kategorija koja je izravno povezana s promocijom ideja (blagodati) mediteranske prehrane.

Odmaknemo li se od rasprava isključivo praktične, odnosno zdravstvene korisnosti mediteranske prehrane, pa i one oko nemogućnosti njezina ostvarivanja, ako konceptualno nije šire sagledana,⁴⁵ u dijelovima svijeta gdje joj je popularnost najveća, ostaju nam još dvije razine izazova koje polazna rasprava adresira. Prva je (više ili manje uspješno) UNESCO-ovo prepoznavanje mediteranske prehrane i njezino uključivanje na Reprezentativnu listu nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva. Druga je ideja da mediteranska prehrana, kako je sada uključena, doprinosi globalnim agendama Ujedinjenih naroda koje se tiču održivosti i održivog razvoja.

O uključivanju mediteranske prehrane na UNESCO-ovu Reprezentativnu listu nematerijalne kulturne baštine čovječanstva u ovoj je reakciji već iznesen niz argumenata. Radni bi zaključak mogao glasiti da je njezin upis, s obzirom na to kako je ona trenutno definirana, možda bio preuranjen, a svakako po nizu segmenata manjkav. Definiranje mediteranske svakodnevice umjesto isključivo prehrane bilo bi daleko preciznije. Pritom sam svjestan da taj proces upisa nije jednostavan, kao i da je često politički uvjetovan. Stoga se slažem se opservacijom koja je iznesena u

43 Prva asocijacija na mediteransku prehranu u nemediteranskom svijetu u pravilu se odnosi na korištenje maslinovog ulja i veću konzumaciju ribe naspram crvenog životinjskog mesa.

44 Koji su istraživanjima doista i dokazani.

45 U smislu da se prepoznaje kao mediteranska svakodnevica umjesto samo kao mediteranska prehrana.

polaznoj raspravi da je poželjna okolnost to što je mediteranska prehrana, kao oblik prakse pripreme hrane, uvrštena na tu UNESCO-ovu listu. Premda to ne smije i ne može biti opravdanje da se uvršteni pojam, *per se*, ne unaprijedi i idealno ne redefinira kao mediteranska svakodnevica, kao nadređeni i znatno precizniji pojam koji uključuje niz praksi koje određuju mediteranski način života.⁴⁶

Što se tiče doprinosa trenutno prevladavajućeg oblika prakticiranja mediteranske prehrane u kontekstu politika održivosti, u većoj sam mjeri skeptičan u odnosu na autoricu početne rasprave, čega sam se već dotaknuo i ranije.⁴⁷ Održivost ili, preciznije, održivi razvoj današnjeg (globalnog) društva ne ovisi o široj primjeni ideje mediteranske prehrane, pa ni proširenog koncepta mediteranske svakodnevice koji ovdje sugeriramo, već o suštinskom prepoznavanju toga da je lokalnost, odnosno dominantno oslanjanje na lokalne/regionalne proizvode i povezane prakse ključni koncept održivosti. Kupine ili riba nedavno ulovljena iz Sredozemnog mora svakodnevno raspoloživi u Londonu ili maslinovo ulje u Torontu ne znače održivi koncept razvoja, koliko god ga neke aktualne politike protežirale. Jedna od ključnih komponenata održivog razvoja utemeljena je na interesu lokalne zajednice. Sve ostalo mora biti nakon toga, premda nažalost nije uvijek tako, pa ni u slučaju mediteranske prehrane. Mediteranska prehrana nije jednina, kako uvodničarka i spominje citirajući talijanskog antropologa Ernesta di Renza.

Koje su na osnovi iznesenih komentara moguće opcije? Perpetuiranje ideje tradicionalnog mediteranskog načina života, točnije njegove lažne slike u kojoj je maslinovo ulje njegova ključna karakteristika to nažalost nije. Ironično, do neke razine, koncept mediteranske prehrane, kako je trenutno postavljen, najbolje može biti sačuvan ako postane muzealiziran. Drugim riječima, ako postane sadržaj stalnog postava muzeja mediteranske prehrane u Hrvatskoj,⁴⁸ te se u okviru tog specifičnog medija, s kojim smo u Europi bliski sada već više od 250 godina,⁴⁹ pokuša protumačiti kompleksnost mediteranske prehrane. Svjestan sam koliko blasfemično zvuči ideja smještanja nematerijalne baštine ponajprije u okvire muzejske institucije,⁵⁰ premda je, s obzirom na sve navedeno, vidljivo da praksa mediteranske prehrane nestaje i u sveukupnom ju je opsegu⁵¹ moguće pronaći samo još u rijetkim "oazama" na Sredozemlju. A u takvim situacijama muzejsko rješenje⁵² nije najgora opcija, dapače, može biti kvalitetan pokretač novog interesa i dubljeg razumijevanja zašto (i kako) je ovaj životni stil vrijedan divljenja i oponašanja u našim vlastitim životima.

I pitanje održivosti, kao i mnogi drugi aspekti današnjice, ima svoje dvije strane. Ideje "sezonalnosti, očuvanja bioraznolikosti, lokalne proizvodnje i potrošnje hrane te razumnog korištenja prirodnih resursa, osobito tla i vode" koje se u polaznoj

46 Od namirnica do dnevnog/popodnevnog odmora i niza drugih elemenata.

47 Primjerice, pišući o lokalnom ribarstvu u odnosu prema globalnom.

48 Ili u Grčkoj, Španjolskoj, Cipru itd. Ili idealno mreži takvih muzeja po Sredozemlju.

49 A u međuvremenu je postao i globalno uvriježen.

50 Iako to ne bi bio prvi primjer u Europi ili svijetu, pa ni u Hrvatskoj.

51 Koji nedvojbeno uključuje cjelovitu svakodnevnicu, a ne samo prehrabene namirnice.

52 Podrazumijevam ovdje suvremeno osmišljeni muzeološki sadržaj s npr. uključenim iskustvom kuhanja i kušanja hrane u sklopu stalnog postava, ali i adekvatno radno vrijeme ili prostore za dnevni/popodnevni odmor itd.

raspravi spominju nadasve su poželjne no istovremeno nepomirljive s praktički globalnom popularnošću mediteranske prehrane. Odnosno, uvijek kada nešto dobiješ, nešto i izgubiš. Ako želimo biti surovo objektivni, prakticiranje mediteranske prehrane jest ponajprije “igralište” za dovoljno imućne⁵³ koji si takav stil prehrane mogu priuštiti. Nažalost, stanovnici na Sredozemlju sve su manje u navedenoj privilegiranoj skupini pa bi do određene razine i ovdje mogli govoriti o obliku ekološkog imperijalizma. Ne tako drastičnom kao u neki drugim državama u razvoju, ali svakako prisutnom. Potonje nikako ne znači da od ideje održivosti mediteranske prehrane treba odustati, već da širinu obuhvata treba daleko intenzivnije (i drugačije)⁵⁴ promišljati, kao i da načelno plemenita i poželjna ideja boljeg zdravstvenog stanja (dijela) čovječanstva⁵⁵ ne smije biti realizirana nauštrb kvalitete života izvornih zajednica mediteranske prehrane. Jer, nažalost, već niz godina škarpine iz Jadranskog mora odlaze na tržišta zapadne Europe, a na našim se tržnicama prodaju one iz Tunisa pa u konačnici nitko ne konzumira “frišku” ribu. Kao ni dnevni/popodnevni odmor.

53 Izostavimo li srdele, koje su još uvijek cjenovno pristupačne. Dnevni/popodnevni odmor da i ne spominjemo.

54 Kako se to dešava upravo u području etnologije i antropologije.

55 Koja se temelji na praksama mediteranske prehrane.



SVRT NA KOMENTARE

Jelena Ivanišević

Povijest koncepta mediteranske prehrane poznata je i dobro istražena, a svi autori koji su o njoj pisali jednodušno se slažu da je ona izum dr. Ancela Keysa (Matalas 2004; Dernini 2012; Queroz 2015; Moro 2016; Medina 2021a i dr.), istraživača koji je u siromašnim kuhinjama poratne Italije i Grčke, sredinom 20. stoljeća, vidio mogući odgovor na javnozdravstvene izazove suvremenog Zapada. Nastala tako u okvirima medicinskih istraživanja, mediteranska prehrana s lakoćom je prenesena izvan svojih simboličkih i geografskih granica, gdje se postepeno oblikovala u nutritivni obrazac koji je u svoje temelje ugradio i prikrio iskustvo gladi i neimaštine. Mehanizme koji su siromašnu prehranu oblikovali u hedonistički i gurmanski kulinarij Sredozemlja jasno skiciraju Albala i Tominc, prvenstveno ističući romantiziranje pučke, siromašne kuhinje kakva se prakticirala u vremenu prije industrijske revolucije. Kako ističe Albala, u prehrambene prakse Sredozemlja upisuju se, doduše sasvim suvremene, vrijednosti predmoderne prehrane iz vremena “prije nego što je sve krenulo po krivu” (str. 1). No vrijednosti poput *prave, jednostavne i poštene hrane* manje otkrivaju o minulim prehranbenim praksama i običajima, a više o današnjim preokupacijama i trendovima. Doista, kako ističu Albala i Tominc, nutritivni su savjeti društveno konstruirani te ih se ne može promatrati izvan trenutnih društvenih, kulturnih, ekonomskih i političkih okvira. Prehranbeni savjeti zrcale trenutne prehrambene preferencije i strahove, osobito one koje dio autora opisuje kao “tjeskobu suvremenog potrošača” (Jackson 2015) suočenog s porastom nepovjerenja u suvremeni agroindustrijski prehranbeni sustav.

Nepovjerenje i tjeskoba sitog Zapada značajno utječu na svakodnevne prehrambene izbore i prakse, koji se najčešće artikuliraju kao kritika ili otpor dominantnom agroindustrijskom prehranbenom krajoliku. Zabrinutome potrošaču prehranbenih proizvoda, koji dolaze iz nesaglediva lanca opskrbe, preostaje razvijanje različitih alternativnih načina snabdijevanja hranom te svakodnevno kuhanje kao čin otpora brzjoj, gotovoj hrani. Zbog toga Albalu više zanima mediteranska prehrana kao novi rukavac kritike suvremenog prehranbenog sustava nego njezina kulturnopolitička legitimacija u okviru UNESCO-ove zaštite.

Ideal domaće (lokalne i sezone) hrane prije prehrambene revolucije sredinom 20. stoljeća predstavljaju siromašni, poratni jelovnici juga Italije i otoka Krete. Umjerenе i ekonomične pučke kuhinje, čije su izbore prije određivale mogućnosti nego želje, u sebi sadrže i glad i snalazljivost. Nije se teško zato složiti s Anom Tominc, koja ističe da je to bila prehrana za koju smo znali da će se nepovratno promijeniti

čim se poprave druge okolnosti. Sakrivajući glad i neimaštinu, mediteranska je prehrana svoj "novi" sadržaj istovremeno gradila i na ideji imaginarnog Sredozemlja kao prostora dokolice, sporijeg ritma života i hrane kao društvenog rituala. Nije slučajno da se mediteranska prehrana, osobito u svojim baštinskim interpretacijama, kondenzira upravo oko ideje konvivijalnosti – dijeljenja hrane i zajedničkog blagovanja, odnosno prepoznavanja društvenosti kao temeljne vrijednosti vlastite prehrabene kulture. Medina ispravno zamjećuje da su naše predodžbe Sredozemlja i sredozemnih kuhinja neodvojive od stereotipova, poput onoga o ležernosti života i radostima dokolice. Stil života, kako je posredovan medijskim slikama mediteranskih kuhinja, koje su doista rezultat dugotrajnih i nikada završenih procesa preuzimanja i prilagođavanja novih namirnica, jela i okusa, postaje tako holistički princip na kojemu se danas gradi narativ o mediteranskoj prehrani kao osobitom izrazu vitalnosti kulture čiji je rezultat. Zbog toga se može činiti da je UNESCO-ov pristup zapravo zaštita "života pod opsadom" koju donose novi prehrabeni i kulturni obrasci razvijenog Zapada.

Kritika suvremenih prehrabnenih sustava koju imanentno sadrži koncept mediteranske prehrane postavlja novi okvir u koji se upisuju globalni ciljevi poput osiguravanja stabilnosti opskrbe sigurnom, hranjivom i kulturno prikladnom hranom, zaštite prirodnih resursa i bioraznolikosti. Istovremeno, mediteranska prehrana koja se nudi kao panaceja za različite izazove današnjice ne samo da ne pokazuje da je sposobna boriti se protiv promjene tradicijskih prehrabnenih praksi čak ni na vlastitim prostorima nego svojom globalnom popularnošću pridonosi perpetuiranju prehrabnenih nejednakosti. Ukazuje na to Albala kada s pravom postavlja pitanje tko si uopće može priuštiti mediteranske proizvode visoke kvalitete. S popularnošću mediteranske prehrane nije samo porasla simbolička vrijednost tipičnih namirnica nego je dugoročno utjecala i na njihovu cijenu. Pitanje prehrabnene pravde (engl. *food justice*), iako načelno sadržano u globalnim ciljevima prehrabnenih politika FAO-a (primjerice Agenda 2030) na koje se naslanja, zasada ostaje nedovoljno istaknuto u trenutnim, nerijetko apologetskim, zagovorima jačanja održivih prehrabnenih modela kakav je mediteranska prehrana. Mogući smjer daljnjeg promišljanja budućnosti mediteranske prehrane nije samo u shvaćanju da je rok trajanja trenutne očaranosti ovim prehrabnenim modelom teško predvidjeti nego i u problematiziranju novih oblika "ekološkog imperijalizma" (Babić) koji donosi komodifikacija i simplifikacija iskustva života na Sredozemlju. Je li mediteranska prehrana, kao set kompleksnih praksi svakodnevnog života (od pitanja proizvodnje hrane do njezine konzumacije), tek još jedan u nizu hirova globalnih političkih elita ili nužan početni korak *zelene transformacije* ostaje tema za neku buduću raspravu.

MEDITERRANEAN DIET 3.0

From Traditional Food to Sustainable Policies

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This paper will try to sketch the conceptual transformations of the Mediterranean diet from the second half of the 20th century to the present. This undoubtedly popular food model, which combines various food cultures of the Mediterranean, was initially recognized due to its health benefits, contributing to the prevention of cardiovascular diseases. The initial impulse for the global popularity of the Mediterranean food culture, which came from medical and nutrition sciences, has helped simplify, in the long run, the complex food systems of the Mediterranean, which have been recognized as a homogeneous culinary and cultural pattern since the 2000s. After the Mediterranean diet was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010, the understanding of this food culture changed. Today, the Mediterranean diet is being examined within the context of sustainable development policies and the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems with the aim of developing new long-term political and economic models within the necessary transformations of present food systems towards greener and more sustainable solutions.

Key words: traditional cooking, Mediterranean, Mediterranean diet, intangible heritage, sustainable food policy, sustainable diet

Introduction

This year marks the tenth anniversary of Croatia joining the *Mediterranean diet* as an inscribed element on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, together with Italy, Portugal, Greece, Spain, Morocco, and Cyprus.¹ Although it was nominated in 2008, it was inscribed two years later, together with the *Gastronomic meal of the French*² and *Traditional Mexican cuisine*.³ Two years may not seem like a lot, but food practices had yet to be included on UNESCO's lists in 2008. Although the authors of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003) did not have culinary arts in mind as one of the intangible expressions of culture when drafting the Convention (Bortolotto and Ubertaini 2018), the process of *culturalization* of food practices, i.e. expanding the understanding of food as a complex system of meanings or total social fact, paved

1 The *Mediterranean diet* was inscribed in the mentioned list in 2010, at a session in Nairobi when Italy, Spain, Morocco and Greece represented this intangible cultural heritage. The list of countries was expanded in 2013, as Portugal, Cyprus and Croatia joined the inscribed element.

2 <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/6.14> (accessed 1. 2. 2023.).

3 <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/6.30> (accessed 1. 2. 2023.).

the way for food to be included on the lists of intangible cultural heritage. At first, it would seem that ethnologists and cultural anthropologists, who were most concerned with the food culture,⁴ could be quite satisfied with this outcome. However, following Hafstein's argument (2018) that the penetration of folklorist and ethnological knowledge, perspectives, and concepts into the public sphere represents a significant part of modernist reflection, we can also incorporate his idea of *folklorization*, seen as a process that denotes the success of the mentioned disciplines primarily manifested in changing the ways people experience their culture, how they define it, and how they practice it (2018: 128), which brings significant long-term changes in cultural practices deemed worthy of preservation.⁵ Today, cultural anthropology understands food as a reflection of identity, culture, and everyday life of communities, and this understanding stands as one of the foundations of UNESCO's approach. More significantly, this kind of understanding of food also made it possible to conceptually connect people and landscapes, which would prove important for the latest articulations of the Mediterranean diet, as will be discussed later.

Anniversaries, especially milestone ones, present an opportunity to look back and examine the Mediterranean diet with an objective outlook, not only as it is described and inscribed, but also what it represents today. What exactly do we try to preserve when it comes to food? How does food fit into a cultural pattern worthy of protection and safeguarding? Consequently, did this inscription influence the understanding of the Mediterranean diet, and if so, did we contribute to its transformation? From the late 1960s, when the concept of the Mediterranean diet was created, which will be discussed a bit later, to date, this cuisine has experienced various transformations and conceptualizations. It went from a healthy model of a traditional diet to a model of a sustainable diet (Dernini et al. 2017; Medina 2021a, 2021b), becoming an intangible cultural heritage along the way. This paper, which does not include a critical look at the phenomenon of intangible cultural heritage and the disputes that arise from it (for example, Kirscheblatt-Gimblett 2006; Hameršak and Pleše 2018; Brulotte and Di Giovine 2014), will try to identify the conceptual transformations of the Mediterranean diet in its dynamic history over the last seventy-or-so years.

4 Ethnological and cultural anthropological research defines food culture not only as a system of practices, attitudes, beliefs, but also a wide network of communities, individuals, and institutions involved in the production, distribution, and consumption of food (Long 2015), emphasizing the socio-cultural and symbolic aspects of food preparation and eating. For a recent overview of the different approaches of the anthropology and sociology of food, see, for example, Aktas-Polat and Polat 2020.

5 Hafstein (2018) uses the concept of folklorization somewhat ironically, adopting the term from discussions of authenticity, as the ultimate consequence of the success of ethnological and anthropological knowledge in contemporary understanding of the phenomenon of intangible cultural heritage and its preservation. For Hafstein, folklorization, understood in this manner, represents the success of the aforementioned disciplines manifested in changing the ways people understand their culture, how they define it, and how they practice it. However, it also acts as a starting point for the process of heritagization of social practices and relationships that expands the space for the circulation of protected cultural assets, introduces new (institutionalized) holders, and consequently brings up the issue of objectification, commodification, and exoticization of the elements of cultural heritage beyond its original habitus. The discussion on folklorism is not new in Croatian ethnology, where it can most often be found in criticisms of the terms "originality" and "authenticity." For instance, see Ceribašić 2003: 259, 264 etc.

What does the term “Mediterranean diet” actually mean?

“*Dieta mediterranea non c’è!*” were the words of the Italian anthropologist Ernesto di Renzo as he began his lecture on the concept of the Mediterranean diet in the spring of 2017 on the island of Hvar. “There is no Mediterranean diet!” he exclaimed to the audience at a roundtable on the Mediterranean diet, organized by the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research and the Ministry of Culture and Media looking to *popularize* this intangible cultural heritage in the emblematic⁶ community of the island of Hvar. Explaining the casual approach in which the cuisines and culinary practices of the Mediterranean are reduced to a singular entity, that is, the process of uncritical simplification of Mediterranean food systems and practices in creating the concept of the Mediterranean diet, Renzo highlighted one of its main problems. Namely, the Mediterranean diet is inscribed in the UNESCO list in the singular form, which, to some extent, assumes the homogeneity of culinary practices in places where even regional food practices include a myriad of small local variations and peculiarities, both in recipes and in the culinary lexicon, to mention only the most obvious examples.

How does one define the Mediterranean diet? Does this mean Italian, Moroccan, Dalmatian, Lebanese, or Portuguese cuisine? Does it include the meals of fishermen, peasants, or ones closer to the urban population and the nobility? Does it belong to the ancient or modern world? Is this the cuisine of Christianity, Judaism, or Islam, because all these religions left their mark on the Mediterranean and combined in intertwined culinary systems? Can it be defined merely as a set of food practices, recipes, and typical products found on tables across the Mediterranean? Each simplified explanation of the Mediterranean diet implies a more or less typical nutritional model based on a large share of plant food, olive oil as the staple (although not the only) fat, and a small share of foods of animal origin, but pays no attention to the social framework, complex system of practices, knowledge, choices, and beliefs related to the production, preparation, and consumption of food. If the Mediterranean diet is a set of foodstuffs and recipes, can its connection with the specific space of the Mediterranean be severed today? Global consumer culture has made Mediterranean products, such as olive oil, wine, and pasta (which is recognized as typically Mediterranean) as easily available in places like Iceland, Sweden, or the United States as they are in Croatia. Why should certain menus be inscribed on lists of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity? Behind the Mediterranean dishes, which actually also holds true for any other local or regional cuisine, there is a long history of production, preparation, and consumption of certain foods, a history of cultural contacts, exchange, and adjustments. The material and symbolic dimensions are inscribed in

⁶ The *Mediterranean diet* on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity is represented by the following so-called emblematic communities: Cilento (Italy), Soria (Spain), Chefchaouen (Morocco), Koroni (Greece), Agros (Cyprus), Tavira (Portugal), and the islands of Brač and Hvar (Croatia). For more information on the issue of participation of communities, groups and individuals in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and the implementation of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), see, for example, Blake 2019.

each foodstuff, in every dish and meal that represent the experience of everyday life in the Mediterranean.

This problematic assumption that Mediterranean cuisine is self-evident, when we examine it from the outside, was the guiding idea of the international conference *Mediterranean Food and Its Influence Outside the Mediterranean* held in 2004 in Dubrovnik.⁷ At the time when ethnologists Nives Rittig-Beljak and Mirjana Randić organized this conference, Mediterranean cuisine was globally recognized and popular. It was a cuisine of basil, tomato salsa, and pasta, garlic and olive oil, prepared by, for instance, Jamie Oliver in a number of culinary series. In the early 2000s, the success of this global cuisine was enthusiastically supported by publishing houses and TV productions, reinforcing the hedonistic fantasy of the Mediterranean, the imaginary space where merry eaters gather around tables full of opulent dishes. In the British cultural space, this notion can be traced to the 18th century, when the Mediterranean became the “reference point and defining idea of what is beautiful or desirable” (Burning 2018: 4). Risottos simmered on TV screens, and pizza or pasta could be found in every corner of the world. In addition to being tasty and allegedly easy to prepare, research showed the benefits of the Mediterranean diet in the prevention of cardiovascular disease (Trichopoulou 1997). The conference in Dubrovnik had opened a discussion on Mediterranean food almost ten years before the UNESCO inscription, identifying it as a point where different *concepts* and *trends* intersect, as the title of its proceedings reads. Konrad Köstlin (2006) discussed that Mediterranean cuisine came about only after the rise of the concept of Mediterranean cultural space, which we credit to the research by French historian Fernand Braudel (Braudel 1997–1998; Köstlin 2006). Consequently, Mediterranean cuisine is the result of an outside view at the complex system of food practices of different social groups and communities of the Mediterranean. However, the view at Mediterranean cuisine from the inside, offered by one of the editors of the proceedings in the introductory chapter, found numerous micro-locational differences in culinary choices, practices, and tastes, similar but slightly different recipes that can be found across the Mediterranean (Rittig Beljak 2006), like *vitalac* from Brač, which can be found in different variations on Crete and Rhodes (where it is seasoned with oregano, lemon, and pepper), or the *pašticada*, which, in addition to Dalmatia, is also prepared on Corfu and in the Veneto province. Furthermore, this pioneering attempt at a critical discussion of the Mediterranean food phenomenon, which the organizers tried to encourage in humanities, was among the first to point to the problem of the apparent homogeneity of this food culture in media and popular articulations outside the Mediterranean. The hedonistic image of opulent Mediterranean cuisines, mostly represented by Italian cuisine in the media, reveals itself to be an invention of recent history and owes at least some of its success to the touristic popularity of the Mediterranean. All of the above leads us to conclude that the concept of Mediterranean cuisine has been shaped by the outside view over the last half

⁷ The international conference *Mediterranean Food and Its Influence Abroad*, 15th International Ethnological Food Research Conference, Dubrovnik, 27 September to 3 October 2004.

century (Köstlin 2006: 79). By reducing complex culinary systems and food practices into one singular tradition (*Mediterranean cuisine, Mediterranean diet*), a new food landscape was created, based on the metaphor of the Mediterranean as a compact cultural space. But observed from the inside, this foodscape is much more complex than all its pop-cultural representations, which display an insensitivity to social and economic culinary differences within the Mediterranean cuisines. All of them are a result of contacts, exchanges, and adaptation of foodstuffs and recipes. Nives Rittig Beljak (2006: 15, 20–21) saw Mediterranean cuisine as extremely heterogeneous and believed a unifying characteristic or common foundation of Mediterranean cuisines can only be found in dishes of the poor, such as ones made from chickpeas, barley, and fava beans. These are simple and modest Mediterranean recipes that mostly bear witness to frugality and hunger as a constant in the lives of Mediterranean people throughout history. Rittig Beljak recognized the notorious *stone soup* as a measured metaphor for Mediterranean cuisine that indicates hunger as a constant and often-realized threat that led to the creativity and richness of Mediterranean cuisines.

Less than ten years after the conference, on 17 November 2010, at a session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Nairobi, the Mediterranean diet was inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity,⁸ which, as it seemed, meant that a consensus was reached about what this term implies. The Mediterranean diet comprises “the set of skills, knowledge, rituals, symbols, and traditions, ranging from the landscape to the table, which in the Mediterranean basin concerns the crops, harvesting, picking, fishing, animal husbandry, conservation, processing, cooking, and particularly sharing and consuming of food” (UNESCO 2010)⁹ At that moment, the Mediterranean diet was supported by at least half a century worth of medical, nutritionist, and, since the late 1990s, social and humanities research, which laid the foundations for UNESCO’s inscription through mutual dialogue, highlighting the importance of social practices, especially food sharing, as its center point (Medina 2021a). The Mediterranean diet no longer represented a collection of diverse recipes with slightly different foodstuffs, but a complete way (style) of life that takes place in challenging climatic and geographical conditions, in an environment characterized by a lack of fertile soil and water, whose people necessarily turn to the sea as a place of trade, cultural exchange, and food, but also danger. The seasonally uniform and frugal cuisines of the Mediterranean are concealed in the hedonistic utopia of abundance (still) presented by the media, pop-cultural but also cultural-political images of Mediterranean cuisines, where eating represents shared social pleasure, ritually associated with customs of annual or life cycles.¹⁰ The Mediterranean diet, defined from the perspective of cultural anthropology which is at the

8 <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/6.41> (accessed 17. 5. 2023.).

9 <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00884> (accessed on 30. 3. 2023.).

10 Even a cursory look at the promotional video for the Mediterranean diet as intangible cultural heritage of humanity shows a romanticized image of the Mediterranean, where are no problems of hunger, rural underdevelopment, landscape degradation, touristic pressure or international migration, to mention only a few. The video is available at: <https://www.unesco.org/archives/multimedia/document-1680-eng-2> (accessed 20. 5. 2023.).

center of food-related heritage policies, represents a *set of skills and knowledge associated with the production, processing, and consuming of food*, provides a wide framework where *traditional diet and economy* are a starting point for development and a way of safeguarding traditional lifestyle in a particular cultural space. In this context, the Mediterranean diet is represented as a way of life that journalist and writer Siniša Pavić (2017) correctly describes when he says that it entails “the environment, the techniques of food production, the preservation of the ecosystem, traditional agriculture, cooking, dining with laughter, in the shade, with family, [...] *balote*¹¹ and *picigin*,¹² and finally health.”¹³

The Mediterranean diet and health

The already mentioned definition of the Mediterranean diet from the perspective of cultural anthropology were preceded by numerous medical studies which should be considered the initial impulse of the global popularity of this culinary model. We must not forget that the term Mediterranean diet (greek *diaita* – prescribed way of life)¹⁴ was coined by Dr. Ancel Keys.¹⁵ During the early 1950s, when Keys began his research, the mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases in the United States was two to three times higher than in southern Europe. This dedicated researcher, popularly called Mr. Cholesterol (Dhami and Vaidya 2015), devoted most of his research to the relationship between blood cholesterol and cardiovascular health. The fact that mortality from heart attacks and strokes was extremely rare in the Mediterranean during those years was a compelling research challenge for Keys. In the mid-1950s, Keys began a research project which today is considered to be the starting point for recognizing the health benefits of the Mediterranean diet. The famous, but also controversial, *Seven Countries Study* included 12,000 respondents from Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, Japan, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, and the US. Keys also had access to the results of previous studies examining the nutrition of the island of Crete,¹⁶ which would later become the dietary model we recognize today. A diet based on seasonal vegetables, beans, and cereals, with a low share of foods of animal

11 *Balote, boće*, is a ball sport belonging to the boules family, played in coastal Croatia. Rules are simple, game starts by throwing a small ball called *bulin* (or *balin*), and the goal of the game is to get *balota* balls as close to the *bulin*.

12 Popular game from Split which is played with a small ball, usually peeled tennis ball, on the sandy beach in the shallows. Game is mostly played by five players arranged in a pentagon and spaced apart from twenty feet, are added *balun* (ball), hitting it with palms. *Balun* must not fall into the sea.

13 Pavić, Siniša. “The Mediterranean diet includes more than food itself – it is a lifestyle.” *Novi list*, 6 June 2017, available at <https://www.novolist.hr/life/gastro/mediteranska-prehrana-zahvaca-vise-od-same-hrane-to-je-nacin-zivota/> (accessed 20. 3. 2023.).

14 https://www.etymonline.com/word/diet#etymonline_v_8554 (accessed 20. 3. 2023.).

15 I would like to thank colleague Moro for the information on the two doctorates, in oceanography and biology, attained by Dr. Ancel Keys.

16 In 1948, the Greek government, together with the Rockefeller Foundation, conducted the first epidemiological study that included research into the nutrition of the island of Crete, intended to improve the living conditions of the population in the post-war period in the long run (Nestle 1995). The results of this study were published in the book *Crete, a case study of an underdeveloped area* by Leland G. Allbaugh in 1953. Princeton University Press.

origin, was used to link certain fats to blood cholesterol levels for the first time. The paradoxical conclusion of Keys' research was that richer nations, regardless of their better access to health care, were in poorer health than the countries of the post-war Mediterranean. Daily consumption of olive oil, a variety of fruits and vegetables with respect to seasonality, and a relatively small intake of foods of animal origin (especially meat) form the basis of Keys' Mediterranean diet. As a living advertisement for the diet and lifestyle he advocated his entire life (he lived to be a hundred years old), Keys spent years in Pioppi, in southern Italy, where, according to him, his greatest teachers were his cook Delia Morelli and gardener Angelo. The foundation for Keys' Mediterranean diet was a varied, simple diet, based on local and seasonal foodstuffs coming from the land and the sea. Although Keys' model is based on a limited geographical area (Greece, Italy, the south of France, and Mediterranean Spain), and does not take into account the historical, economic, social, and cultural aspects of food, it still indicates the social character of eating and sharing food as a crucial factor in understanding the *culture* of the Mediterranean diet.

Based on Keys' research, migration flows (bringing food from home and adapting it to the new places) and the already mentioned popularity of the Mediterranean in representations in the Anglosphere since the 1950s (Jones and Taylor 2001), the Mediterranean diet became a global phenomenon supported by both medical science and the media industry. As was already mentioned, but bears repeating, when viewed from the outside, the Mediterranean diet is a homogeneous term that does not accurately reflect the numerous local and regional cuisines. The pop-cultural production of meaning is not concerned with the simplification used to construct a universal Mediterranean cuisine dominated by olive oil, fish, basil, and tomatoes, and enthusiastically prepared by numerous culinary and travel TV stars. The popularity of Mediterranean cuisine(s) is supported by the fact that medical and nutrition sciences recognize it as an extremely healthy diet. It is a way to prevent cardiovascular diseases (De Lorgeril and Salen 2006) and a number of other health issues such as dementia, depression, etc. (Yin et al. 2021; Shafiei et al. 2019).

The Mediterranean diet as a lifestyle

Even a quick glance at the pictures representing the Mediterranean diet in dietary pyramids gives us some insight into different understandings and evolution of the food model into a desirable lifestyle. Since the 1990s, the Mediterranean diet pyramid has been expanded with layers that reflect not only new understandings of this dietary model but also the development of research interests that contribute to an understanding of food culture and food systems today. Even if the Mediterranean diet pyramid of the 1990s¹⁷ was the result of medical research, offering a recommen-

¹⁷ We should mention, for example, the pyramid developed at the international conference on the Mediterranean diet held in Boston in 1993. For more information, see Matalas 2006: 92, Dernini et al. 2012.

dation for proper diet, it certainly no longer functions according to this principle today. Over the last twenty years, food has moved away from the margins of incidental interest for ethnologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and historians, and has become a separate thematic field within various academic disciplines. This is why today's Mediterranean diet pyramids are equally the result of research done in natural and social sciences, and humanities. For instance, in 2008, the new pyramid was presented at a conference dedicated to the Mediterranean diet,¹⁸ and it included new scientific and academic knowledge, primarily insights from ethnologists, anthropologists, and sociologists who researched the diet in parallel with doctors. The base of the pyramid shows that the foundations of the Mediterranean diet are social practices (shared meals, walks, dancing...) that only seemingly have nothing to do with food.¹⁹ However, by then, food had already been recognized as a medium through which society communicates its values, and its role is not merely the maintenance of life that drives people to produce and consume food. The 2008 pyramid contained not only a proposal for a healthy dietary model but also took social frameworks and social practices into account. More specifically, it included insights from social sciences and the humanities, which at the time examined symbolic and identity practices of the Mediterranean food. The transition from dry medical recommendations and nutritional tips to a diet based on sociability and pleasure is partly the result of research from the cultural-anthropological perspective into food which, keeping in mind the hedonistic shift in the media image of this diet, influenced all Mediterranean food pyramids that followed, emphasizing that it is much more than the food itself. It is a lifestyle!

Mediterranean diet – from a lifestyle to a recipe for saving the planet

Although the cultural anchoring of the Mediterranean diet within the heritage policies does not seem to be a return to compromised or lost seasonality and localization of food practices, but rather as a matter of cultural identities of communities, their strengthening, and (self)representation, today ten year after the inscription we are witnessing conceptualization of the basic Mediterranean diet ideas in new frameworks,²⁰ such as those of rural development, protection of cultural landscapes, the importance of a seasonal diet, small-scale local production, and conviviality as a guarantee of the transfer of knowledge and values. Even though the latter is undoubtedly part of the institutional safeguarding and protection of intangible culture within

18 In 2008, Cambridge, Massachusetts hosted the 15th Anniversary Mediterranean Diet Conference organized by Oldways, a non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to the promotion of healthy food choices, and The Mediterranean Foods Alliance association.

19 A new graphical representation of the Mediterranean diet pyramid from 2008 is available at: <https://oldwayspt.org/news-media/press-releases/oldways-releases-updated-mediterranean-diet-pyramid> (accessed 29. 3. 2023.).

20 <https://mediterraneandietunesco.org/about/messages/> (accessed 20. 3. 2023.).

the purview of, in principle, cultural policies, we can see that today's emphasis is often placed on the localization of the Mediterranean diet and protection of cultural landscapes as its natural habitus. In this regard, local production and consumption are understood as the foundation for developing highly depopulated and less developed areas, based on concepts of *sustainable diet* and *sustainable development*. By basing the narrative of the Mediterranean diet on the notion of *sustainability*, this food system, which is, in reality, compromised and often abandoned (Nestle 1995), is hoped to act as a panacea for numerous burning global problems. The Mediterranean diet, depending on the views and level of the actors engaged with it, is offered as a solution to the problem of cardiovascular health or obesity epidemic, or offered as a tool for rural development that protects local production while contributing to the strengthening of green food policies and/or protecting biodiversity.

Current global food policies, put forth in the activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), have provided significant and continuous support to the Mediterranean diet in recent years. The range of themes connected to it today, for example, can be seen in the document "Mediterranean food consumption patterns: diet, environment, society, economy, and health" from 2015, by the FAO and CIHEAM Bari,²¹ which was drafted following the ideas developed during the EXPO exhibition held in Milan 2015, dedicated to the topic of *feeding the planet*. The basis of examining diet at this level was:

[...] to highlight the role that the current food consumption patterns play in food and nutrition security, public health, environment protection and socio-economic development in the Mediterranean region. The ultimate aim is to stimulate a multidisciplinary dialogue among the Euro-Mediterranean scientific community on the sustainability of current food consumption and production patterns in the Mediterranean region and beyond, to identify the research activities and policy actions needed to move towards more sustainable Mediterranean food systems. (CIHAEM/FAO 2015: 1)

Therefore, the basic intention of this document, as stated, was to encourage a multidisciplinary dialogue within the academic community on the sustainability of current food patterns, equally related to both food production and consumption. Thus, it comes as no surprise that today the range of new topics related to the Mediterranean diet includes current food practices of the people in the Mediterranean area (which place them at the top of European statistics on obesity), public health, sustainability of food systems (with regard to the planned growth of the world population), to the ecological footprint of agro-industrial systems or the problem of food waste. The call for a transformation of global food systems is contained in the notion of a sustainable diet presented in the *Sustainable Diets and Biodiversity. Directions and*

21 CIHAEM The International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies, Bari, Chania, Montpellier, Zaragoza. CIHAEM was founded in 1962 with the intention of strengthening cooperation in the area of higher, agricultural education in the Mediterranean and ratified by an agreement between seven countries (Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Turkey).

Solutions for Policy, Research and Action collection several years earlier. Sustainable production and consumer practices are those 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. (Burlingame and Dernini 2012: 7)

As early as 2012, only two years after UNESCO's inscription, FAO espoused the Mediterranean diet as one of the most sustainable diets (Burlingame and Dernini 2012; Petrillo 2012; Dernini and Berry 2015), which has enabled a new approach to this intangible cultural heritage in the long run. Only now the Mediterranean diet was placed within *conscientious* policies, green economies, or the development of rural areas far from mass tourism or large-scale agriculture (Moro 2016: 656). Elisabetta Moro sees the Mediterranean diet as an anthropological pattern that comes from a food culture but admits that "rhetorics, and social politics have transformed simple food as a symbolic operator, a community factor, a marker of identity" (2016: 656), where tables are metaphorical field in which communities are constantly constructed. Thus, traditional food has offered, through cultural policies of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, its social, economic, cultural, and symbolic potential to global food policies, aimed primarily at new environmental challenges. It is quite clear that today when climate threats are recognized (too) slowly, food patterns must undergo a transformation into more sustainable and greener solutions. Taking a step back, towards local and seasonal eating habits, seems like a logical start. This is why the Mediterranean diet today should not be practiced for its health benefits or the values of cultural heritage, but for the benefit of the ecosystem, biodiversity, and the planet. If we understand the Mediterranean diet today as an agreed menu for saving, or at least helping, the planet, one could easily agree this diet is not only food, but an intellectual product which is the result of diverse local food cultures and practices (Moro 2016: 657). By placing the Mediterranean diet between myth and reality (Moro 2016), between the imaginary foodscape and the one which will have to feed more than nine billion people by 2050,²² an understanding of the role of this food culture must be expanded, especially because of the transformative potential it may have in reducing the influence of our food patterns and practices on the environment. Policy makers can use the intangible cultural heritage of the Mediterranean diet as a type of special, *culturally acceptable* economic resource by placing it at the center of recent, global food recommendations. Thus, the simplified, culturally and politically validated food patterns of the Mediterranean diet now necessarily transcend the context of (food) culture, presenting "a model of lifestyle, an educational pattern, a unique heritage... a very farsighted economic development..." as empha-

²² The projection for the increase in world population by 2050 is available at: <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/population> (accessed 5.4. 2023.).

sized by Moro in her examination of the tendencies and conceptualizations of the Mediterranean diet (2016: 660).

Cum grano salis

Without losing its firm cultural and anthropological footing in UNESCO's heritage policies, today the Mediterranean diet is presented as a tool of sustainable development whose success we will see in the years that follow. This food culture, no longer present in the everyday lives of the Mediterranean inhabitants, testifies the erosion of traditional food patterns and the consequent growth of health problems. Year after year, statistical data infamously place Mediterranean people among the most obese Europeans (WHO 2022a and 2022b),²³ and action plans for the development of Mediterranean countries emphasize that "Mediterranean agricultural and rural models, which are at the origins of Mediterranean identity, are under increasing threat from the predominance of imported consumption patterns. This trend is illustrated in particular by the decline of the Mediterranean dietary model despite the recognized positive effects on health" (UNEP/MAP 2005: 16). Given all of the above, it is not surprising that over the last decade we have witnessed the importance of cultural value or health being relegated in favor of preserving the ecosystem, biodiversity, cultural landscapes, and the sustainability of our food choices. Today, the Mediterranean diet is anchored in the global challenges of sustainability and the green transition, i.e., food and environmental policies. This means that the Mediterranean diet should be observed primarily as tailor-made intangible cultural heritage which easily adapts to new conditions and new requirements.

Participating in the Croatian nomination process since 2010, and later in the activities of the informal network of emblematic communities from 2014 to the present, the small team of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research served as academic and professional support to the Ministry of Culture and Media and was given an exceptional opportunity to monitor activities from the inside, the different approaches and good practices that seek to popularize, revalorize and safeguard the Mediterranean diet in all seven countries. Thanks to our participation in the work of this informal network with continuous field research, we are able to monitor the development and issues in connection with the concept of the Mediterranean diet itself, which also provides insight into the various levels where its modern life takes place. Each of the countries has its own approach and accents, its safeguarding and popularization plans, as well as projects to develop and manage this intangible cultural heritage. Being involved with the work of the network has also yielded in-

23 WHO. 2022. *Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI) Fact sheet highlights 2018 – 2020*, available at: <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/m/item/childhood-obesity-surveillance-initiative-cosi-fact-sheet-highlights-2018-2020> (accessed 31.3. 2023.) or WHO. 2022. *Report on the fifth round of data collection, 2018–2020: WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI)*, available at: <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2022-6594-46360-67071> (accessed 31. 3. 2023.).

sight into the often obscured network of local initiatives and institutional support on which different efforts to spread the basic ideas of the Mediterranean diet take place. The Mediterranean diet in heritage and cultural policies serves as a mobilizing narrative of the unity of specific cultural space, characterized by the millennial history of contacts and influences, which at least in principle tries to offer a framework to understand different local, regional, and national identities (Quiroz 2015). But the “conceptual transformation” (Medina 2021a) of the Mediterranean diet, i.e., its placement in (new) frameworks of green (transition) food policies, requires additional critical and analytical efforts aimed at a deeper understanding of the relationship between food, landscapes, and individuals, as well as the essential connection between cultural, political, and economic issues. The endorsement of the Mediterranean diet provided by UNESCO’s inscription also represents a challenge (in the long run) to understand the relations between the goals of global policies, such as the UN 2030 Agenda (UN 2015) containing the main goals of sustainable development, and local practices, i.e., the significant role of local communities which the *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003) has as a core tenet. The case of the Mediterranean diet significantly moves from the bottom-up practices of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage one could expect and comes as a success of a widespread network of actors at different levels. Annual meetings of the informal network of the Mediterranean diet countries, attended by representatives of the relevant ministries and the emblematic communities, which I have been participating in since 2015, provide a chance to gain better insight into different levels of safeguarding this intangible cultural heritage, but even more significantly, they give an opportunity to exchange good practices between the seven countries. Various institutional and non-institutional actors join the safeguarding efforts at the national and local levels. For example, in Spain, the safeguarding and popularization of the Mediterranean diet is the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture, representatives of UNESCO, the academic foundation Fundación Científica Caja Rural, but also local policy in cooperation with the local community, educational, and cultural institutions. The popularization of the Mediterranean diet in Soria, primarily seen as a means to implement preventative public health policies, is carried out, among others, by establishing urban gardens²⁴ or naming streets after the elements and communities of this intangible cultural heritage.²⁵ Portugal also employs a wide network of partners from the public and private sectors, local associations, educational, and cultural institutions involved in the popularization, revalorization, and management of the Mediterranean diet. At the level of local policy in Tavira, Algarve, exceptional mobilization activities bring together, for example, the University of Algarve,²⁶ the Museum

24 https://cadenaser.com/emisora/2018/04/25/ser_soria/1524653680_391819.html (accessed 22. 5. 2023.).

25 <http://fundacioncajarural.net/en/fundacion.html> (accessed 22. 5. 2023.).

26 During the Portuguese coordination of the informal network of Mediterranean diet countries, the annual network coordination is a responsibility shared by all of these countries as each in turn takes on this task; and an international, academic conference “The Cultural Heritage of the Mediterranean Diet” was organized on 9 and 10 May 2017 in Faro. The conference program is available at: <https://www.minhaterra.pt/wst/files/I12967-PROGRAMAXPT.PDF> (accessed 22. 5. 2023.).

of the City of Tavira,²⁷ local food producers, and the hospitality sector,²⁷ as well as cultural workers and associations, who all gather at the “Mediterranean Diet Festival” held in Tavira every year September since 2013.²⁸ Additionally, the Portugal Council of Ministers founded the Mediterranean Diet Conservation and Promotion Group²⁹ in 2014, and the “Centro de Competências para a Dieta Mediterrânica”³⁰ in 2018, which made this intangible cultural heritage a national, strategic issue for Portugal. Cultural anthropological studies of food often call for rejecting the idea of apoliticality in our food choices, which seems particularly justified when trying to understand the relationship between the concepts and practices that arise from the Mediterranean diet. Even a quick look at the latest Mediterranean diet pyramid published in 2020 reveals new points of interest that are inscribed in this fundamentally cultural pattern.³¹ The current pyramid, along with all the previously mentioned layers, introduces the issue of food system sustainability, thus emphasizing the role of seasonality, preserving biodiversity, local production and consumption of food, and reasonable use of natural resources, especially soil and water. Traditional cuisines of the Mediterranean can now represent a necessary step back to a better future, and not just an opportunity for communities to represent themselves or improve their market value.

At the end of last year, the Mediterranean diet was the highlight of a panel held at the United Nations in New York, titled *Mediterranean Diet – Lifestyle for a Sustainable Future*.³² This event, organized as part of last year’s Italian coordination of the informal network of emblematic Mediterranean diet communities, with the help of the Italian Ministry of Agriculture³³ and the permanent missions of Italy and Morocco at the UN, has shown the width of access, political and economic agendas that are becoming proactive agents for the Mediterranean diet. Removed from everyday Mediterranean life, the Mediterranean diet sets ambitious, global goals, but also paradoxically shows a lack of power in the fight against globalized, industrialized food and changes in eating habits. Transformations of the Mediterranean diet concept, from traditional food to intangible cultural heritage and a sustainable diet, speak more of present preoccupations than about food models, practices, and choices. As we leave the questions of the relationship between cultural and food policies aside, and the complex relations between the environment and people open, we should question how the current popularity of the Mediterranean diet relates to the anxiety

27 For the museum’s activities in safeguarding and popularization of the Mediterranean diet, see: <http://museu-municipaldetavira.cm-tavira.pt/?q=dm> (accessed 23. 5. 2023.).

28 More information on the festival: <http://www.dietamediterranea.pt/?q=pt/node/759> (accessed 22. 5. 2023.).

29 https://inovacao.rederural.gov.pt/images/imagens/GTInovacao/17-Protocolo_CentroCompetenciasDietaMediterranica.pdf (accessed 22. 5. 2023.).

30 <http://www.dietamediterranea.pt/?q=pt/ccdm/quem-somos> (accessed 22. 5. 2023.).

31 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7728084/> (accessed 7. 4. 2023.).

32 For more information on the event itself, held on 18 November 2022, as well as an integral video, see: <https://media.un.org/en/search?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A387&f%5B1%5D=topic%3A556&f%5B2%5D=topic%3A718&f%5B3%5D=topic%3A963&f%5B4%5D=topic%3A1077&f%5B5%5D=topic%3A1148&f%5B6%5D=topic%3A1240&f%5B7%5D=topic%3A5878> (accessed 29. 3. 2023.).

33 Ministero delle Politiche Agricole, Alimentari e Forestali – MiPAAF.

of modern eaters as the most common expression of food scares in the well-fed West (Jackson 2015), which are often expressed with the development of more robust ethical consumer practices favoring short supply chains, local food consumption, and food sovereignty issues. A holistic approach to food culture, which is at the core of the Mediterranean diet, enacts its modernity by playing with (culinary) nostalgia and the comfort of the (beautified) experience of everyday Mediterranean life. But today this food culture is as imaginary as it is based in reality.

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OMMENTS

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Response to Jelena Ivanišević: Mediterranean Diet 3.0 – From Traditional Food to Sustainable Policies

In this comprehensive overview, Jelena Ivanišević makes three important points with regard to the Mediterranean diet and the ways in which we have come to understand it. First, she challenges the singularity of its description by demonstrating how this diet, which UNESCO inscribed in its Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2010, is never just *a* diet. This is achieved, as she argues, “by reducing complex culinary systems and food practices into one singular tradition,” which, in itself, is also based on “the metaphor of the Mediterranean as a compact cultural space” (p 40). Such an “imaginary foodscape” is the result of decades of Western understanding of the Mediterranean as a space of leisure, often through the romanticization of its landscapes and the glorification of its poverty. These contributed, as the author further argues, to the reductive representation of the Mediterranean diet as the food of simple, poor, and honest people. We don’t have to look further than Jamie Oliver’s TV shows about Italy, or Rick Stein’s cooking in small Greek and Turkish villages, to see a glimpse of this, as Oliver foregrounds *le nonne* as the true guardians of the Italian food culture and tradition, offering through their lifestyles a solution to the problems of the modern world. As Hollows (2022: 142) points out, this kind of romanticization of peasant food cultures, not just in the Mediterranean but elsewhere too, goes hand in hand with the overall ‘foodie’ understanding in the West of poverty as something to be celebrated and elevated (for this, see Johnson and Baumann 2015) in an effort to leave behind industrialization and return to nature. This urge is governed by images of the pre-modern, 19th-century Mediterranean as the setting for upper-class travel to Italy and Greece, visiting beautiful but poor, dry, and empty land, and encountering people with “exotic” habits to be reported back home. Extending Ivanišević’s critique, we could further ask how the Western understanding of the Mediterranean diet today is linked to long-existing cultural associations with the Mediterranean as a space of holidays, romance, and health. Such associations conveniently sideline (erase, forget) a rep-

resentation that belongs to an entirely different discourse that also seeks to define the Mediterranean in terms of poverty and its relationship to migration, where the sea itself is understood as the “graveyard of migrants,” commonly reported about negatively on the European side of the Mediterranean and conveniently ignored elsewhere.

Ivanišević’s final point concerns the changeability not so much of this diet, but of how it is justified. Initially framed primarily in terms of it being the healthy diet of a certain style of life, the Mediterranean diet is now seen more as a sustainable diet that “today should not be practiced for its health benefits or the values of cultural heritage, but for the benefit of the ecosystem, biodiversity, and the planet” (p 45). This is an interesting, but not surprising discursive shift, well demonstrated in the article, which shows how dietary advice is established, functions, and ultimately, is transformed as part of the larger discourse units to which it is connected. By doing this, it assumes a move from its universality (the Mediterranean diet should be eaten by everyone because it is healthy) to locality (the Mediterranean diet should be eaten by the people of the Mediterranean because it is local to them and therefore its consumption reduces its environmental impact).

In the last two decades in the West, the need for environmental sustainability has overshadowed the focus on health among the food-related discourses inherited from the 20th century. As the Mediterranean diet has now become seen as a sustainable diet, it is assumed Mediterranean eaters are asked to move “back to a better future” (p 48) and reject the progress of the last century: no more foods imported from far away, no more multinationals and their global brands, no more tomatoes in December! To *le nonne*, who have always eaten from their garden, and in winter, tomatoes only in the form of *la salsa* which they themselves preserved in summer, this is self-evident; for this, they do not require their cooking to be called a Mediterranean diet; it is their family cooking, regional and unique. For the rest, what of this Mediterranean diet? Ivanišević rightly assumes this discursive turn to be yet another fad of global political elites that “speak more of present preoccupations than about food models, practices, and choices” (p 48) or of the practicalities of feeding families in the Mediterranean region, where its food system interacts with the interests of global multinationals, and where UNESCO protected ‘traditions’ meet fiercely with both the need for progress and preservation of established and tested ways of doing things locally across the Mediterranean. A comprehensive analysis of the existing literature into what Mediterranean populations eat today, for example, suggests adherence to the Mediterranean diet is currently not more than moderate, with a significant variation between regions, such as Italy’s industrialized North and rural South, not to mention the evident differences between the European Mediterranean as compared to the African or Asian sides (Obeid et al. 2022). Such a move away from traditional diets may be found in other locations too, as populations supplement traditional menus with available international offerings, including those made by global food chains. In such circumstances, there may be little space for a politically driven return to the olden days, especially if those days are associated locally with poverty, hunger,

and migration. Rather, a sustainable diet – in any location, not just the Mediterranean – can only be successful if it takes into consideration the present practices of the population and adapts them, for the future, to a more sustainable model – one which derives from the possibilities of the local environment and traditions, while not denying the present realities, tastes, and aspirations of its populations.

Communications, including those from governments and international bodies, will undoubtedly have an influence on how successful these shifts towards more sustainable diets will be (Johnston et al 2014; Culliford, Bradbury, and Medici 2023). Messaging about topics, such as sustainable diets, and the issues around contemporary food systems, however, are complex, and the audiences diverse. A study into the effects of the framing on the promotion of the Mediterranean diet, for example, demonstrates these dilemmas, identifying how attempts to persuade people to adhere to this diet depend on both the positiveness of the message and a clearly identifiable end gain (Carfora, Morandi, and Catellani 2022, also Rowe and Alexander 2018). Promoting the Mediterranean diet means, among other things, also promoting a reduction in the consumption of meat – a luxury food associated for centuries with the wealthy and comfortable lifestyle of the upper classes, that is central to deeply engrained and traditionally held perspectives around not only class but also gender, as meat consumption is stereotypically associated with masculinity. These ideas are, at least in the Western world, now slowly changing as vegetarian and especially vegan foods are increasingly being marketed to men (see for example Hollows 2022, also Contois 2020). In the contradictory cacophony of voices available to Mediterranean audiences, deriving from a variety of sources (governments, multinational advertising, lifestyle media, and so on), all offering food advice of sorts, the idea of the Mediterranean diet as a homogenous metaphor for a complex set of real-life practices may not be the ideal vehicle through which a more sustainable diet could evolve.

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The Mediterranean Diet – A Response

Before the rise of modern medicine, nutritional theory was at the center of most physiological systems. It has also been more prone to fashion and fad. While the broader medical orthodoxy shifts slowly with the gradual application of the latest therapeutic discoveries by professional physicians, dietary advice can change rapidly and violently because implementation is relatively easy, and the public is often eager for dietary advice. This means that nutritional theory is a more salient bellwether of

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shifting cultural ideals. In other words, if a large robust body were the cultural ideal, mainstream nutritional theory would reflect this in specific recommendations, emphasizing meat and dairy products, caloric density, and fats. As cultural and social norms idealized a slimmer less muscular body for office-bound workers, calorie reduction, and cutting out fats and sugars, became common advice. This doesn't even account for weight-loss diets, body-building diets and other nutritional subcultures. It simply means that nutritional advice is socially constructed and changes according to the values of the particular society that creates it.

Dietary advice also tends to swing from complete trust in progress and science in some periods – think of the late 19th century through the mid-20th century when vitamins were discovered, food pyramids framed, and people believed whatever experts claimed, contrasted with periods that distrust science. Think of every so-called “natural” diet that calls for a return to simple unprocessed food, however that is culturally defined. For Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the 18th century, that meant bread, milk, and vegetables. For Paleo-Dieters it means heavy reliance on protein and cutting out carbs, under the assumption that this is how we evolved to eat before the Neolithic Revolution. In all cases, natural is however we imagine our diet before everything went wrong.

The Mediterranean diet, from the time it was first conceived in the era of Ancel Keys in 1948 to the height of its popularity later in the 20th century, was profoundly a rejection of conventional nutritional advice, turning to the simple, unmodern diets of Crete and Greece, Southern Italy and eventually the greater Mediterranean. This was a plant-based diet, with emphasis on grains, fruits and vegetables, very little meat and fat, except for olive oil, a glass of wine a day, and practically no sweets or processed junk food. The fact that this was a diet of post-war poverty that would change once relative prosperity returned was largely ignored. That people in these areas lived to 100, escaped cardio-vascular disease, exercised a good deal, and seemed to live simple happy lives was far more important. For Western Medicine, this was a romantic ideal of how we all ate before the Industrial Revolution, before the diseases of modern life took their toll. Since the goal of Western Medicine was explicitly and almost exclusively longevity and low incidence of heart disease, nutritional scientists had concrete evidence to claim that this was the ideal diet for everyone.

Promotion of the diet ignored that people around the globe have subsisted on very different diets throughout history and have survived, this particular cuisine was considered scientifically superior. Eventually, a few other longevity diets were praised as well, like Okinawa and Seventh Day Adventists in Loma Linda California, and what came to be called blue zones where people were untouched by modern industrialized food with its emphasis on meat. The Mediterranean diet gradually influenced mainstream nutritional guidelines, again because longevity and avoiding heart disease were the explicit goals.

Nor should we forget that at its core this was both a gastronomic ideal of simple honest peasant fare, a cultural ideal that prompted people like Ancel Keys himself to visit the Mediterranean and even live there, and most importantly a reorientation

of dietary advice away from fats, sweets, cheap processed foods, and everything the modern industrial food system could supply. These were exactly the foods, incidentally, that were rationed in both World Wars, so they could be sent to feed soldiers – wheat, beef, and sugar were nutritional ideals. The Mediterranean diet was its exact antithesis.

Nor should it be forgotten that the success of the Mediterranean diet in the popular imagination was largely a success in marketing certain products like olive oil, wine, and European cheese. These were at best marginal in the early 20th century outside particular ethnic groups but became culinary staples in the latter 20th century.

These nutritional ideals were of course idealized from the outside, mostly from the US and Northern Europe, inscribing the Mediterranean lifestyle with an allure of happiness, leisure, a style of growing and processing food, and eating socially that modern life outside the Mediterranean had banished. When UNESCO designated this as intangible cultural heritage, it was an attempt to preserve a food system, albeit very heterogeneous in its details, from within – not as a nutritional ideal, but as a way of life under siege, to be preserved like an endangered animal.

It is not surprising that more recently, as this article points out, the discussion of the Mediterranean diet has turned increasingly toward sustainability, seasonality, and the communal benefits of eating locally. These too are another iteration of the critique of everything wrong with the modern industrial food system that ships food around the globe heedless of the environmental cost of doing so or its contribution to climate change. The traditional Mediterranean food systems provide a foil for industrialized agriculture, the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and especially the modern behemoth of the meat and dairy industry. Once again, this is a romantic evocation of the past, or an attempt to slow down the wheels of change away from a heedless and destructive addiction to global scale, efficiency, and corporate profit.

On the other hand, one might argue that this is anything but a wholesale turning back of the clock. It is an effort to preserve the positive elements of the food systems of the past while restructuring the most unsustainable practices of the present. Whether this is possible or not is another question entirely. But if we look at how the Mediterranean diet has impacted our ways of thinking about food, there is no doubt that a whole new range of ingredients have become staples, and plant-based diets are held up as an ideal, even though in practice meat consumption continues to rise globally. Perhaps only relatively affluent people can afford the Mediterranean diet, ironically.

But the real question remains: is there such a thing as the Mediterranean diet? I don't mean one homogenous simplified diet, which no one ever pretended existed. I mean are there people who still live and eat this way, and if there are, for how long? And even if the diet remains nutritionally sound in principle, can it realistically withstand the onslaught of modern industrialized food?

I believe the answer is no. We may retain elements. Sophisticated bourgeois palates will continue to pay extortionate prices for artisanal olive oil, rare cheeses, tinned fish, or whatever the latest gastronomic fad might be. But will they be able to

recreate the social and cultural setting that gave rise to the Mediterranean diets? Will they be constrained by the poverty and isolation that preserved these foodways until recently? Perhaps most importantly of all, will people take the time, or even have the time to walk to the local grocery, cook from scratch at a leisurely pace, and share food with family and friends over a bottle of wine on a regular basis? If these are the real core of the Mediterranean diet, then perhaps these are more important systemic problems than eating more vegetables and using olive oil.

That is to say, my cynicism over dietary faddism is much less critical than my faith in the power of gathering socially over food, cooking it using local ingredients, and understanding where our food comes from. All of which are much more important than importing Mediterranean luxury items. That also means if Mediterranean people can preserve their food systems, fantastic. But it would be impossible to simply transfer those intangible cultural properties to other places completely out of context. Should we cultivate comparable diets that include these elements? Absolutely. I also believe that there is a conscious effort on the part of food manufacturers to engender social anomie. They can simply sell more product if people are disconnected and eat, on the move, foods that are quick and convenient, packed with bold flavors, and encourage you to eat more. Ultimately this is why obesity, late-onset diabetes, and other dietary diseases are on the rise globally. They are the cost we pay for letting corporations feed us.

My call here is therefore not for a specific Mediterranean way of eating, but a diet suited to your place and time, made with ingredients that grow where you are, by people who live in your community, and cooked by people for others, to be shared in ways that are suitable for your culture. And if we can take into consideration the environment, human and animal welfare, and the long-term health of the planet, then all the better. This is a tall order, but I think it starts in the kitchen – by simply cooking and feeding others.

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Mediterranean Diet: From Health to Sustainability through Culture, or on Cultural Models Interpreted from the Urgency of the Present Moment

We know today that the *Mediterranean* is a sociocultural and political construct based on geographical entity. And any discussion about food in the Mediterranean involves also social and cultural construction. Food and eating behaviors in gene-

ral fall within the frameworks of the societies that produce and recreate them, and therefore within specific sociocultural systems.

While we construct our conception of the Mediterranean based on certain parameters, which are strongly defined by geography and climate, they are also defined by cultural projections and stereotypes that are difficult to avoid. We use these to create differences and similarities, and we also define them in relation to agriculture, livestock farming, and food. This means that it is possible to say that despite being geographically close, certain cultures and/or religions, such as the northern, southern, or eastern Mediterranean, are very different and even conflicting; or on the contrary, they are not so distant and even have a type of family relationship, which gives them their identity and ultimately brings them together (Caro Baroja 1956).

However, the Mediterranean is and has always been a place of communication and contact. As Fernand Braudel noted (1981), the routes in this *Inland Sea* can be found on land and at sea and are linked in a system of circulation that has driven all types of relations between the various societies that have developed on its shores. The Mediterranean is therefore, on the one hand, an important crossroads and a vast center for integrating and redistributing influences – not only in food – received from the four cardinal points; and on the other, an exceptional field of acclimatization, where products, most of which still exist today, from other places both near and far, have found a suitable environment for their cultivation or breeding, and thereby expect to be accepted and implemented within local food systems.

But this ability to integrate items is no coincidence. It should be remembered that many of our cuisines are the product of processes rather than recipes. They thus have a gift for adopting new raw materials to the methods that they have always used. For example, as observed by González Turmo (1993), over time many Andalusian stews have introduced vegetables or meats that they did not previously use, without changing their essentials.

Mediterranean diet 3.0, 4.0 or even more...

As Dernini (2008) points out, the Mediterranean diet is observed today as a whole lifestyle that makes visible cultural identities and diversity, providing a direct measure of the vitality of the culture in which it is embedded. In this regard, the Mediterranean diet is an expression of a Mediterranean style of life in continuous evolution throughout time, and it is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to changes in their environment and history. As a part of these different cultures, the Mediterranean diet provides (local, regional, national...) identities and continuity for Mediterranean societies.

Furthermore, with the modernization of agriculture and the globalization of foods that took place in the second half of the twentieth century, concepts such as sustainable diets or human ecology have been neglected in favor of the intensification and industrialization of agricultural systems. More recently, in the last three decades, the growing concern over food safety has motivated a renewed interest in or-

ganic foods (Herrin and Gussow 1989) and locally produced and sustainable foods. This fact is particularly interesting in the Mediterranean area (Medina 2015), where international movements such as Slow Food, among others, are based on the defense of local production, biodiversity, and sustainability, where both sociocultural and biological aspects are included.

Nevertheless, the Mediterranean diet is still being considered politically as an independent item, and not as part of a significant social and cultural Mediterranean food system. Health or food consumption is still considered separately from agricultural or fisheries production, economics (sales, import-export, etc.), or the maintenance of traditional structures of distribution and commerce (González Turmo and Medina 2012). In this framework, while good nutrition should be a goal of agriculture, it is imperative that concerns of sustainability are not lost in the process. Many dietary patterns can be healthy, but they can vary substantially, for example, in terms of their resource cost or their environmental impact.

In 2011, the Mediterranean diet was identified by FAO and CIHEAM (the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies) as a joint case study for the characterization and assessment of the sustainability of dietary patterns in different agro-ecological zones, with specific regard to the sustainability of Mediterranean food systems. Under the auspices of FAO and CIHEAM, the Mediterranean is today going to be observed as a 'sustainable food system' in the Mediterranean area. The present framework (4.0) includes the following points: (1) Nutritionally adequate, safe, and healthy; (2) Low environmental impact – Protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystem; (3) Culturally *acceptable*; (4) Accessible, economically fair, and affordable.

Ivanišević talks about "3.0", although she only does so in the title. I presume that these three elements include culture, economy, and sustainability (assuming that health is already contained therein). The 4.0 indicated by Dernini et al. (2017) includes health in its conception. However, we do not know what it may include in the future. Will we talk at some point about a 5.0 or a 6.0, incorporating new elements into the analysis?

Nevertheless, and within the three social, environmental, and economic sustainability pillars, four mutually interdependent, thematic sustainability dimensions of the Mediterranean diet were also identified: nutrition and health, environment including biodiversity, sociocultural factors, and economy. As an outcome of this interdisciplinary and multidimensional sustainability approach, the following four benefits were highlighted in one single comprehensive Med Diet 4.0 framework, with country-specific variations: major health and nutrition outcomes, low environmental impacts and rich in biodiversity, high socio-cultural food values, and positive economic return locally (ibid.).

This Med Diet 4.0 methodological approach, by considering country-specific and regional variations within the Mediterranean area, tries to contribute to understanding what constitutes a sustainable diet in the different agro-ecological zones. Nevertheless, as often happens, cultural aspects have been relegated to the background.

Regarding culture, it is only required that it should be “acceptable” (and not “coherent”, for example) for the populations involved, and this acceptability implicitly allows eventual up-down forced changes or modifications for cultural changes in favor of other main elements, such as nutrition or the environment (Medina 2019b).

Where are we going?

Like its cultures, the cuisines of the Mediterranean are different, diverse, interconnected, and changing; continuously evolving, and continuously receiving external influences that accompany their own internal developments. What is always clear is the difficulty of ‘building’ the idea of a common food (or diet) for all the countries or cultures of the Mediterranean.

Attempting to find common elements between them is a difficult exercise (which is also a construction). Evidently, as it involves a shared space like the Mediterranean, with strong interactions and a long-shared history, it leads to some positive results. However, these results cannot be reductionist, nor can we expect the different situations to fit our preconceived or desired models.

It is, therefore, impossible to speak of a community of shared ingredients across all the countries in the Mediterranean basin, or of identical cuisines or dishes. However, we can speak primarily in terms of a community of common culinary techniques and preparations, of local adaptations that are similar in some cases, of production and sales structures that have some shared characteristics, and even some manners of consumption that, when taken as a whole, enable us to talk of a more or less common Mediterranean culinary system (Contreras *et al.* 2005) and that confer some degree of *family relationship* on the various cuisines surrounding the Mediterranean, which has been called the Mediterranean diet since its declaration as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2010.

Nevertheless, we must always bear in mind that the Mediterranean diet is part of an interdependent social and cultural system and must never be considered as a separate element, as has often been observed, especially from the health sphere and in relation to some selected products. This food system is a complex network of interdependent cultural aspects, and we must remember that all the links in the chain must be protected (Medina, 2015), from production to the dish, including distribution, sales, cooking techniques, consumer behavior, etc. As Ivanišević points out in her text, the “conceptual transformation” of the Mediterranean diet (i.e., its placement in new frameworks of green [transition] food policies) requires additional critical and analytical efforts aimed at a deeper understanding of the relationship between food, landscapes, and individuals, as well as the essential connection between cultural, political, and economic issues.

What we know today about the Mediterranean diet has undergone various changes that have taken it from a conception linked, at its origins and for some decades, solely to health, and made it an element of culture, a lifestyle, after its declaration as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2010 (and its expansion with

three new countries in 2013, which is a quite particular fact in relation to UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage). Since that point, the Mediterranean diet has adopted a new path, guided by FAO, as a sustainable diet, focusing on sustainability and locality as the cornerstones of its new identity. We can therefore see how the Mediterranean diet has undergone a conceptual transformation over the years, which has taken it from health to sustainability, by way of culture (Medina 2019).

However, it is also evident that the focus on health has never really declined in its importance, but instead has been adapted to the times and modified to suit new food trends. Nevertheless, it remains the primary focus. On the other hand, we tend to forget that any transition towards sustainability requires the prism of different local cultures, with particular attention to the entire food chain becoming possible. And usually, we focus only on the environment and forget about the social and cultural (Medina 2023). As Ivanišević also points out (very wisely, by the way) in her text, those “transformations” of the Mediterranean diet concept, from traditional food to intangible cultural heritage and a sustainable diet, speak more of present preoccupations than about food models, practices, and choices (p 48).

However, the Mediterranean diet is currently facing a major challenge: the commitment to safeguarding, which has been made by the seven countries that presented or subsequently adhered to this declaration. This challenge, which goes far beyond the realm of public health or mere sectoral policies, is at the very core of the protection of food systems as cultural heritage. And this is not easy.

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Comment to Jelena Ivanišević's “Mediterranean Diet 3.0 – From Traditional Food to Sustainable Policies”

The aim of Jelena Ivanišević's paper is to sketch the conceptual transformations of the Mediterranean diet from the second half of the 20th century to the present.

Her work gives the opportunity to recollect all the main historical and theoretical information concerning the recognition of the MD as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (2010). Her approach is, from the beginning, theoretically aware of all the implications food cultures have for communities and institutions. In fact, the author chooses to distinguish the Mediterranean diet as a food model designed

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by science from the Mediterranean diet as a common food culture and practice of the Mediterranean countries.

The final aim of the paper is to examine the role of the Mediterranean diet “within the context of sustainable development policies and the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems with the aim of developing new long-term political and economic models within the necessary transformations of present food systems towards greener and more sustainable solutions.” About this subject, I thank the author for mentioning my paper “The Mediterranean Diet from Ancel Keys to the UNESCO Cultural Heritage. A Pattern of Sustainable Development between Myth and Reality” (2016).

It is quite interesting the reference referred to Hafstein’s argument (2018) “that the penetration of folklorist and ethnological knowledge, perspectives, and concepts into the public sphere represents a significant part of modernist reflection” (p 37). As well as the proposal of the author to “incorporate Hafstein’s idea of *folklorization*, seen as a process that denotes the success of the mentioned disciplines primarily manifested in changing the ways people experience their culture, how they define it, and how they practice it” (2018: 128). Indeed, the anthropological competence during the elaboration of the 2003 Convention was not as strong as it had been years before, when a magister of anthropology, Claude Lévi-Strauss, was the main UNESCO advisor for the topic intangible cultural heritage (Moro 2023 and D’Alessandro 2021). But it is surely true that anthropologists have influenced the application of the 2003 Convention, especially in what concerns food cultures’ recognition. Indeed, a special commission of five anthropologists, mandated by UNESCO, gathered at *La Maison des Cultures du Monde* in Vitré (France) on October 4th and 5th, 2009 to give a judgment as to whether food heritage was implicitly included in the official definition of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The unanimous verdict was affirmative (Moro, 2014: 81–82; 2023).

Jelena Ivanišević, with this paper, tries also “to identify the conceptual transformations of the Mediterranean diet in its dynamic history over the last seventy-or-so years” (p 37). In this, the author refers to the statements of the Italian anthropologist Ernesto Di Renzo during his lecture on the concept of the Mediterranean diet in the spring of 2017 on the island of Hvar. His arguments are very old and have already been surpassed by a new approach to this topic. Denying the existence of the very concept of the Mediterranean diet, which for the last seventy years in the international lexicon means the plural heritage of the countries situated around the Mediterranean Sea, is today a mere rhetorical device. It would be like denying that the ancient Greek philosophy existed, arguing that Plato thought differently from Aristotle. That’s why Di Renzo’s statement “*La dieta mediterranea non c’è!*” is, in my opinion, senseless. First, because the historical origin of the Mediterranean diet is well known (Niola 2019). Second, because the Mediterranean diet is wider than a list of recipes; the Mediterranean diet, as defined in the UNESCO Nomination File, goes much further than the question of culinary traditions, and recipes are mentioned very seldom. In fact, the UNESCO Dossier focuses its attention on social practices, agricultural techniques, beliefs, celebrations, harvesting, etc. Further-

more, the file writer, Prof. Pier Luigi Petrillo – recent President of the UNESCO International Commission of Experts for the Intangible Cultural Heritage – proposes the idea of a relationship between landscape and table as the central point of the document (2021; 2019).

In this part of the article, it would be useful to distinguish more clearly the opinions of the author from the statements of her colleague Di Renzo. In any case, all those indirect quotations are precious, because they suggest that the time has probably come for the “Denialism of the Mediterranean diet” to be analysed as a phenomenon that deserves specific study.

About the important contribution of Fernand Braudel to the “rise of the concept of Mediterranean cultural space,” I suggest taking the 18th century as a starting point, when archaeological discoveries in Italy, Greece, etc. started to attract the attention of the most important intellectuals of Europe, even if until recent times Mediterranean food, particularly Italian, was not at all included in the list of the positive expectancies of the travelers of Grand Tour, as recently reported by Dieter Richter (2021).

It is outstanding the analysis of the process permits to the author to state “today’s Mediterranean diet pyramids are equally the result of research done in natural and social sciences, and humanities” (p 43). Furthermore, it is extremely relevant that the new Mediterranean pyramid was redesigned in 2020.

A new role is assigned to the virtuous lifestyle named Mediterranean diet: “The Mediterranean diet, depending on the views and level of the actors engaged with it, is offered as a solution to the problem of cardiovascular health or obesity epidemic, or offered as a tool for rural development that protects local production while contributing to the strengthening of green food policies and/or protecting biodiversity” (p 44). The main promoter is the FAO, with the support of institutions like the CIHAEM (International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies) institutes in Bari, Chania, Montpellier, and Zaragoza.

The author points out that a large international academic and political process favored the present idea that new topics pertain to the Mediterranean diet, including public health, the sustainability of food systems, the ecological footprint of agro-industrial systems, and the problem of food waste. I would add a new topic, to be included in the previous list, which is the “universal right to safe and nutritious food” through a democratic distribution system.

The role of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, for whom the author works, with support from the Croatian Ministry of Culture and Media, is quite relevant for its production of scientific reflections on the Mediterranean diet, with Ivanišević writing, “[We] are able to monitor the development and issues in connection with the concept of the Mediterranean diet itself, which also provides insight into the various levels where its modern life takes place.” (stranica) The author also illuminates the endorsement of the Mediterranean diet provided by UNESCO’s inscription, which represents a challenge to understanding the relations between the goals of global policies, such as the UN 2030 Agenda (UN 2015).

At the end of the article, Jelena Ivanišević poses a very sharp and smart question, when she writes:

Removed from everyday Mediterranean life, the Mediterranean diet sets ambitious, global goals, but also paradoxically shows a lack of power in the fight against globalized, industrialized food and changes in eating habits at home. Transformations of the Mediterranean diet concept, from traditional food to intangible cultural heritage and a sustainable diet, speak more of present preoccupations than about food models, practices, and choices. As we leave the questions of the relationship between cultural and food policies aside, and the complex relations between the environment and people open, we should question how the current popularity of the Mediterranean diet relates to the anxiety of modern eaters, as the most common expression of food scares in the well-fed West (Jackson 2015), which are often expressed with the development of more robust ethical consumer practices favoring short supply chains, local food consumption, and food sovereignty issues. A holistic approach to food culture, which is at the core of the Mediterranean diet, enacts its modernity by playing with (culinary) nostalgia and the comfort of the (beautified) experience of everyday Mediterranean life. But today this food culture is as imaginary as it is based in reality. (p 49)

Since a good question in science is better than a good answer, because it gives a long-run vision of a problem, in my opinion, the “conceptual transformation” of the MD (Medina 2021) is a logical and positive aspect of a living Cultural Heritage. As researchers, we should probably not ask that the Mediterranean diet save the planet, but rather simply provide us with suggestions and inspirations to understand how food ideology (including traditions, beliefs, practices, passions, obsessions, etc.) grows and develops. One lesson, no doubt, that the Mediterranean cultures have given to the world so far is that most of the time, thinking is more important than acting.

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The Musealization of the Mediterranean Diet

Can the concepts of “global” and “local” go together? More precisely, is it possible to replicate something regional, recognized as a unique local value³⁶ and designated as a UNESCO heritage treasure, on a global scale? And how desirable would such an

³⁶ The discussion of the singular and/or plural form of Mediterranean diet is left for later.

action be, even if it were possible? “One size fits all” does not apply to the Mediterranean diet. What proves useful in the Mediterranean and on its coasts is not the best recipe for, e.g., the diet of people living in Sweden, Paraguay, Cambodia, or any other country that does not lie on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea or even some countries that geographically actually belong to the Mediterranean. The lead text by Jelena Ivanišević, “Mediterranean Diet 3.0 – From Traditional Cuisine to Sustainable Policies,” touches upon these observations, although the debate on specific challenges it presents is not as intense as we would expect. This does not diminish the analysis by Jelena Ivanišević regarding the current state of the Mediterranean diet as a UNESCO-recognized phenomenon of intangible heritage, including all of its positive aspects, as well as the challenges presented.

Even though beginning a commentary with a joke is academically unconventional, in this instance, it is somewhat appropriate to paraphrase a relatively common joke about the Mediterranean approach to business and life compared to the Western European one. Essentially, the punchline contrasts the average (poor) Mediterranean fisherman who, as his family has done for decades (or even longer), simply catches fish along the Mediterranean shores and prepares them for his family. A Western European guest³⁷ comes along and suggests that this is not a successful way of doing business. In the guest’s opinion, the fisherman should sell some of the fish he catches for a profit instead of sharing everything he has with his family and friends. Then, by repeating this process, he could earn more and more money to eventually buy a larger fishing boat and continue expanding his fleet of fishing vessels, which would guarantee him significant profits. The fisherman responds by asking how this would change his and his family’s quality of life. The Western European guest suggests that the increased income would ultimately allow the fisherman to spend a significant portion of his time socializing with family and friends. The fisherman calmly replies that he does not need that whole cycle when he already leads that kind of life. It is clear that the joke is partially based on stereotypes, with the average hardworking Western European focused on maximizing earnings and the Mediterranean person³⁸ primarily focused on quality, or more precisely, enjoying life’s (small) pleasures. Regardless of the level of generalization, the joke touches upon several aspects through which the idea of the Mediterranean diet is marked or overlooked as a distinctive (heritage) phenomenon.

On one hand, as the lead text clarifies, the initial fascination with the Mediterranean diet was entirely driven by its (at that time) well-documented health benefits. These benefits included significantly reduced risk of heart attack and stroke, lower cholesterol levels, and overall cardiovascular health improvement. This is precisely why the Mediterranean diet has become, as the author correctly points out, a global phenomenon supported by medical science and the topic of more and more diverse media promotions³⁹ identifying it as being of interest to viewers. This

37 It would be more appropriate to call him a tourist.

38 Both categories (Western European person; Mediterranean person) are generalized to a great extent.

39 Primarily culinary TV shows, later adopted by social networks and other internet channels.

interest stemmed from the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, but it may have also been influenced by a simultaneous reduction in the quality of healthcare services in some countries. This aspect should be further explored and examined in order to determine whether the global promotion of the Mediterranean diet was primarily motivated by the “nostalgic” presentation of the Mediterranean or if the medical/nutritional dimension had taken precedence. Without a doubt, the typical (Mediterranean) nutritional dietary model, based on a significant share of plant-based foods, olive oil as a key fat source, and reduced intake of foods derived from animals, as noted by the author of the lead text, is not harmful to health; on the contrary, it is beneficial. However, the question remains whether the Mediterranean diet can entirely rely on the aforementioned health-based argumentation as the main tool for its promotion and acquired popularity. Can research solely in the field of health continue to be persuasive enough, given that today’s statistical data show that the prevalence of prominent diseases, reduced by practicing the Mediterranean diet, is nowhere near what it used to be?

At the same time, as the author of the lead text points out, the idea of the Mediterranean diet has only recently expanded beyond the purely medical-nutritional aspect, primarily through ethnological and anthropological research. It now involves aspects of everyday life that differentiate the Mediterranean diet in much more detail and help us better understand it. For example, people in the Mediterranean have traditionally practiced the daily siesta, a period of rest typically in the afternoon, which is often forgotten or consciously ignored.⁴⁰ I remember a situation when I visited an interpretation center near the city of Manresa with colleagues from the University of Barcelona.⁴¹ After the visit was over and we finished our lunch, we boarded a local train for Barcelona where, within five to ten minutes of departure, all my colleagues around me, nearly ten of them, dozed off while I expected lively discussion we had during lunch to continue.⁴² Given that I have not conducted independent research nor found results from other academic studies that unequivocally show that people living on the Mediterranean coasts and islands have different physiological (or mental) needs, I can only conclude that I witnessed a situation in which my colleagues experienced an activation of a certain level of archetype,⁴³ a behavior pattern within the daily routine of Mediterranean inhabitants. Similar to observing the Mediterranean diet solely through its nutritional values, it seems that research into the question of daily afternoon rest primarily highlights the health benefits of such a practice. We do not doubt these benefits, but what is often overlooked in such research is the modern, fast-paced way of life that no longer allows the majority of people, whether on the Mediterranean coasts, islands, or most other places, to engage in this practice in

40 Today, many people still practice it to the extent that their fast-paced modern lifestyles allow.

41 Manresa is approximately a 2-hour train ride away from Barcelona.

42 My origins are from here as well, even though as a third generation removed from the Mediterranean coasts, my way of life has evidently not developed this habit.

43 I am aware that this is a simplified explanation and it is primarily used to illustrate the ideas I am presenting.

the same way.⁴⁴ When we look at other parts of the world,⁴⁵ it becomes clear that, in the vast majority of cases, if not all of them, the traditional Mediterranean practice of daily afternoon rest cannot be implemented due to entirely different daily routines. This underscores why, for a long time, the overall Mediterranean way of life was not seen as important, though the use of certain foods was consistently highlighted.⁴⁶ This has led to a hybrid state in which the Mediterranean diet becomes more attractive globally, as people are drawn to the demonstrated positive health effects⁴⁷ if they consume common Mediterranean foodstuffs, while all other aspects of the typical Mediterranean way of life are often overlooked. The role of ethnologists and anthropologists in the study of the Mediterranean diet is undoubtedly more demanding, as they must note that the phrase “Mediterranean diet” is far from clear and simple, as it is often portrayed. The benefits of such a diet are undeniable, but at the same time, they do not arise simply from substituting sunflower oil with olive oil, for example, but from a fundamentally different outlook on overall lifestyle habits. Furthermore, they argue for the protection of local communities that still embody the original ideas of Mediterranean daily life as these ideas gradually disappear. The world we live in today has significantly changed incredibly quickly over the past few decades. For example, the concept of the indigenous local fisherman on the European side of the Mediterranean is nearly non-existent today, or, using UNESCO terminology, we could say that they are an extremely endangered species. Former fishing vessels have been transformed into those suitable for tourism, or they are decommissioned with relatively generous subsidies from the European Commission to achieve the envisioned (although not sufficiently well-thought-out) agenda of sustainable fishing. Fishing is just one category directly related to the promotion of the ideas (benefits) of the Mediterranean diet.

If we step away from discussions centered solely around the practical utility of the Mediterranean diet, and even those concerning the impossibility of implementing it unless it is conceptually expanded to include other practices in regions where it is most popular,⁴⁸ two more levels of challenges addressed by the lead text remain. The first is the (more or less successful) recognition of the Mediterranean diet by UNESCO and its inclusion on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The second is the idea that the Mediterranean diet, as it is currently inscribed, contributes to UN global agendas on sustainability and sustainable development.

Regarding the first level, a series of arguments have already been presented earlier in this text. The conclusion, albeit preliminary, could be that the inclusion of the

44 None of my colleagues who dozed off on the train on the way back to Barcelona has the opportunity for an afternoon rest during the remaining days of the week, when they work in university offices.

45 Western Europe, the North American continent (especially the United States), and other regions where the concept of the Mediterranean diet has gained popularity.

46 The first association with the Mediterranean diet in non-Mediterranean regions almost always involves the use of olive oil and a higher consumption of fish compared to red meat.

47 That have been confirmed by research.

48 To be recognized as Mediterranean everyday life, instead of solely the Mediterranean diet.

Mediterranean diet on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, as currently defined, might have been premature and lacking in several aspects. Defining Mediterranean everyday life vs. solely its diet would add much precision, though I am quite aware that this path is not straightforward and is often influenced by politics. Thus, we agree with the observation from the lead text that it is desirable for the Mediterranean diet, as a practice of preparing food, to be included on this UNESCO list. However, this inclusion should not and cannot be an excuse preventing the concept from being further refined or, ideally, redefined under the term “Mediterranean everyday life,” which is an overarching and far more precise term that encompasses a range (or all) of the practices that define the Mediterranean way of life.⁴⁹

With regard to the second question, the contribution of practicing the Mediterranean diet in its current form compared to sustainability policies, I am more skeptical than the author of the lead text, including some of the comments mentioned earlier.⁵⁰ Sustainability or, more precisely, sustainable development in today’s (global) society does not depend on a broader application of the concept of the Mediterranean diet, or even the expanded concept of Mediterranean everyday life that we suggest here. Rather, it depends on the fundamental recognition that local production and consumption of food is a key concept of sustainability. Blackberries readily available in London, fish recently caught in the Mediterranean Sea, or olive oil in Toronto are not sustainable development concepts, no matter how much certain current policies may promote them. A key component of sustainable development is grounded in the interests of the local community. Everything else must follow from that, although, unfortunately, this is not always so, including the case of the Mediterranean diet. There is no Mediterranean diet but rather Mediterranean diets, as the author of the lead text mentions by quoting Italian anthropologist Ernesto di Renzo.

Considering all the presented arguments, what are the possible options? Perpetuating traditional Mediterranean life, unfortunately, isn’t one of them, as seen in the false images of the Mediterranean way of life, whose key characteristic is olive oil. Ironically, to some extent, the concept of the Mediterranean diet, as it is currently presented, might be best preserved if it becomes musealized. In other words, it should be presented as a permanent exhibit in a museum of the Mediterranean diet in Croatia.⁵¹ Through this specific medium, a familiar form in Europe for over 250 years,⁵² we can interpret the complexity of the Mediterranean diet. Though I am aware of how blasphemous it may sound to place intangible heritage within the framework of a museum institution,⁵³ considering everything mentioned in the lead text and our response, it is evident that the practice of the Mediterranean diet is disappearing, and it can currently be found only in rare “oases” in the Mediterranean

49 From foodstuffs to daily afternoon rest and a number of other elements.

50 E.g., regarding local fishing vs. global.

51 Or in Greece, Spain, Cyprus, etc. Ideally, there would be a network of such museums throughout the Mediterranean.

52 Which has since become globally accepted.

53 Although this would not be the first such instance in Europe, or even in Croatia.

in its entirety.⁵⁴ In such situations, a museum solution⁵⁵ is not the worst option; on the contrary, it can be a valuable catalyst for new interest and a deeper understanding of why (and how) this way of life is worthy of admiration and emulation in our own lives.

In terms of sustainability, as in many other aspects of today's world, there are two sides to the coin. The ideas of "seasonality, preserving biodiversity, local production and consumption of food, and reasonable use of natural resources, especially soil and water" (*stranice*) mentioned in the lead text are highly desirable, but also incompatible with the practically global popularity of the Mediterranean diet. In other words, every gain also carries with it a loss. If we want to be completely objective, practicing the Mediterranean diet is primarily a "playground" for the affluent who can afford it.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, people who live in the Mediterranean are increasingly becoming less privileged in this regard, and we could even speak of a form of ecological imperialism to some extent. Though it is not as drastic as in some other developing countries, it is nevertheless certainly present. This does not mean that we should abandon the idea of sustainability in the Mediterranean diet but rather we need to think about its scope much more intensively (and differently).⁵⁷ Additionally, the fundamentally noble and desirable idea of improving the health of (one part of) humanity⁵⁸ should not be realized at the expense of the quality of life of the communities that originally practiced the Mediterranean diet. Unfortunately, for many years, scorpionfish from the Adriatic Sea have been sent to markets in Western Europe, while our markets offer fish from Tunisia, so ultimately, no one consumes "fresh" fish. Much like no one practices daily afternoon rest.

54 That unquestionably includes comprehensive practices from everyday life, not just foodstuffs.

55 Here, we assume a contemporary museum concept including, for example, cooking and food tasting experiences as part of the permanent exhibit, as well as appropriate working hours or spaces for daily afternoon rest, and so on.

56 Excluding sardines, which are still relatively affordable. Not to mention daily/afternoon rest.

57 As is currently happening in the fields of ethnology and anthropology.

58 Based on practices of the Mediterranean diet.

R EPLY

Jelena Ivanišević

The history of the concept of the Mediterranean diet is well known and thoroughly researched. Every author who has written about it agrees that it was the invention of Dr. Ancel Keys (Matalas 2004; Dernini 2012, Queroz 2015, Moro 2016, Medina 2021a, and others), a researcher who saw in the impoverished cuisines of post-war Italy and Greece of the mid-20th century a potential response to the public health challenges of contemporary Western society. Originating from health research, the Mediterranean diet was easily transmitted beyond its symbolic and geographic boundaries, gradually being shaped into a nutritional pattern that incorporated and concealed the experiences of hunger and poverty at its foundations. Albala and Tominc clearly outline the mechanisms that shaped the diet of the poor into a hedonistic and gourmet food culture of the Mediterranean, primarily emphasizing the romanticization of the popular food practices predating the Industrial Revolution. As highlighted by Albala, the dietary practices of the Mediterranean are inscribed with, albeit entirely modern, values of pre-modern diets from a time “before everything went wrong” (Albala). However, values such as *genuine, simple, and honest food* reveal less about past dietary practices and customs and more about present concerns and trends. Indeed, as emphasized by Albala and Tominc, dietary advice is socially constructed and cannot be observed outside current social, cultural, economic, and political frameworks. Nutritional advice reflects current dietary preferences and fears, especially those described by some authors as the contemporary consumer’s anxiety (Jackson 2015) and increasing distrust in the contemporary agro-industrial food system.

Suspicion and anxiety in the well-fed West significantly influence everyday dietary choices and practices, often articulated as criticism or resistance to the dominant agro-industrial foodscape. Concerned food consumers, faced with products originating from an inestimable supply chain, are left to develop various alternative means of food provisioning and embrace everyday cooking as an act of resistance against fast, convenient food. Consequently, Albala is more interested in the Mediterranean diet as a new branch of criticism against the modern food system rather than its cultural-political validation in the context of UNESCO protection. The idea of home, local, and seasonal food before the dietary revolution in the mid-20th century is represented by the poor post-war menus of southern Italy and the island of Crete. Moderate and frugal peasant cuisines, where choices were primarily influenced by necessity rather than desire, encapsulate both hunger and resourceful-

ness. Thus, one can easily agree with Ana Tominc, who highlights that this was a diet we knew would irreversibly change as soon as other circumstances improved. By concealing hunger and poverty, the Mediterranean diet simultaneously constructed its “new” content based on the idea of an imaginary Mediterranean as a space of leisure, a relaxed lifestyle, and food as a social ritual. It is no coincidence that the Mediterranean diet, especially in its heritage interpretations, condenses precisely around the concept of conviviality – sharing food and communal dining, recognizing sociability as a fundamental value of its food culture. Medina astutely observes that our perceptions of the Mediterranean and Mediterranean cuisines are inseparable from stereotypes, such as the notion of a relaxed lifestyle and the joys of leisure. This lifestyle, as presented in media depictions of Mediterranean cuisines – which are the result of prolonged and ongoing processes of adopting and adapting new ingredients, dishes, and flavors – becomes a holistic principle on which today’s narrative about the Mediterranean diet as a specific expression of a culture’s vitality is built. Hence, it might seem that UNESCO’s approach is, in fact, protecting the “life under siege” brought about by new dietary and cultural patterns from the developed West.

The criticism of modern food systems inherent in the concept of the Mediterranean diet sets a new framework encompassing global goals such as ensuring stability in the safe supply of nutritious and culturally appropriate food, as well as safeguarding natural resources and biodiversity. Simultaneously, the Mediterranean diet, presented as a panacea for various contemporary challenges, not only fails to demonstrate an ability to combat the change of traditional food practices, even within its own boundaries, but even contributes to perpetuating food inequalities with its global popularity. This point is raised by Albala when rightfully questioning who can even afford high-quality Mediterranean artisan products. The popularity of the Mediterranean diet not only increased the symbolic value of typical foodstuffs but has also had a long-term impact on their prices. The issue of food justice, although theoretically addressed in the global goals of the FAO’s food policies (such as Agenda 2030), upon which it relies, currently remains insufficiently emphasized in the present, often apologetic, arguments for strengthening sustainable food models such as the Mediterranean diet. One possible direction for further research in the future of the Mediterranean diet lies not only in understanding that it is difficult to predict how long the current enchantment with this food model will last but also in problematizing new forms of “ecological imperialism” (Babić) brought about by the commodification and simplification of the Mediterranean way of life. Whether the Mediterranean diet, as a set of complex practices of daily life (from food production to consumption), is merely another fad of the global political elites or a necessary initial step in the *green transformation* remains a subject for future debate.

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