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“You are what you eat”

In what ways do the cuisines of the Czech Republic and the UK reflect the truth of this statement?

Bakalářská práce

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Vedoucí práce: MgA. Simon Gill, M.A.

I declare that I worked on this bachelor thesis independently and that I included the complete list of used and cited literature.

In Olomouc _____ Signature _____

I would like to thank MgA. Simon Gill, M.A. for his support and valuable comments on the content and style of my final project.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UK United Kingdom

CZ Czech Republic

USA United States of America

AD Anno Domini

SIRC Social Issues Research Centre

ABSTRACT

The aim of my bachelor's project is to deal with and interpret the national cuisines of both countries in connection with their eating habits, national characters and behavioural patterns. This is presented via a historical insight into the countries' gastronomic roots, where I strive to highlight some interesting and relevant facts that may have influenced the contemporary choice of food, ways of eating, rituals and customs. The reason I dedicate a substantial part of the project to a historical study of the national cuisines is that I aim to show that the forming of national identity is a long process done through centuries and the story of each of these countries shows how it is influenced by everyday life and routine procedures.

In the analysis of selected national dishes, my object is to introduce the background and development of the dish and find out whether and to what extent it says anything about the nation itself.

The final part, a questionnaire survey, is added with the aim to demonstrate through questions related to personal eating habits how identity and lifestyle may or may not be influenced by a temporal or permanent move to another country.

In the conclusion I sum up the ideas and analyse some typical behavioural patterns with regard to the national eating habits of both countries.

INTRODUCTION

A word of alchemist:

*“The way a dish is prepared, the same is the blood of a man,
and like the blood, like the spirits of a man and like the spirits, like the wits of a man.”*

Bavor Rodovsky of Hustirany

Food itself and ways of preparing and eating it have always been a significant part of every nation's culture, its history and its current lifestyle. When trying to understand a country's traditions, customs, behavioural patterns, manners and even politics, which is indisputably an integral part of learning a foreign language, it is worth investigating the typical national cuisine and eating habits, their historical roots and their influence on above mentioned features.

“Every culture has its own distinctive food rules – both general rules, about attitudes towards food and cooking, and specific rules about who may eat what, how much, when, where, with whom and in what manner – and one can learn a lot about a culture by studying its food rules”. (Fox, 2004 p. 296)

As far back as in 19th century, Winter (1892) mentions that a man depends on their cuisine and the cuisine depends on the geographical latitude a man lives at. He adds that we Europeans would not care for what e.g. Eskymos feed on and would undoubtedly die of their common diet. He then likens a slice of English roastbeef to a piece of shoe sole and Czech mealy pudding to overcooked glue, to demonstrate how it would all taste the same for the “lumpish Eskymo stomach”. He is also convinced that one can recognize a culture of any nation by tasting its food as if they were to investigate the nation's artefacts or historical monuments.

Having been a teacher of English for several years now, many times have I in my teaching practice needed the knowledge of the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom dining habits to be able to explain a certain historical or social context. That is why I have chosen the topic of national cuisines in connection with the national characteristics of the two countries. I strongly believe that there is an intense relation between the nature and the temperament of people and their nourishment as I am a gourmet myself and am very interested in discovering people's character via their eating habits.

Furthermore, I am really fascinated by the natural physical character of such topic, which humanizes the whole concept of an academic work. As the aim of any bachelor thesis is to widen one's knowledge, to open up new perspectives and move a step further in their field of study, then I believe it is truly important to process a theme which is tangible, lifelike and applicable in practice.

Finally, there is a certain indication of controversy hidden in the title “You are what you eat” and that has always attracted people’s attention. I have an urge to uncover the historical reasons for the deep-rooted stereotypes of both the prevalent bad reputation of British cuisine as well as the Czech infamous lack of refined appetite. At the same time, by writing about this, I would very much like to convince the readers about the lovely quality of both.

I believe that in the time of globalization process, which slowly eliminates the differences between the cultures, it is essential to look for even the smallest evidence of a nation’s uniqueness in order for any nation to survive and keep its cultural heritage for the future generations.

1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CZECH AND BRITISH NATIONAL EATING HABITS – RELEVANT AND INTERESTING FACTS

1.1 A historical outline of Czech gastronomy

1.1.1 Slavs

The fact that the Czech nation was formed on the origins of Celts and Slavs plays an important part in the very beginnings of Czech culinary art. We Czechs very like to relate everything we do to the Slavic origin and are sometimes excessively proud of being a part of the Slavic race, therefore I am going to mention a little more about the Slavs and their cooking habits.

Their farming lifestyle introduced some of the core eatables and ingredients which the Czechs have been typically using since. This has been described by Horackova and Bayerleova (1987), who say that several types of cereals were grown by Slavs including rye and wheat – the basics of today's Czech bread, which is supposed to consist of 45% rye flour, according to iDnes.cz (2008). Bread baking in small ovens in Slavic huts has even been proved by archaeological discoveries. The traditional baking of leavened bread of today's style may have also started there and then. Horackova and Bayerlova (1987) also point out that it was presumably thanks to the old Slavs that soya beans, peas, lentils, poppy seeds and beetroots have become so popular in Czech cooking. Slavs were more than likely the originators of sprinkling the pastry with poppy seed, which is so typical and popular of today's Czech traditional bread rolls and buns (Delta-pekárny.cz, 2012)

In Beranova (1988) Slavs are often marked as the eaters of various kind of mush. As they had more demanding palate for it, not only they boiled it in water, but they also cooked different kind of cereal in milk, sweetened by honey, fresh and dried fruits and buttered. Beranova (2005), Horackova and Bayerlova (1987) all mention that sweet porridge or hot cereal served as a festive meal even till the Middle Ages and early Modern Ages. Frumenty and oatmeal porridge were to fill the hungry stomachs of hard-working old Czechs. Semolina porridge sprinkled with cocoa powder and poured over with melted butter (krupicová kaše in CZ) has stayed popular up to these days as a filling and calming evening meal for babies and children, sometimes even their parents who more or less eat this mush out of nostalgia or to satisfy their sweet tooth.

Both Toufar (2008) and Beranova (2001) confirm that Slavs were also lovers of good meat, which they processed from domestic animals, mainly beef cattle and pigs. However, the

pigs, unlike today, ran freely around the property and therefore their meat was not as fatty as it is these days. The lean meat was boiled in pots or roasted on the open fire, sometimes cooked in ashes, dried or smoked. Rarely did they have deer meat which was mainly served to the wealthier ones, and is even now considered a pricy delicacy.

In Beranova (2005) we learn that dairy products, primarily the cheeses and the Czech curd cheese, both made of cow's milk, are another Slavic food which has kept the popularity up to the 21st century. The old Slavs were so dependant on those, that they even knew how to preserve it for the winter season in order to have an "iron/emergency ration". Again, a slice of fresh rye bread topped with a mixture of curd cheese and chopped onion, seasoned with caraway seeds is a Slavic reminder of a common Czech tea/dinner today in many families. Our ancestors not only ate everything they grew themselves, but they also picked anything edible around their houses and villages, including young nettles, dandelion leaves, wild garlic and sour dock. These items are mentioned to show that the original Slavic savoury appetites, especially the sour taste, have lasted for ages. The popularity of sour cream, acidified milk, sauerkraut, pickled vegetables and vinegar salad dressings amongst Czechs is well-known. Ironically, one may easily associate this fact with the characteristic "sour faces" of some Czech natives when travelling through the country. This opinion of mine is supported by Berka, Palan and Stastny (2009) who sarcastically claim that any foreigner can notice the grumpiness and morose face of Czechs in the airport, at a shop or in a hotel when coming to the Czech Republic. "While other nationals need a very serious reason to be sulky, Czechs don't need any. But foreigners don't have to be afraid, Czechs love to be annoyed, it is their hobby" (Berka, Palan and Stastny, 2009, p. 24).

1.1.2 Middle Ages

Czech cuisine has also incorporated a mixture of traditions and cultures that have been developing throughout the Czech territory since the ancient times. Thanks to its position in the "heart" of Europe, Czech cuisine has been under the influence of nations from all cardinal points and therefore willingly adopted anything new. (Ellegant.cz, 2012)

At the time of Czech nation forming in the 9th century, it was not only the above mentioned farming which provided the basic raw materials for cooking, but people also used the meat from cattle breeding, hunting and many ingredients from trade. As well as many other nations the old Czechs depended and still rely on high consumption of bread. They

mastered many different kinds of it, for example, buckwheat bread or millet bread. Bread and cheese were the everyday repast of commoners in Middle Ages. To demonstrate the importance, here are some examples from the history: It is said in Kosmas chronicle that legendary Přemysl, the Ploughman, who was the purported ancestor of the Přemyslid dynasty, indulged in such simple meal when he was chosen to help Libuse to rule the Czech Lands (Beranova, 2005). Another story says that in 1073 the Prague bishop Gebhard gave the Olomouc bishop Jan a thrashing for eating cheese with toast, onion and caraway seeds as it was supposedly considered a meal unfitted for a bishop and disparaging his status (Beranova, 2001, p. 12).

According to Beranova (2001), contemporary preparation of meat has also its origin back in medieval Bohemia. Pork, beef, poultry, deer and fish was either boiled, roasted or smoked and garnished with root or leafy vegetables sometimes flavoured by herbs like sage or garden cress. Meat was a part of very festive feasts, usually served on bread plates, which were later also eaten or thrown to the dogs. Interestingly, a knife was being shared by fellow diners. To keep their hands clean, the guests routinely used the lower parts of frilled table cloths or a bread crumb. Sweet pastry and frumenty were another essential part of these feasts. Sugar came to the Czech lands much later, therefore they used mainly honey, fruit, fruit juices and jams for their preparation as the fruit trees grew plentifully here (Beranova, 2001, p.13) Toufar (2008) presents an early evidence of a famous feast. He retells a story of one organized by Boleslav in 935, a brother of the Duke of Bohemia Vaclav (Wenceslaus I), on the eve of the treacherous regicide. He states that many legendists describe St. Vaclav as a pious ascetic, eating only flat bread and a piece of boiled fish, however he believes that he surely joined the company of his fellow diners and enjoyed the tables full of food and drink in a very sprightly manner. That is perhaps why he rushed for the infamous morning confession to unburden his conscience from the sleepless night and the lavish feasting.

In Beranova's opinion (2005) the amount of eaten food depended on the wealth of the diners. The commoners were obviously able to eat only as much as they had. From 11th century on, except for the times of war plundering or poor crop, Czech people did not starve. The noble ones were demanding new ingredients in order to season their dishes richly (Beranova, 2001, p. 13). Domestic herbs were available all around, often grown in garden plots (Beranova, 2001, p. 13). In 13th century, growing of saffron became popular. For the wealthy ones, the imported spices, such as black pepper, ginger and clove came into focus (Beranova, 2001, p. 14). As they write in Ellegant.cz (2012), the first hand-written recipes appeared in 15th century. The whole 16th century in the history of Czech cuisine is considered

the “period lavishness”. Apart from the above mentioned popularity of spices and seasoning, the Czech cooking was enriched with Italian, Spanish, French and English specialities (Ellegant.cz, 2012) The first printed Czech cook book by Jan Severin in 16th century contained over 400 recipes and also instructions how to use figs, olives and spices from overseas (Ellegant.cz, 2012). The dishes were not only heavily seasoned but decorated with flowers or peacock feathers or even dyed (Ellegant.cz, 2012).

1.1.3 From 16th to 18th century

Here I must stop and mention a little more about the eating habits of the ruling class. The main difference between the food of poor ones and the wealthier ones was not as much in the amount of served food as it was in the variety and preparation of the meals. This fact may have not been specific of just the Czechs; it may have applied to the class eating habits throughout Europe at the time. Although bread was earlier mentioned as food for the commoners, its finer version was prepared for the noble ones as well. Cereal was richly sweetened by plenty of honey and rare fruit, deer meat was served regularly, other type of meat was of the highest quality and chosen and prepared carefully (Beranova, 2001). Beranova (2001) further states that apart from the consumption of local-grown walnuts, almonds, coconuts and figs were imported and eaten abundantly. It was for the upper classes, that rice and cane sugar began to be imported gradually. Toufar (2008) however remarks that the lower classes used to feed on much simpler and healthier food. Beranova (2001) argues that class privileges and exploitation limited the poor people’s nutrition. The pastures used for cattle were on the decrease, consequently there was less meat for the commoners. From what they were able to keep and breed, they were obliged to supply substantial part to their lords and the rest had to be sold to earn money for the taxes and levies. She explains that in the country, vassalage was instituted, in the growing townships many people were destitute and lived in poverty. Crop failures, starvation and famine began to seriously bother the population of developed class society because majority of the unpropertied were not able to keep any food reserve.

In the 17th century, the social differences between “the haves and have-nots” became even more evident in the Czech cuisine. The noble dishes turned into delicacies; pheasant, turtle, game or seafood were served. Veal and pâté made from partridge, pigeon, duck, wildfowl, cod, eel, crayfish or truffles were dominating the festive tables. This trend was carried on in

the 18th and 19th centuries. Sweet dishes were introduced and became more popular, for example cakes and chocolate, “bábovka”, “buchty” and pancakes. (Ellegant.cz, 2012)

Let us now investigate what the regular time for taking meals was. Beranova (2001) describes the 16th century custom of taking meals only twice a day. She even quotes a saying of the time: “Get up at six, have lunch at ten, dine at six, go to bed at ten and you will live ten times ten years.” A 16th century preacher Johann Geiler introduced very distinctive rules about the number of meals a day: “The one who eats once a day is a God, twice a day is a Man and three times a day is a Beast. The Devil is the one who eats four times and five times a day is granted only to the Devil’s mother (Toufar, 2008, p. 153). According to Beranova (2001), three to four meals a day were considered acceptable for only the immature and the elderly and she confirms that even John Amos Comenius apparently recommended eating the first meal at eleven o’clock. During the 16th century, a breakfast was slowly added, especially for those who worked hard on farms and in the 17th century, eating regularly three times a day became common (Beranova, 2001, p. 14)

There was a major turn in the Czech culinary art in the end of 18th century. It was slowly getting rid of the old traditions and was modernizing. The composition of meals, their succession and seasoning methods were very different. All thanks to new cooks and authors of cookery books. In 1792 Viennese chef of Czech origin Neubauer publishes a book called in loose translation “Viennese cookery book – how to prepare meat and fasting meal without a big cost, but still very tasty”. This manual was aimed to the town people who were supposed to improve their standards of table manners. Such long names of cookery books were common in order to show the potential buyer what to expect of the printout. (Beranova, 2001)

1.1.4 Modern Ages

Beranova (2001) also writes that the fashion of publishing various kinds of cookery books continued to 19th century, the time of Czech national revival. Every Czech has once heard of the famous and glorified Magdalena Dobromila Rettigová, author of many Czech cookery books of the time. She influenced the cultural life of the whole country. Her “Home Cookery Book: or discussions on meat and fasting meals for Czech and Moravian girls” was first published in 1826. It was so popular that many more extended editions were published one after another from 1830’s till 20th century. In the last editions, she changed the weights and measurements from pints and pounds to litres and kilograms. Besides the classical cookery

books, Rettigova wrote works on the economical housekeeping in order to raise the home and social life and the whole standard of households. Her last work called “A nice cup of coffee and something sweet” from 1845 became extremely popular with ladies, so called coffee parties had a great importance for the uplift of women’s intellectual and social life standards. Many culinary experts later wondered why Rettigova’s recipes were so well-liked. Some say that she added something very personal, her own experience to them, some praise her excellent writing style and good clear instructions. Via her books she was teaching her readers to eat healthily, save on expenses, not to waste food and use all leftovers - all nicely explained even for beginners. She recommended them to think before cooking, accompany all meals with small innovations. She believed that by varying the mundane cooking, the town families can improve their lifestyle and partners can have happy married life. How true that is even today! One of the most famous Czech saying “Love comes through stomach” must have its origin in those days.

According to Beranova (2001) we may have the impression that 19th century eating habits were not very different from today, however she states that no cookery book of that time recommended heavy greasing and overeating. Vegetables were regular part of daily meals. Therefore any blame for serving loads of dumplings, sweet pastry and side dish taking up a place for lean meat, vegetables and legumes, does not have reasoning or anything to do with Czech traditions. In Beranova opinion (2001), it is strictly contemporary vice.

Food and dining in the time of Monarchy was also - in contrast to our hectic time of cafeterias and fast food restaurants - surrounded by a range of specific symbolic meanings: people from all walks of life expressed through their dining not only their social status, tastes and values, but also their religious or magical rules, customs and habits. For instance, Lenderova et al. (2010) writes about the techniques associated with baking and eating bread. Those were accompanied by ritual gestures, whether it was sketching the cross on the top crust before slicing, or the principle that the bread must not fall on the ground, or the methods of correct slicing etc.

In Ellegant.cz (2012) the authors say that simplicity of cooking comes in the beginning of the 20th century. Gradually, the Czech cuisine incorporated new principles of well-balanced diet, following the dietetic and health aspects. Newly, people started experimenting in their everyday cooking, trying new recipes from abroad, probably thanks to international cookery books becoming available.

In 2003 Jasminsky (2003) wrote that owners of restaurants, bars and cafes have the Czechs on their side more and more. With the rising income at the time people spent more money on refreshment and eat out more often. They referred to Radek Mužík from Incoma Research who said: Gastronomy is one of the fastest growing industry, in the last 4 years the revenue rose from 40 to 50 billions of Czech crowns.

Today, we can open-mindedly say that the Czech cuisine is a typical central European one, although still keeping its specific national elements such as Christmas carp, thickened soups and sauces, old favourite dumplings, potato pancakes and a wide range of traditional sweet pastry. However, Humpreys (1993) states: “The forty years of intensive centralisation has produced a a nationwide cuisine with predilection for big slabs of meat served with lashings of gravy, dumplings and pickled gherkins, not to mention a good helping of pickled cabbage.” On the other hand Humpreys (1993) praises the Czechs for home dishes, which are prepared with imagination and are ignored by most ordinary restaurants. He recommends the foreigners taking any opportunity to eat in someone’s house, otherwise in restaurants they would be served stodgy servings of meat and one vegetable.

Mlcoch (2008) claims that our diet has changed quite a lot in the past twenty years. He says that people learned to differentiate between the healthy and unhealthy. Here are some of his observations as for the trends in Czech eating habits: consumption of fruit and vegetables is slowly rising, more in favour of fruits than vegetables, consumption of dairy products went down due to price increase, eating fish products has improved only very little, people still consume meat heavy on fat, fried food is on daily menu, “light” products predominate low-fat diet, many people keep to wrong slimming diets and usage of products with animal fat still outnumber the consumption of vegetable fat ones.

On the other hand, Lidovky.cz (2012) writes about the rising popularity of cheap and lower quality food amongst the Czechs. They describe how the revenues of food retail sale in September 2012 dropped and people's shopping trolleys are getting thinner but the frequency of going shopping stayed the same. They quote the Next Finance economist Pikora: “People are not slimming down, but they buy food which, hundred years ago, nobody would have even regarded as food. There is less meat and milk in the food products, they are substituted by modern chemicals and that fact makes the products much cheaper”. Lidovky.cz (2012) adds that a substantial number of Czech population travels to buy food in neighbouring countries where the VAT rate is lower.

This still does not sound very optimistic but I believe that thanks to a new fashion of cooking reality TV shows, newspaper/internet reviews of culinary experience and

cosmopolitan behaviour of the Czechs, our demand for high quality food and cooking may be slowly returning. Younger generation is gradually getting interested in healthy and alternative ways of eating and even home made cooking. I dare to say that it may be becoming a kind of fashion and “in” thing to take on cooking lessons or sharing tasty recipes on social networks. Just this year, there has been an unusual cookery book published aimed at young and busy people by 17 year old Martin Skoda – so-called Czech Jamie Oliver – A Cook Book Full of Music. I believe that his following appeal to the public may change the typical Czech attitude to food, i.e. to eat cheaply and feel full. “People, remember, food is not fuel, but something we ought to enjoy and savour! Eat well!” (Skoda, 2012, p.224).

1.2 A historical outline of British gastronomy

“Until recently British cuisine was in the doldrums, the poor relation of Europe, disdained for its lack of flavour, soggy vegetables and watery meat. The last thirty years have seen British cuisine fight back and re-establish itself proudly among the cosmopolitan collection of cuisines that we can now savour in the restaurants of the British Isles.” (quoted in Go dine.co.uk, 2010)

In the eyes of foreigners, British cuisine does not have a very good reputation, although very few of them actually know much about it and have experienced a typical/traditional English dish. Therefore, I am going to briefly describe what preceded forming such prejudice and write some relevant historical facts about British/English cooking and eating habits.

1.2.1 Prehistoric Britain

I shall start my investigation in the prehistoric times. Thanks to archaeological discoveries we know that the first people made and used many tools helping them obtain their food and to prepare it. Generally, learning how to use fire and to farm definitely improved their cooking skills, which after all were the basics of all historic civilizations development. Brears et al. (1993) point out that another aid in reconstructing prehistoric cooking methods is to examine the practices that survived in islands like Orkney and Shetland whose inhabitants had to make do with what was available in later prehistory. Their creativity served well to make the meals palatable even with the limited range of ingredients. To sum it up, since the first men to have arrived in Britain 300, 000 years ago were mainly hunters, their lives depended on meat from wild animals, those who lived closer to the sea fed on shellfish and sea fish. Some gathered seeds and plants and even knew how to preserve them. Later, the first farmers arrived from the Continent and brought with themselves first seeds of corn, barley, flax and first domestic animals. With the help of metal, they were able to make sharper knives, cauldrons, firedogs, spits, spoons and drinking vessels. All this must have enabled to improve their cooking techniques tremendously (Brears et al., 1993, pp.14-15).

1.2.2 Roman Britain

From the lessons of history we know that, in AD 43 Romans entered Britain and started their not only military but also cultural invasion of the indigenous Celtic population. This is often called a process of Romanisation. During their forty years of conquest, they enriched the country with many high standard innovations, e.g. built towns with squares, complete with law-courts, bath-houses, forums, temples and aqueducts, well-constructed roads and elegant villas equipped with central-heating. Colquhoun (2008) calls this period a time of *conspicuous culinary consumption*, which is evident in descriptions of Trimalchio's feast written by Petronius. He satirically describes a banquet, which was served as a show-off, kind of a theatre, displaying dishes ranging from live fish, a boar stuffed with sausages, a hare made look like a Pegasus, dormice rolled in honey to sow's nipples and vulvas (reportedly, the Romans adored the sexual parts of animals). Brears et al. (1993) remark on another evidence but of less sumptuous food served in Roman Britain. It is mentioned in the letters of Vindolanda, written by soldiers serving on Hadrian's Wall to their families. They were given spice, goats' milk, young pig, ham, corn, venison, vintage wine, fish sauce, Celtic ale and pork fat. This only demonstrates that good food was a mark of civility.

Go dine.co.uk (2010) remarks that Romans brought to Britain number of sources of food. Cattle, sheep and pigs were supplemented by a wide variety of game like pheasants and peacocks. Many of the basic vegetables that we know today were introduced to Britain by the ancient Romans: new varieties of cabbage, onions, lettuce, celery, parsnips, turnips and peas all came after 43 AD. New aromatic herbs and plants were imported and frequently used in their sauces, some remained in use even today and we now take for granted. Rosemary, marjoram, borage, fennel, spearmint, pepper, ginger, parsley, hyssop, aniseed, chervil, dill and many more were favoured by emperors for its apparent encouragement of bold decisions. Roman cooking used wine rather than milk, oil instead of butter, and it was richly flavoured with sharp herbs and expensive spices. (Colquhoun, 2008, p.20) We may assume that stewing with herbs has therefore persevered as the principle cooking method of ordinary people to this century.

Colquhoun (2008) also points out that in areas, where Roman influence remained weak, tribalism and its subsistence tradition of boiling and of porridges stayed uninterrupted and ordinary pheasants were anxious over crops, weather and the health of livestock. They kept

cooking around a single pot, using peas, beans, root vegetables, fruit and cereals, occasionally supplemented by wild game, pig and fish.

When concentrating on relevant facts I must mention the name Apicius. His collection of 459 recipes compiled around the first century is the earliest surviving cookery manuscript in the Western world. The name is connected with culinary inventiveness and reputation for decadent eating. The first word of each of his instructions gives us the noun that we use to this day, for “recipe” was the Latin word for “take”. (Colquhoun, 2008, p.25)

In Brears et al.’s opinion (1993) the main difference between Roman and contemporary cooking is that they were greatly fond of using a special sauce called “Liquamen” made from fermented entrails of fish, which they used as a condiment in for enhancing the taste of other foods. According to Colquhoun (2008), this smelly relish was added to salads, meats or seafood as frequently as today people might turn to ketchup or Worcestershire sauce. This sauce was even exported throughout the Empire; from discarded containers we know that Romans in Colchester imported theirs from Urbicius’ factory.

The last thing I need to point out about the Romano-British eating habits is the factor of playfulness that may have survived in British character. Brears et al.(1993) say that the Romans used to make some of their festive dishes look as though they were prepared from other ingredients. It was supposed to be a kind of identification game with the guests. Talking about guests and banquets, it was a custom for them to bring their own napkins which when eating they wore around their necks and had another beside them to wipe their fingers.

Unfortunately, I cannot cover all the sophisticated habits, manners, techniques and innovations the Romans practiced, introduced and left behind when inhabiting the Britain. It would include information ranging from their farming practices, special preparation of different kinds of meat including e.g. snails and horse meat, production of cheese, cultivation of wheat, the fondness for porridge and gruel made from cereals, their import of herbs and lentils into Britain and introduction of grapes and winemaking. I would have to mention their ingenious cooking equipment and ways of serving the food, but all that would present another whole project.

1.2.3 Medieval Britain

After the Romans left Britain in AD 410, Germanic tribes overran the remnants of the Roman Empire, pushing the Britons west (Cookit.e2bn.org, 2009). As Colquhoun (2008) aptly

points out “the aromas of fish sauces, warm honey, sharp vinegar and spices were soon dispersed by the violence of a new generation of invaders, and Roman traditions and practices declined and disappeared. In the country, the harvests went unmanaged, orchards became overgrown, and carrots, parsnips and fennel ran to seed. It was the age of collapse.” Then, throughout the 5th century, when the Saxon barbarians poured into Britain, the country became a place of constant race of warriors and peasants and obviously there was no time to savour food and elevate cooking methods. The sophisticated Roman kitchens reverted to plain fires at floor level, usage of refined oil turned into the spreading of butter, wine sipping changed into ale gulping. Monotonous diet took over the variety of food and the cycles of famine and hunger troubled the commoners (Colquhoun, 2008, p.35).

Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) further explains that this period has been described as the “Dark Ages”. Life was thought to be hard and brutal; yet the culture, language and administration introduced at this time still underpin many aspects of life today.

As for the language, there is for example the Old English word for “spoon” – *span*, which simply means “splinter of wood”. Those were shared by men at the long tables with their lord together with sharp-pointed knives for spearing meat (Colquhoun, 2008, p.36) The Old English heritage is also evident in words like “cheese” and “butter”, both appear in Aelfric’s vocabulary. This vocabulary also lists edible meats including pig, goat, deer, hare, chicken, swan, duck and goose (Colquhoun, 2008, p.40). Since everyone hunted, there was no particular social cachet attached to these meats but even the students of English as a second language know that the English modern words *beef*, *veal* and *mutton* are Norman rather than Anglo-Saxon. According to Colquhoun (2008) this fact suggests that the mass of Anglo-Saxon society kept these animals mainly for their wool, skins and working ability rather than for the table.

Colquhoun (2008) also mentions that the detail of cooking disappears from sight in this period. She describes this era as a world of superstition and spirits, where the food had an “added value” i.e. magical power. For instance, wild basil was gathered while holding an oak leaf to ward off evil etc. In Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) they even claim that Anglo-Saxon medicine was a mixture of deep knowledge of herbs and their properties, and magic. Every community would have had a person who specialized in knowing how to use plants for medicine. Unfortunately, there are only rare written records. Both Colquhoun (2008) and Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) mention at least the most famous medical book, so called The Leech Book or Leechdoms of Bald written at about AD 950. The leech-book contained mainly charms and recipes for treating 'external and internal' ailments such as lice, boils and stomach-

pains. Colquhoun (2008) adds to that and gives an example of children collecting wild roots like raddish as it was supposedly to protect men from “incessant female chatter”, when eaten at night.

Brears et al.(1993), Colquhoun (2008) and Go dine.co.uk (2010) all point out that bread was the staple of everyone’ s diet in the Middle Ages. Though, they agree that it differed in the graininess and coarseness as it descended the social scale, growing darker and drier for the poor. The commonest bread, called maslin, was made from wheat and rye flour mixed and according to Colquhoun (2008) it sat in the belly like a stone. Brears et al. (1993) say that the fine white bread was made of wheat which only grew on good soil; and only the lord of the manor could afford to have the land dug over and manured. One of the type was called the Pandemain and it was made of flour sifted two or three times. Other breads contained all sorts of grain including seed seeds, beans, peas and even acorns. In the north and west, bran bread, barley bread and oatcakes were popular. However, as Brears et al. (1993) explain further, the brown bread was also used by the wealthy. So called trenchers were made of four days old bread to be used as plates for holding the meal. They describe how large loaves were cut into thick slices with a slight hollow in it and according to social status given in adequate amount to the diners, i.e. an ordinary person would have only one plate trenchers for a whole meal, but a personage would have several stacked up for him. After the meal, the trenchers were collected and given to the poor or thrown to the dogs (Brears et al., 1993. p.99). To stress the importance of bread in the medieval society, Colquhoun (2008) describes how Old English words for bread were connected to the social class: the lord - *hlaford* - was literally the bread guardian, the lady - *hlafdige* - was the bread-maker, and dependents - *hlafaeta* - were the bread-eaters. She also found out that by today’s standards, vast quantities of bread were eaten: 4 pounds a day for the poor of all ages. Just for comparison, according to the UK Federation of Bakers Fact Sheet of September 2010, bread is purchased by 99% of households in the UK and this figure has remained relatively static for several years. The average UK household buys just over 80 loaves per year which through a quick calculation comes to approximately 0.29 pounds per household per day (a common loaf of 600 grams). The decline is therefore evident and the above mentioned source lays the blame on the changing variety of bread products, the changing ethnic mix of the UK population and an ageing population that is interested in smaller quantities and healthier products (Bakersfederation.org.uk, 2012).

The origin of another popular bread product has its roots in the Middle ages – hot cross buns. They were originally made in honour of Eastre, goddess of spring and of the dawn, but

as Christianity spread, they began to be marked with a cross by monks (Colquhoun, 2008, p. 39) Other cakes and buns were really just sweetened, spiced pieces of bread dough, gingerbread was just a heavily spiced breadcrumb and honey mixture, adds Brears et al.(1993).

When describing the eating habits of Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, it would be impossible not to mention their love for meat. For example the pig (itself na Old English word) was so important that it headed Aelfric's list of animals. Most of households would have had one or two, slaughter them with Martinmas (11 November) and would use every part for something. When reading about the process in Colquhoun (2008), it very much reminds the typical Czech slaughter of the pig that is practised by today's Czech villagers. In those days, the pig's organs, including the heart, lungs and liver, were eaten fresh or chopped with fats and herbs to make sausages or puddings stuffed with oatmeal like the ancient Scottish haggis - a term that may have derived from hagg, a Viking word meaning to 'hack' (Colquhoun, 2008, p. 41).

Nothing else had such a far-reaching effect on eating habits and cooking than the arriving Christian religion. As Brears et al.(1993) writes, Roman Catholic Church laid down new commands, i.e. that on Fridays (later even Saturdays and Wednesdays) no one might eat meat; and throughout Lent, eggs and dairy products were forbidden too. This meant that for about half the days in the year everyone had to eat fish. The church strictly obeyed the Rule of St. Benedict, which forbade the "meat of quadrupeds" to monks except for the sick. However, Colquhoun (2008) describes that monks were quick to interpret this as excluding birds and fish so that fishponds and dovecotes became highly valuable and placed in every monastery ground, providing a constant supply of flesh. Even though she states that Christianity brought with it the concept of gluttony as a sin and of abstinence and fasting as symbols of faith, it was the monks who were re-stimulating the art of gastronomy in their private cells.

As mentioned above, fish was as vital as bread to medieval people. In Brears et al.(1993) they say that for ordinary ones, fish meant mainly salted or pickled herrings. England's herring fleets caught vast number of fish during the summer and salting a pickling was the only way to preserve them for travel inland. The wealthy has a wider choice of sea fish, including those known today, such as plaice, haddock and mackerel. Oddly enough, seals were eaten and so were whale, sturgeon and porpoise, which belonged to the king but which he often gave away (Brears et al.1993, p. 100).

In Brears et al. (1993) they surprisingly state that most estates also had their own fishponds, called stews, breeding carp which was unlike pike considered a luxury! This fact

just proves that the typical Czech Christmas dish may not be as unappetizing and humble as it is described by many British who have been fed on sea fish mainly.

Throughout medieval time more sheep were kept in eastern England than cattle. Brears et al. (1993) confirms that even back then, mutton was second favourite to beef, both these meats having been preferred to white meats, because they made more solid, satisfying roasts.

It is worth to mention some information about the medieval table manners. In Brears et al. (1993) they describe them into quite a detail. For instance, there were already etiquette books for young people in those days. In them, students were told to have clean nails, not leave finger-marks on the table, not to drink from a shared cup, nor drink their soup noisily. Neither had they to pick their teeth with their knife, blow on their food to cool it or wipe their mouth on the tablecloth. For their neighbour's sake, they should clean their spoon properly and should not dip their fingers too deep in the shared dish. Scratching their head at table was unacceptable as well as spitting and belching.

With the arrival of Normans “the stage was set for one of the greatest culinary renaissances in the history of Britain” (quoted in Colquhoun, 2008, p. 44). As Colquhoun remarks (2008), Norman cooks were valued so highly that two royal master-cooks were being given manorial lands for their service. She claims that there was even a new vocabulary produced by Alexander Neckam, *De utensilibus*, which began with describing a high-class kitchen of the twelfth century with all its equipment including tripods, mortars, pestles, frying pans, eel spears, cloths hung on poles to keep them from the mice, separate sinks for viscera and offal, ladles for basting and much more. This list was enriched with the first cooking instructions, i.e. giving fine directions for roasting pork with a little salt to make its rind really crunchy.

Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) describe several interesting facts about the Norman eating habits as well. For instance, a person who held lands from someone of higher rank, was required to feed them when they travelled across their lands, which included the lord and his company. This could sometimes bankrupt the host. They give an example of the consumption over a few days of Christmas feasting: “6,000 chickens, 1,000 rabbits, 90 boars, 50 peacocks, 200 geese, 10,000 eels, thousands of eggs and loaves of bread, and hundreds of casks of wine and cider” (quoted in Cookit.e2bn.org, 2009). On the contrary, a large part of the poor people's meals were only soups made from root vegetables. From this, the peasants got most of their small amount of protein. Pottage, a stew of fresh seasonal vegetables, pulses, cereals, seasoning and a little meat, was the commonest food eaten (Halliday, 2011, p. 64)

1.2.4 From 16th to 18th century

Generally, the sixteenth-century foodstuffs were almost identical to those of the medieval period. Tudor upper classes fed on roast and boiled meat, poultry, fish, pottages, frumenty, bread, ale, wine. People mostly stayed away from raw fruit and vegetables as they were still regarded with some suspicion and were reputedly causing stomach ache. Even Colquhoun (2008) says that raw fruit was considered dangerously cold and was either baked or balanced by cooking in wine and with spices. That is probably why the sale of fruit was banned in the streets during the plague of 1569 (Brears et al.1993, p. 140).

As this age is also marked with great voyages of exploration and growth of trade, many new food items were introduced in England. The wealthy were relishing fruits imported from southern Europe, exotic vegetables from South America, spices from India and Spice Islands. Potatoes arrived in Britain in the 1580's and at first they were though unhealthy because they grew underground (Cookit.e2bn.org, 2009). Compared to the common sweet potatoes cooked in wine, the white "Virginia potatoes" were used in pies mixed with sugar and fruits and would not achieve an important place in the British diet for another two centuries (Colquhoun, 2008, p.93). In about 1525, turkey was brought from the New World and by the 1540's it was regularly served at important feasts and entertainments (Brears et al.1993, p. 143). According to Brears et al.(1993), the most important and influential change concerning food in the sixteenth century was the popularity of sugar. It came to Europe from the plantations in West Indies and so called "white gold" was used to prepare a great variety of sweet meats, preserves and syrups etc. Interestingly, as Brears et al.(1993) states, the national annual consumption of sugar averaged a pound a head during this time, majority of it eaten by the aristocracy, who soon began to suffer from tooth decay. It is alleged that even Queen Elizabeth had very black teeth from enormous use of sugar. In Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) they state that the rich very soon got used to flavouring their tea and coffee with white sugar crystals and liked buying silver sugar spoons, boxes, sieves and tongs.

Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) confirm that the Tudors loved sweet flavours and fruity sauces, rich pastries and puddings. At the end of rich meals came the fashionable puddings and sweetmeats. Pastry very much evolved throughout this period, it became edible thanks to the addition of eggs and use of cold fats like butter. People today can see the Tudor standing pies as edible works of art in many of the Renaissance still-life paintings.

According to Cookit.e2bn.org (2009), during Elizabeth I's reign, dishes relied heavily on the import of spices. They hid the taste of the salty or bland meat and according to a saying

“Dear as pepper” showed how the rich people were. Spices were used to make spiced wines, to flavour foods such as fish, jam, soup and meat dishes.

As Colquhoun (2008) remarks, the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1540's changed not only the way the countryside looked but also the eating rules of the society. One striking example was the decline in fish consumption when the monk's fish-ponds suddenly disappeared and fish days in the fast-day diets begun to lose its importance. Cookit.e2bn.org, (2009) add that with the monasteries closed, inns, alehouses and taverns started providing places for travellers to spend a night and have a meal. They became especially popular in towns on a market day and for people to hold celebrations, drink, relax, gossip, eat and be entertained. The food they offered was simple, it included bread, meat, pies and soups with floating pieces of bread or meat called “sops”.

My insight into the history of British eating habits would not be complete if I did not mention the phenomenon of tea. Halliday (2011, p. 75) calls tea “the British love affair”. He then adds that tea reached Britain in the mid-17th century from China and was first sold in a coffee house in London in 1657. He also describes how its proprietor sold the dry tea at very high price, claiming that “it was gathered by virgins and would make the body active and lusty, and preserve perfect health until extreme old age”. It was highly recommended to fight nightmares, unwanted need for sleep and even men's corpulence. It is therefore not surprising that by 1750 tea had become Britain's favourite drink. Halliday (2011, p.76) claims that although eighty per cent of Britons drink tea, each consuming on average 2.1 kg per year, coffee, at 2.8 kg a year, is now Britain's favourite hot beverage. Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) mention that tea was made popular by Catherine of Braganza, the wife of King Charles II, Portuguese by origin. The princess made tea-drinking fashionable in England among the wealthy.

In Go dine.co.uk (2010) they mention the newly imported coffee and chocolate. They both became fashionable drinks in the 1650's and were widely drunk in the newly set up coffee houses in London. According to them, by 1675, there were over 3,000 coffee houses in England. They were popular places for merchants and professionals to meet, to read newspapers, to talk politics and business and gossip about His Majesty and his Ministers. They also mention one that originally started as a coffee house and later on became a well-known gentleman's private club.

Go dine.co.uk (2010) writes about the influence of the Puritans on contemporary eating habits. They claim that “serving plain food as simple as possible became the sign of a virtuous British household”. Spices reportedly disappeared from the staple dishes of the middle

classed. According to Cookit.e2bn.org (2009), during Cromwell's leadership, all enjoyments including Christmas festivities and celebratory feasts were banned and were replaced with fast days, even though Cromwell himself was not strict and enjoyed all kinds of entertainment. What an evidence of the infamous English hypocrisy!

The establishment of a constitutional monarchy had a substantial effect on domestic life as Brears et al.(1993) states. The landed gentry spend much more on recreation, travel and luxury goods and enjoyed coming to London, the finest food market in the kingdom. He then mentions that the fare of the country gentleman changed from relatively plain and simple and based on home-produced food to dishes with new flavours and cooked with new methods. Variety was suddenly preferred to plenty.

However, in Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) they write that in Stuart times, “food took up to four-fifths of an ordinary family's budget and that the diet of the poor remained rather basic. The diet was based on hunks of bread, coarse hard cheese, meat if it could be afforded, and fish. Pottage continued to be part of the staple diet and ale was consumed in vast quantities”.

Between 1600 and 1800 many cookbooks were published. With titles such as *The English Hus-wife*, they were intended for use in well-off families with the lady being responsible for all aspects of housekeeping. The books contained many items from overseas, mainly from France (Brears et al.,1993, p. 182). France was a great source of recipes and new terms, e.g. Bouillon and Hash became widely used. Even so, Brears et al.(1993) further explains that French style did not overwhelm the native English taste for good plain cooking and many still preferred substantial, wholesome roast and boiled meats. Cookit.e2bn.org, (2009) add that this was the time when the traditional English dishes appeared on many tables, e.g. roast beef and vegetables. They explain further that at the turn of the 17th and 18th century there was a change to what the British consider more 'modern' cooking and many of the recipes they would still recognise today. Improved kitchen equipment allowed more sophisticated cooking , technical revolution in agriculture allowed more foods to be cultivated and grown in England and therefore available to more people at a cheaper cost. Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) also point out that thanks to this increased food production most people had an adequate diet.

During the Georgian/Regency period meals started to have a set time for serving. According to Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) and Brears et al.(1993) both, breakfast was taken as late as around 10 am, there was not a regular lunch and dinner was served at about 6 p.m. in the countryside and at 8 p.m. in town, with the new development of tea filling the gap in the afternoon. Brears et al.(1993) add that the less wealthy continued to have dinner in the middle of the day, dish of tea in the afternoon , and then had a supper in the evening of something

cold and bread or cheese. The reason behind breakfast being served so late was that a lot of work had to be done beforehand and many activities were usually carried out before breakfast, e.g. taking a ride in the park or checking correspondence. Small wonder that many Czechs are often confused with the English words for the daily meals and when visiting a host in the UK they do not know what to expect of dinner, supper or tea.

According to Cookit.e2bn.org (2009), the reason why lunch was not taken regularly is that it was considered “effeminate” to take “Luncheon” or “Nuncheon” and many men looked at this meal as a female affair. A gentleman might just pop into his club for a drink. When visiting, people would be offered refreshments; when going shopping, they might eat a pastry or a piece of cake. This may explain why the British tend to eat lightly at lunchtime and more heavily at dinnertime as it works the opposite way in the Czech Republic.

The upper-class dinner of the time was a formal affair and could last several hours as it consisted of many courses. Several hours after dinner was finished, it was time for supper, or, as it was sometimes called, “the tea board”. There would have been several types of cake, biscuits, pastries and sandwiches or savouries. When the tea board was cleared from the room, that was the polite time for guests to take their leave (Cookit.e2bn.org, 2009).

Brears et al.(1993) states that the 18th century Britons were great lovers of meat. The ones who could afford it were according to foreign visitors of that time dining on up to twelve sorts of meat but very little bread. In [Go dine.co.uk](http://Go.dine.co.uk) (2010) they confirm that the British food was always known for its emphasis on good quality meat. Neither the popularity of French cooks in the 18th and 19th centuries would change the fact that British just like their beef plain, served without any delicate sauces. This trend has persisted for many years. They also state that vegetables were looked down upon and were mainly considered as food for the poor ones.

1.2.5 Modern Ages

To choose and sum up relevant facts about food and eating habits in the UK from 1900 up to now is a very complex task. With the eighteenth-century enclosing of land and the Industrial Revolution, the lifestyle of the society changed completely. The differences in the diet and eating habits between the upper classes, middle classes and the poor ones became immense. Many people left the countryside to find work in overcrowded cities where the majority of ordinary people depended mainly on factory-made food. As Brears et al. (1993)

remarks, bread was everyone's staple food in the 19th century and we can get a good idea of what else middle-class people ate in this time by reading about the home life of the author Jane Austen. Her family farmed some land which enabled them to make their own bread and keep some live stock. Together with their vegetable garden and fruit trees they were able to keep self-sufficient and the only foods they had to buy were game and fish, and some imported goods such as tea, coffee and sugar.

Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) states that compared to previous times, food generally became much simpler and plainer during Victorian times. People slowly realized that excessive sophisticated flavouring could totally cover the taste of the main ingredients. Further on Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) add that even in America, many middle class people began to be proud of rejecting “the fopperies of continental cuisine” and preferred plain roasts or boiled joints. It is said that Queen Victoria herself favoured plainer food. This is perhaps why many foreigners today regard the traditional British cuisine as boring and tasteless repast and quite often they yield to the stereotype when thinking the same about the Britons themselves.

The second half of the 19th century was the time for mass-produced and mass-preserved foods to come. Canning was patented in the United Kingdom in 1810. It was an expensive and time consuming procedure, mainly used for military supplies. As techniques improved, the demands of urban populations in Victorian Britain for large quantities of cheap, varied, easy to store food, increased. In response, companies such as Nestlé, Heinz, Crosse and Blackwell and others emerged to provide quality tinned food, for sale to working class city-dwellers. From the 1860s, tinned meat was available (quoted in Cookit.e2bn.org, 2009). For example, Halliday (2011, p.79) writes about Britain's favourite Heinz's Baked Beans cans. This product was first introduced to the British public in Piccadilly in 1886 and marketed as an expensive and exotic import from the USA. Nowadays, 1.5 million tins are being consumed each day, mostly by children.

The Victorians valued breakfast. According to Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) and Brears et al. (1993) both, middle class breakfasts consisted of bacon, eggs, ham, haddock, toast, coffee and fruits; especially men asked for substantial cooked breakfast which was served earlier as the pattern of “going to the office” developed. It is also worth to mention the opulent dinners of well-to-do Victorians and Edwardians. Such dinners were a meal with strict etiquette. Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) describe how this covered everything from laying the table, the way meal was served to the serving order of courses and food that was eaten. As Brears et al.(1993) mentions, what made such a dinner so very different from today's was that there were usually six or seven courses and wide choice in each. In Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) they

confirm that meal times were often displays of people' wealth. Rich food, fine cutlery, china and servants – all this was necessary for great dinner parties which could include up to 70 dishes.

Needles to say, the diet of the very poor was nothing like mentioned above. As Cookit.e2bn.org (2009) and Brears et al.(1993) well describe, many of the city slum-dwellers lived on potato parings, porridge and scraps. Their only comfort was a cup of strong tea which gave an illusion of warmth and fullness. The needy had to seek a place in the workhouse where some basics were provided.

The Victorian era was also the time of emerging tea rooms as places for social gatherings and chatter. It also became fashionable to eat out in restaurants and to have picnics (Cookit.e2bn.org, 2009).

According to Go dine.co.uk, 2010, the decline of British cuisine came with the two World Wars in the last century. At a time of food shortage, in 1918, a food rationing was introduced by the Ministry of Food of that time. This and the loss of servants meant that many middle class women had difficulties learning to cook for their families. All was radically rationed – meat, butter, eggs, sugar etc. Even after, when Britain was striving to re-establish the economy, bread and potatoes were severely rationed. “Watery soups with little meat, bulked out with vegetables became the norm. Overcooked cabbage and potatoes brought little relief to this dismal diet” (quoted in Go dine.co.uk, 2010).

Brears et al. (1993) states that during the Second World War, eighteen million people listened every day to Charles Hill “The Radio Doctor”, and learned which foods were good and healthy and how to cook them.

As Go dine.co.uk (2010) write, a change came with cookery writers like Philip Harben or Elizabeth David and European travels in the Fifties. They brought a new interest in proper and tasty cooking after the British cuisine had been ruined by the Ministry of Food economical recipes consisting of only carrots, potatoes and dried eggs (Brears et al., 1993, p. 306).

Brears et al.(1993) points out the “Swinging Sixties” and their impact on the eating habits of the time. As he claims, the attention moved from eating healthily and nutritively to eating fashionably. Coffee-Bars and self-service restaurants selling fried food were gaining popularity. However, some people's obsession with the content of the food they ate turned them to “alternative” life in communes, some became the “slimmers”. He refers to a survey of 2,000 consumers by the *Independent* newspaper in 1986, the public showed a substantial interest in “healthy eating” - 63% of respondents had reportedly increased their fruit and vegetable intake, 33% said they were eating more fish, most said they were eating more fibre

and less meat. However, Brears et al.(1993) also remarks that market statistics of the time showed the opposite. He then mentions the saying “An apple a day keeps the doctor away” which is still acknowledged truth at the end of the 20th century, but in reality children are more keen on a packet of crisps than on eating a piece of fruit. (Brears et al., 1993, p. 322).

According to Go dine.co.uk (2010), the Sixties and Seventies were the times when cuisines of other countries came into the fashion. Many new restaurants emerged including ethnic eateries and bistros. Brears et al.(1993) adds that thanks to refugees from Communist China, every medium-sized town in Britain had its Chinese restaurant by the mid 1960s. Those provided cheap but original food, a perfect kind of relaxed catering for growing student population and young workforce. Some families, looking for alternatives to home cooking, became accustomed to eat in places like the Quality Inn, the Chicken Inn and, after 1965, in Pizza Hut and McDonald's (Brears et al., 1993, pp. 323-4). By 1980, most people had access to a wide variety of takeaways, which also delivered to the door (Cookit.e2bn.org, 2009)

Go dine.co.uk (2010) mention the era of “nouvelle cuisine” in the Eighties. This French influenced cooking was according to Brears et al.(1993) nothing less than exquisite presentation of small portions of food and that failed to find popularity with a general public who wished to feel full for their money.

Cookit.e2bn.org describe how dinner parties with aids like soda stream, fondue sets and tupperware became very popular in the Sixties and Seventies. Those products were to entertain and to convince the guests that such gadgets are must-haves items.

Colquhoun (2008) claims that so called “foodyism”, fierce and growing interest in food and cooking in the Eighties and Nineties, caused that the new generation began to demand books by celebrity chefs in order to be as successful in the kitchen as they were at work. The Official Foodie Handbook, published in 1987 by Ann Barr and Paul Levy, likens the proud statement “I am a Foodie” to old Roman “I am a winner”.

Colquhoun (2008) also writes that taste for hot spice grew and therefore it was no surprise that by 1997 a Gallup poll was announcing that curry was the nation's favourite food. In his 2001 general election speech Robin Cook tried to persuade the Britons that chicken *tikka masala* had become their national dish.

As Go dine.co.uk (2010) present, modern British cuisine is a re-interpretation of the old dishes, taking the best of traditional stews, roasts, pies and puddings and re-inventing them. A new spice or herb, an imaginative accompaniment, unusual vegetables, all bring new interest to dishes like steak and kidney pie or bubble and squeak (that had been ruined for many of Britons by the old institution of school dinners.

Go dine.co.uk (2010) and Colquhoun (2008) both sum up and explain what the modern British cuisine concentrates on: usage of fine ingredients like excellent beef and lamb humanely reared, wonderful pork sausages and pies and a good variety of sea fish, preference of seasonal and domestic foods, usage of organically produced food, all fresh and of the best quality. Relaxed and messy cooks like Jamie Oliver, Nigella Lawson and their ilk have been promoting domestic and family cooking and baking for some time now and even Czechs are able to enjoy their cooking programmes in the Czech Republic. Lately, it has become fashionable to focus on food with a social conscience, “slow food” ethical production, on Fair Trade and environmental responsibility (Colquhoun, 2008, p. 374)

However, Colquhoun (2008) reveals the other side of British contemporary eating habits. She claims that the amount of food thrown away has risen 15 per cent in the last decade. Sales of convenience and takeaway food continue to increase – Britons eat three times more ready meals than the average European country. Due to high consumption of sugars, fats and salts, the nation suffers from high levels of nephritis, arteriosclerosis and hypertension; one in five children over twelve is overweight.

2 SELECTED NATIONAL DISHES AND REASONS BEHIND THEIR POPULARITY

It has been very difficult to choose a national dish that would represent the wide range of food and dishes and indicate some typical features of the national characters. Both the cuisines, as mentioned in the historical part, have been under the influences of foreign cultures, imports, political situations, climate, social development and much more. However, I believe that there are some dishes that reveal some of typical national characteristics and may correspond with the title of this project “You are what you eat”.

2.1 Vepřo, knedlo, zelo

As a representative for the Czech cuisine, I have chosen a famous pork dish, which is served in almost every family in one way or another.

In May 2003 Czech Centre for Public Opinion Poll carried out a survey focused on Czech traditional cuisine. They approached 1048 people of 15 years and above and asked what they comes to their mind when they hear “Czech traditional cuisine”. The results proved unequivocally the victory of “Vepřo, knedlo, zelo” – pork roast served with yeast dumplings and sauerkraut. For the record: 80 per cent of respondents indicated “vepřo, knedlo, zelo”, 45,2 per cent wrote “Svíčková” and 23,3 per cent decided for “řízek” (Tisková zpráva CVVM, 2003)

The name “Vepřo, knedlo, zelo”, consists of 3 words, each naming a part of the dish. “Vepřo” is roasted pork, “knedlo” means a popular side dish known as a dumpling in English and “zelo” supplements the dish with either braised cabbage or sauerkraut, depending on a family tradition or regional popularity.

Beranová (2005) writes about the historical background of using the pork for cooking throughout the ages. According to her, pork was not valued by gourmets in the middle and modern ages but among the commoners, pig was in favour. For example, she quotes a 15th century humorous pamphlet which talks about a little piglet begging for a moment before his slaughter to write his will at the time of Shrovetide. Further, she writes how the commoners value the ownership of such animal and therefore uses the pigs for all purpose, e.g. skin for books, fat for greasing the shoes, bristle for brushes etc. From my personal experience, I dare to say that not much has changed since the mediaeval times, today villagers still cherish their

pigs and other cattle with a great care and after the traditional pig-slaughter, they use all edible parts for cooking (offal for puddings, blood for sauce, head for soup etc.) and freeze the meat for later. Czechs generally like to have good “emergency ration”.

Beranova (2005) also remarks that roasted pork with fried onion was the core dish at the time of Shrovetide. However, no cookbook mentions such a dish until the 17th century when together with white and black puddings it becomes a part of gourmet menus. In Beranova (2001) we read that the first mention of the pork and cabbage combination comes from the 19th century, but instead of the roast, it were the pork chops “decorated” with cabbage. The classical “Vepřo, knedlo, zelo” appears later in the second half of the 19th century cookbooks. Supposedly, it was very much popular with men who at the time started to push for warm dinners. Many dishes were being supplemented by potatoes and floury side dishes and meat was becoming a morsel or just a decoration (Beranova, 2001, p. 26).

As for the popularity of cabbage, we find in Beranova (2005) that it was already a vital part of mediaeval cuisine and life. First it served as a remedy and was used mainly for inflammations and swellings together with vinegar or dried grass. It was also regarded as a nourishing food for the women in childbed as it was supposed to help with lactation. Magdalena D. Rettigova, who I mentined in the historical outline, recommends preparing cabbage in many different ways, promoting the importance of regular vegetable intake. It can be preserved and accompanied with apples, dill or caraway seeds to supply a regular intake of vitamins throughout the winter times. This may be the reason behind such popularity among the Czechs who suffered with the lack of fresh vegetables and fruits in off-seasons, mainly in the past sixty years.

As Ellegant.cz (2012) put it, the likeness of dumplings in the CZ dates back to the 19th century. However in Knedlik.cz (2007) they write that as far as back in the Middle Ages, “knedlík” meant a small meatball or a dumpling made of soaked bun and it used to be fried compared to today’s way of preparing.

However, 17th century cookbooks describe a dish which reminds us of our “knedlík”, it was called “knedle” and was very salty (Beranova, 2001, p. 61). Today’s traditional Czech yeast dumpling has been adopted from Tyrolean mountain people and within time it became the Czech national dish. Its potato variant became popular in the 19th as well and was usually accompanied with mixed vegetables or smoked meat (Beranova, 2005, p.53)

Unfortunately, the current trend in Czech eating habits is to eat a lot for little money spent. Majority wants to eat traditionally but without a change of lifestyle. Old Czechs used to work hard, therefore a rich and filling meals were justifiable. Today, filling and fatty dishes like

“Vepřo, knedlo, zelo” are being heavily criticised, especially by famous cooks like Zdeněk Pohlreich and others. However, he does not reject the Czech traditions, he criticises the way they are served and the quality of ingredients they are made of. This is evident in the article written by Holec (2011) for Reflex magazine, where he says that Czechs are butchering the traditions by offering low-quality Czech cuisine in most of the restaurants. Even though, some Czechs are not hesitant to pay a lot of money for luxuries, they are not willing to pay adequate amount of money for fresh and good quality food (Holec, 2011).

What does it say about ourselves? Some people say that we Czech are like dumplings – passive and slow, conservative but relaxed and easy-going. It is a matter of opinion. The popularity of “vepřo, knedlo, zelo” may indicate that we love to pamper ourselves with quantity and tend to forget about quality - not only in food, though.

2.2 Fish & Chips

I realize that there has been a lot written about this famous British dish and it may look like a well-worn topic, but through my personal experience, nothing else sounds more British than “fish and chips”. The Britons themselves regard this dish as their national one. This Britain’s culinary gift to the world is first recorded as being offered by a Jewish fishmonger in the East End of London in 1860. Fried fish was a traditional Jewish dish which came to England with the arrival of Jews at the time of Oliver Cromwell (Halliday, 2011, p. 63) According to Historic UK. com (2012) Sir Raleigh is thought to have brought potatoes to England from the New World in the 17th century, but chips probably originated in Belgium. In Historic UK.com (2012) they state that the first reference to them in England was found in 1839 in Charles Dickens novel, 'Oliver Twist' where he refers to a “fried fish warehouse” and Halliday (2011) claims that Dickens mentions them as late as 1859 in A Tale of Two Cities where he refers to “husky chips of potatoes, fried with some reluctant drops of oil”.

As they state in Historic UK.com (2012) , by 19th century fish and chips shops became common place and were often run from the “front room” of a private house. Thanks to the technical revolution in industry, lots of fish was brought from overseas and distributed around the country. Halliday (2011) points out that the dish became very popular, cheap and nourishing food and was one of the most popular dishes during the World War II as it was not subject to any kind of rationing. People were used to queuing for hours to get fresh fish. “On one occasion at Brian's Fish and Chip Shop in Leeds, when fish was scarce, homemade fish

cakes were sold - along with the confusing, and slightly worrying, warning: "Patrons: We do not recommend the use of vinegar with these fish cakes"!!" (quoted in Historic UK.com, 2012).

Everybody knows the traditional wrapping of the fish and chips in newspaper, but in 1970s it was suggested that the ink used on newspapers might be toxic and it raised some health alarms. Nevertheless, it remains extremely popular with over 8, 600 fish and chip shops in the UK. (Halliday, 2001, p.63). Some statistics according to Historic UK .com (2012): "In 1999, the British consumed nearly 300 million servings of fish and chips - that equates to six servings for every man, woman and child in the country. There are now around 8,500 fish and chip shops across the UK - that's eight for every one McDonald's outlet, making British Fish and Chips the nation's favourite take-away."

According to Fox (2004), chips have a special meaning for the English. She says that they are not normally inclined to be either patriotic or passionate about food but the SIRC study has shown how enthusiastic they are about an ordinary chip. They like its simplicity. She explains further that the chips are also an important social facilitator. When the English are eating chips, they can be often seen behaving in a very sociable, intimate, un-English manner: sharing chips out of the same bag, picking chips out of the same plate and even feeding chips to each other. Supposedly, this sociability is part of their attraction as the English are known for their reserve behaviour; they need such props that encourage.

3 QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

For the purpose of my thesis I have conducted a small survey. Because of the little number of people I asked, I do not consider this survey very academic and with a statistical value, it is here to enrich and supplement my project with somebody else's ideas. I have questioned five people about their eating habits and their foreign food experience. They all have something in common - they are either Czechs currently living in the UK or they are Britons having settled in the Czech Republic.

The main aim of this survey is to show and analyse the respondent's views and opinions on the changes they had to make having to move to a different country and possibly connect their ideas with the main idea of my project – You are what you eat.

The questionnaires consist of five questions for either the UK resident in the CZ or the Czech resident in the UK.

3.1 The UK residents

Both the respondents were males, **Tijan**, 49, has been permanently living in the CZ since 2008 and currently works as a secondary school teacher at a private grammar school. **John**, 67, has moved to the CZ in 2006, he is retired and occasionally teaches private lessons of English.

Q 1 Having been raised in the UK, how difficult or easy was it for you to get used to the Czech eating habits when you first moved to the Czech Republic?

Both respondents agree that it was not easy. **Tijan** was surprised to be served soup before most main meals and missed not having a desert after a main meal. He also was not accustomed to having a sweet alternative as a main course, e.g. sweet dumplings. **John** does not comment on particular dishes, but says that he is used to eating in restaurants slowly and likes enjoying the company of friends while Czechs tend to just eat and go.

Q 2 Have your eating habits, tastes and choices of food changed over the years in the Czech Republic? If yes, can you describe how and why?

Both respondents have changed their eating habits, **Tijan** does not eat nearly as much sweet food as he was used to, although he claims that it was not through any choice of his own as he

would still like a desert after his main meal and the Czech “zákusek” is not satisfying enough. John, on the other hand, praises the Czech dishes. Thanks to the availability of the ingredients he and his English wife eat and cook Czech specialties and have grown to like them.

Q 3 Do you ever miss any particular types of food or dishes back from the UK? If yes, which ones and how do you compensate for them?

Interestingly, both respondents do not mention missing a traditional British cuisine, but agree on missing the Indian curry dishes. Tijan also names the Chinese food and fish and chips. As he has a sweet tooth, he does actually mention lacking some typical British puddings like apple crumble, custard, “spotted dick” and mince pies and custard. He does not think that Czech pudding is an adequate compensation for them; therefore he tends to eat “babovka” with double cream and “piškoty” with vanilla Czech pudding. John tries to get the curry ingredients whenever he and his wife visit their home country and then they prepare it themselves.

Q4 Has any typical Czech dish become your favourite or even something sought-after? On the other hand, is there a Czech speciality that you try to stay away from or even detest?

As expected, both respondents state that they find the Czech favourite – “dršťková polévka” disgusting. As for the favourites, Tijan states that he has grown to like the typical Czech Sunday lunch “vepřo knedlo zelo” and a sweet dish – “sladke knedliky s meruňkou, polite maslem, cukrem a zakysanou smetanou”. However, he says he never developed a liking for the Czech spinach puree with boiled eggs and potatoes, a dill sauce or a dill soup (perhaps “kulajda”). John rates goulash and dumplings among his Czech favourites.

Q 5 If you were to compare, from your own experience, both of the cuisines and their connection to the national characters, which features would you pinpoint as the most striking?

Well, both the respondents do not go very deep in this question. Tijan writes about the difference in sugar content of the cuisines, stressing the fact that the English diet contains a lot more sugar and fat and slightly criticises the enormous amount of pre-packed frozen meals consumed by the English. John only states one difference, i.e. that the English eat more boiled and roast dinners and puddings, while Czechs love meat and cakes.

3.1.1 Conclusion

It is hardly possible to draw the only right conclusion on the basis of those replies. Although, both men came to the Czech Republic as adults set in their ways, there are evident differences in their background. Tijan has married into a Czech family which must have affected the change of his eating habits tremendously and John came to the CZ with his English wife to spend a nice retirement. Generally, I can say that both men have changed their eating habits to a certain point and they try to compensate for their British favourites whenever they have a chance – either while visiting their home country or by buying the ingredients here and cooking themselves. It is pleasant to read that both have grown to like some typical Czech dishes, which I believe is essential when trying to assimilate and reside in a foreign country.

3.2 The CZ residents

I have sent one copy of the questionnaire to my sister who has moved to the UK in 2004 and been living in London since. **Petra**, 33, has first worked as an au-pair and nanny in several British families and now for the past 5 years she has worked in an investment company as Public Relations manager. The second respondents are **Jan** and his wife **Zuzana** who have lived in the UK, Stansted, for over ten years now. They both work as ABA (Applied Behaviour Analysis) tutors and speech therapists in families with autistic children. They are in their 30's. The third respondent is **Radka**, a wife of Tijan, 35, who moved to the UK first in 1997, worked as an au-pair for 3 years, then worked as a hospital nurse for another 6 years and finally in 2008 moved back to the CZ with her husband and children. Currently, she is teaching English at Stramberk Primary school.

Petra, Jan and Zuzana have answered their questions quite thoroughly and have shown an interest in the topic.

Q 1 Having been raised in a typical Czech family, how difficult or easy was it for you to get used to the English eating habits when you first moved to the UK?

Zuzana and Jan have not found it difficult to change their eating habits and surprisingly very quickly have adapted to the different regime of eating in the UK. They say that with the move, they were mentally prepared to accept the transition as they believed that being able to adapt

to the settings and blend in was essential. Petra also states that one of the biggest changes she had to make was the timing of her meals during the day. She criticises the fact that many English families do not eat together around one table anymore but she admits she succumbed to this bad habit herself when she was sharing a flat with other people. Radka had to learn to like eating Indian cuisine which at first used to put her off with the bright colours, but with time she has grown to like the Indian and the Chinese food.

Q 2 Have your eating habits, tastes and choices of food changed over the years in the UK? If yes, can you describe how and why?

Petra's eating habits have dramatically changed over the years. She explains that it was thanks to the accessibility to the variety of food which comes to London from all over the world. She actually calls herself "a foodie" and has fallen in love with dining out in London, which is now the gastronomic capital of the world. She has grown to like the sea fish and seafood and praises the fact that she can get them fresh. Jan and Zuzana also agree that their eating habits have changed and surprisingly it is again the variety of fish that they have grown to love and appreciate. In fact, they mention that over the years they have had difficulties to get used to the Czech eating habits again when coming back home. Radka has learned to cook some traditional British dishes, such as pork chops with backed potatoes and boiled cabbage, carrots and parsnip, broccoli cheese soup, carrot soup with coriander and carrot cake. After some time she has also developed a taste for the famous vinegar crisps.

Q 3 Do you ever miss any particular Czech types of food or dishes? If yes, which ones and how do you compensate for them?

Petra admits that she generally does not miss the Czech food. She says it is mainly thanks to the advantage of living in London, where anything is accessible. As she has got increasingly into healthy style and fitness, she does not consider the typical Czech dishes very healthy. However, she really misses the seasonal fruit and vegetables and the dishes that go with it. She also recalls the nice times and company of the Czech "taborak" which is incomparable to the British BBQ. Jan and Zuzana do not miss the Czech food either, but for a different reason. They often travel back to the CZ and therefore have a regular opportunity to crave on something really Czech, either in restaurants or at their parents' place, plus they try to compensate by cooking the Czech meals at home. Radka only mentions missing the Czech salty crisps "brambůrky".

Q4 Has any typical English/British dish become your favourite or even something sought-after? On the other hand, is there an English/British speciality that you try to stay away from or even detest?

Petra says that she has really learned to love seafood. As for a typical British dish, it would have to be the Sunday roast with Yorkshire pudding, roast vegetable, mash or roast potatoes and gravy which would top her list of favourites. She appreciates the warmth that it brings into the stomach during foggy cold winter evenings. She has also taken to Marmite – a very English yeast spread and crunchy peanut butter on the toast. Porridge with honey also belongs to her favourites. Unlike Jan and Zuzka who do not mention any special dish but write about the English cup of tea with milk they have got to like. After spending some time on holiday outside the UK, a cup of English tea is something they are always looking for. Radka's experience from the UK is connected with nice full English breakfast – mushrooms, beans, tomatoes, bacon, toast, sausages – though she admits it was quite fatty. As for the dislikes, Petra would never eat the typical British fast food, namely the fried dishes and as she says the bitter orange marmalade would also make her “no go” list. Both Petra and Radka mention the Scottish Haggis, black and white pudding as something they detest and would not want to try again. Jan and Zuzana are probably more open-minded regarding the British food as they say there is nothing they would not want to try or stay away from.

Q5 If you were to compare, from your own experience, both of the cuisines and their connection to the national characters, which features would you pinpoint as the most striking?

Petra, Jan and Zuzana all stress the influence of regions as something that plays a significant role in the choice and the variety of food in the UK and has connection to the national characters. Compare to the CZ, the differences are not so evident. Petra writes about Londoners who are influenced by the mixture of cultures, she names areas typical for curry, Australian BBQs, Michelin star dining or gastro pubs and that they all originated because of the ethnic or social minority living there. She describes how the North and Scotland differ from the rest of the UK - their likeness for rich and filling meals, e.g. porridge but unpopularity of fruit and vegetables there. Jan and Zuzana see the difference between the cuisines in that the Czech food has been dependent on the national farming products while they indicate that the UK is open to foreign cultures and their influence on the variety of food. However, they have seen a change in the Britons attitude to the imports lately. There has been

a rising of nationalism to support local farms and now very little is imported when a particular food is in season in the UK. Radka compares the catering of students at British schools and children at Czech schools. She claims that the obesity problem in the UK is very much connected to the bad quality of school canteens offering only junk food. She mentions the phenomenon of Jamie Oliver whose image is slowly bringing a change to the system.

3.2.1 Conclusion

Again, to generalize is difficult. All of the Czech respondents have experienced a big change in one or the other. Some, e.g. Petra, have really taken to the style of eating that is practised and the choice of food that is offered in the UK. When comparing, we have to take their background and their social status in consideration. While Petra is still single and belongs to upper-middle class, her living standard and eating habits correspond and it seems she has really become a British or she wants to look like one. Jan and Zuzana work hard to have a good life in the UK and by coming regularly back to the CZ, they keep their eating habits more or less the same and therefore keep in touch with their national identity. I believe that Radka's experience is marked with the lapse of time. She now lives back to the CZ and only sees the striking differences in particular types of food but she may have assimilated a lot when she used to live in the UK which is probably unavoidable when one wants to be successful and "survive" in a foreign country.

4 CONCLUSION - „ARE WE WHAT WE EAT?“

Eating habits, food traditions and rituals play an important role in all our lives. Thanks to their stereotypic but specific character, some of these patterns can be so build into our days that we do not even realize how much they make us what we are. For instance, having a nice Sunday roast or Svíčková at particular time and in certain place can signal a lot – either the person's sense for national traditions and patriotism or their conservative way of life or just their current taste and mood for time-proven dish. Other patterns are such mundane parts of our everyday lives – table manners, mealtimes, that we do not realize how nationally typical they are until we encounter a foreign culture and see that things can be done differently and still they are justifiable and understandable.

Food, eating habits and related traditions go beyond the everyday and the personal. They transfer us back in time, through them we are conjoined with the older generations and their customs. We surely do not always know the reasons behind the popularity of certain dishes and yet we are able to enjoy them just because they have been handed down through our families or within a nation. As much as food can become a distinguishing element amongst the nations, it can play a vital part in connecting us together and help us appreciate the unique identity of people.

We Czechs generally have a very positive attitude to food and drink. Harmon (2011) claims that two thirds of Czechs describe their relationship to food as very open-minded and joyous. Half of the Czechs even care and monitors what they eat. Harmon (2011) refers to a study of Ipsos agency from 2010 which carried out a survey among one thousand of Czechs between ages 18 and 65. According to this, Czechs in restaurants expect relaxed atmosphere, individual customer service and adequately big portions of food. Our favourite places to eat out and appease our hunger are the standard restaurants and pubs. So popular they are that some Czechs come and enjoy their food and service once a week or more. Other frequently visited places are the fast food restaurants and kiosks, as so many of us just love our “párek v rohlíku s kečupem a hořčicí”.

But we Czechs are also lovers of home made cuisine and I can only refer to my own experience. We dwell on our traditions and culinary history and most of my parents' generation (sexagenarians) really knows how to cook and prepare a nice genuine Czech dish with all the heart and kindness. I think that we still somewhere down in heart regard food as a God's gift and treat it as such. For instance, despite the fact that our generation no longer

suffers from starvation or shortage of food, we generally do not like wasting food and like cooking from scraps using all the leftovers. We hate to leave anything on the plate and even praise our children for finishing theirs. According to the consumption of food, we like to judge our children – “What a good girl you are! You have eaten everything on your plate”. These are the words of praise I used to hear all through my childhood.

We Czechs also regard food as a compulsory part of every get-together. It may be partly our sense for hospitality, partly a fact that we like to show comfort and abundance of food is the marker. We love having guests and family over at our place for cooked lunches consisting of soup, filling main course and a home baked dessert to be served with coffee at the end. Being able to offer and serve second helpings makes us really happy and should our guest say no to more delicacies we get depressed and nervous about such visit.

In her book “Watching the English – the hidden rules of English behaviour” Fox (2004) nicely describes some characteristic features of the British with the connection of food rules. Firstly, she quotes a travel writer Paul Richardson's statement, i.e. “the Briton's relationship with the food they eat is more or less a loveless marriage”. She likens the English relationship with food and cooking more to a sort of “uneasy, uncommitted cohabitation”. She explains further that the English do not have the deep-seated, enduring, inborn love of food and that food is just not given the same priority that is to be found elsewhere in Europe. Why is that? In Fox's opinion (2004), such intense interest in food is regarded by the majority as rather odd and even somehow morally suspect – not quite proper, not quite right. Foodie tendencies in a man can be seen as effeminate, they are more acceptable among females, although in some circles foodiness can be regarded as pretentious. Thanks to the prevalent British reserve, no Briton wishes to be seen as too deeply fascinated by or passionate about food. According to Fox (2004), most of the Britons are proud to claim that they “eat to live, rather than living to eat” and that they regard good food as a privilege, not a right.

Fox (2004) also points out how “the English food comes with an invisible class label”. Socially, the British are what they eat – it matters when, where and in what manner they eat a certain item, and what they call it, and how they talk about it. She gives a perfect example with the popularity of bacon sandwiches amongst English people of all classes. For instance, the northern working class call them lovingly “bacon butties” while some more snobbish members of the lower-middle classes pretend to have more refined tastes, and some health-conscious upper-middles just criticize the high fat, salt and cholesterol content while eating them. Another example is the traditional English breakfast – tea, toast, marmalade, eggs, bacon, sausages, tomatoes, mushrooms, etc. This is the only aspect of English cooking that is

frequently praised by foreigners, says Fox (2004). Only a few of the British eat this “full English breakfast” regularly – the tradition is maintained more at the top and bottom of the social scale than among the middle ranks. Fox (2004) explains how the upper class and aristocracy still have proper English breakfast in their country houses and some working-class males still believe in starting the day with a “cooked breakfast” of bacon, eggs, sausages, baked beans and so on, but the rest of the society prefers more or less continental type of morning meal, which I have experienced myself during my regular visits to the UK.

I could very well continue with analysing the British relationship with food and its impact on their behaviour through many more aspects, but in the end it would only be either my own feeling based on outside observations or a native's surmise or hypothesis which could be more or less subjective and biased.

To discover whether we, Czechs or British, really are what we eat is a task for those who not only read expert's opinions but also experience the cultures face-to-face.

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ANNOTATION

Jméno a příjmení:	Mgr. Andrea Krákorová
Katedra:	Katedra anglického jazyka
Vedoucí práce:	MgA. Simon Gill, M.A
Rok obhajoby:	2013

Název práce:	„Jste to, co jíte“. Jak česká a britská kuchyně odráží pravdivost tohoto výroku?
Název v angličtině:	„You are what you eat“ In what ways do the cuisines of the Czech Republic and the UK reflex the truth of this statement?
Anotace práce:	Bakalářská práce se zabývá interpretací národních kuchyní České republiky a Velké Británie v souvislosti s národními zvyklostmi v chování a národním charakterem. Velká část práce je věnována pohledu do historie kuchyní a stravovacích návyků s vyzdvihnutím některých faktů, které se mohou vztahovat k tématu. Další část pojednává o vybraných typických pokrmech daných zemí, řeší jejich historickou podmíněnost a důvody obliby u příslušníků daného národa. Na vybraných pokrmech se práce snaží demonstrovat jejich typické rysy v chování a jednání. V poslední části práce jsou uvedeny výstupy z dotazníkového průzkumu, který se zabývá změnou stravovacích návyků u Čechů a Britů žijících v opačných zemích. V závěru je provedeno shrnutí myšlenek a analýza vzorců chování jednotlivých národů ve vztahu k jídlu a stravování.
Klíčová slova:	Jídlo, stravovací návyky, národní charakter, česká kuchyně, britská kuchyně, pokrm, historie stravování, typické jídlo
Anotace v angličtině:	The final project deals with the interpretation of national cuisines of the Czech Republic and the UK in connection with their national ways of behaving and national character. A major part of the project is devoted to the historical insight into the cuisines and eating habits which are relevant to the topic. The following part deals with two selected national dishes and examines their historical background and reasons of their popularity. With the typical dishes, the project aims to demonstrate some typical features of the Czechs and the British. The last part presents the results of a questionnaire survey which deals with a change of eating habits of people living in the opposite countries. The conclusion sums up some ideas and analyses the behavioural patterns of both nations with regard to food and eating habits.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Food, eating habits, national character, Czech cuisine, British cuisine, dish, meal, history of eating habits, typical food
Přílohy vázané v práci:	-
Rozsah práce:	48 s.
Jazyk práce:	angličtina