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A FOOD TOUR

For the 6th *Tourism, Nutrition, Human, and Food* National Conference at Czestochowa, Poland

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Abstract:

Based on researches of the authors, the work reviews persons that have overcome life inertia and prompted the humankind to move to the next level of civilization. Taking gastronomy as a sample, we show the necessity to dramatically change the social and economic landscapes of everyday life.

Keywords:

Role of certain individuals in overcoming life inertia; functional integrity of humans and the environment: current trends of consumer demand; trends of the international food market; gastronomy and stimulation of zest for life.

Flowers for great cooks – delicate white rose dedicated to Madame Dominique Loiseau

During a very enlightening yet restless stream of visits to farms, guest houses, hotels, touring offices, food processing shops, and other interesting facilities and their owners, we in

passing accepted the invitation from the mayor of a town located at the road from Paris through the heart of France – Burgundy – to magnificent Alpine forests of Franche-Comté. We expected to see around a hotel of 30+ rooms. Well, nothing to compare with Hilton, Sheraton, or Kempinski...

We lingered at the previous facility and were in a hurry and too busy exchanging our experiences, thus overlooking the moment of arriving to the entrance of a small two-storey hotel. Failing to look at the hotel name, we hurried to the lobby and there met the manager whose entire appearance, speaking, and gestures showed a circumstantial, sound, and respectable manner. The manager said, very firmly and tactfully, that the hotel is committed to render the best care to each of the guests, while ensuring their peace and enjoyment.

As the manager said, the hotel servicing and customer accommodation were arranged to ensure their parallel functioning, with guests practically not meeting each other. Each room was decorated in a separate style, the materials included elements of ancient French castles, with up-to-date high-tech appliances added. In fact, the billiard room in the style of Charles X looked a living picture of the French history. Two basins – an open heated one and the roofed one, with health center, sauna and massage room – embodied the idea of home comfort. The panoramic-view elevator and the cozy park customized for varying needs of guests added to the atmosphere. We somehow overheard the manager's address to amateurs and enthusiasts of fine meals and beverages, because you never meet a Frenchman that would fail to consider themselves a connoisseur of the best cuisine!

The recent days' bustle rendered us a disservice – we continued to be under its influence, slightly feeling a certain discomfort from the inadequacy of the present. On the one hand, we saw a town and a small hotel. On the other side, we saw the strikingly ingenious arrangement of the hotel and heard almost sacral words on the essence of gastronomy and cooking.

After the tour around the hotel, the hostess and chef met us in the cozy hall. The hostess was awesome – beautiful, purposeful, and resolute. She managed to combine the incompatible – Queen Marie-Antoinette, Jeanne D'Arc, and the girl pictured by Eugène Delacroix – Liberty Leading the People. She attracted admiration and compliments. My touring experiences suggested the topic – outstanding French restaurateurs as represented by Louis de Funès in the *Le Grand Restaurant* movie. In the movie, the restaurant was located in the center of Paris, at Champs-Élysées. However, I felt my communication failed and, silently cursing my bad French, tried to retrieve situation by passing to gastronomic preferences of other French actors - Gérard Depardieu, Philippe Noiret, and Jean-Paul Belmondo. The result was equally lukewarm. In despair, I mentioned the *Ratatouille* comedy. It was surprising to see the chef's face warmed and

the Madam smiled amiably. “You know, the movie plot was taken from my husband’s life story”, she said.

My legs got wobbly, the back felt cold, and the arm holding the champagne glass trembled. The only thought run around through my mind - the *Ratatouille* plot is based on the life of Bernard Loiseau! He was a most ingenious cook of France and got ultimate success, with his tragic death arising the national mourning.

Finally, we realized the situation. We were granted with the utmost honor – to talk to Madam Dominique, the wife of the great and legendary cook of France - Bernard Loiseau. Madam Dominique really could disregard Paris with its Champs-Élysées, since most valued gastronomic locations of France concentrate in Burgundy and, perhaps, in Lyon. It is the small Burgundy town of Soliers to which food tourists, including showfolks, rush from everywhere, and it is the town where most skilled cooks learn their mastery. Nowhere, except for the Cote d'Or restaurant, you could eat so tasty the poulard and truffles steamed, or rice slowly stewed in milk, or scores of other unique dishes of high-delicatessen.

The world-famous breeder of fruit trees and roses – or Master of Roses, as journalists call him - Georges Delbard introduced a new collection dedicated to stars of European high-delicatessen in 2001, after the collection in memory of impressionists. A most elegant gift from the Master of Roses was the new breed of delicate white roses named after Dominique Loiseau. It was Delbard’s way to esteem the will and talents of the gracious and amiable woman which preserved the knowledge-base and potentials of the great chef and maintained the highest class of his Cote d'Or restaurant.

Individuals that Lead Others by The Hand

Thankfully, there always have been people capable of overcoming the life inertia and inspire humankind to move to the next level of civilization. Due to their efforts, we now may conscientiously choose the ways of our lives and overcome the money-making forces.

These free and smart innovators drastically improve the everyday social and economic landscape. This great pioneering cohort unites various individuals that share the simple idea: “People often do not understand what they want, until you show them.” [7.]

Igor Sykorsky, the Father of Helicopters; Nikolay Vavilov, the theorist of the geographic origin of cultivated plants; Vladimir Vernadsky, the leader of the Russian Cosmism philosophy; Steve Jobs, who created the model of the Universe packed into an iPad or iPhone; Bernard Loiseau, the leader of the delicatessen revolution, and many more. Currently, the list of such creative individuals continues to expand. These individuals maintain their vigor by taking the management of and responsibility for things around them and establish a new type of life arrangement. This type ensures that everyone can realize their best personal initiatives, access

up-to-date knowledge, and satisfy various material and spiritual needs. These individuals have the following credo: “To be the wealthiest person in the cemetery is not important for me. To go to bed with the thought that I have created something beautiful today – that is most important for me.” [7.]

Helicopters created by Igor Sykorsky, a US citizen of the Russian origin, were the first to cross the Atlantic (1967) and Pacific (1970).

While in the USA, Sykorsky led the Tolstoy and Pushkin clubs and was engaged in philosophy and theology. His essay *Pater Noster* expresses Sykosky’s views on the Lord’s Prayer, which are strikingly deep, in addition to being written by an outstanding aviation engineer, scientist, and inventor.

Nikolay Vavilov arranged a lot of expeditions that covered varying continents of the globe, thus discovering origination places of cultivated plants and moreover, established the theory on the world centers of plant origination, discovered the homologous series law in genetic variation, and greatly contributed to the theory of biological types.

Vavilov’s views establish a standard for human treatment of nature. Artificial genetic selection by Vavilov is, in fact, the human active potential.

Vladimir Vernadsky established the theory on anthroposphere (noosphere) which states humans are not autonomic beings living separately, they are an integrate part of the nature. This integrity was mainly caused by functional inter-relations between the environment and humankind. In general, views of Vavilov and Vernadsky establish the code of human behavior in the biosphere [4.]

Current researchers confirm that each and every living organism strives for survival. The limitless and destroying inanimate world continues to struggle for existence. For this, you need free energy. Each living organism strives to receive and retain the maximum amount of energy, in order to spend it in the right time and place to maintain living. The vector of living organism’s activities (life instinct) is streamlined for activities that sustain lives of the organism and the offspring.

Scientists believe impossible to find a difference between the biological and social evolution in terms of energy, since social systems are mainly biological ones. Therefore, social systems are subdued to the only law – survival. It is survival through energy accumulation. Biological systems contain energy in the form of food, while social systems have it as money circulating. The biosphere has the exclusive type of living organisms – Homo Sapiens – that do maintain reasoning power. Thanks to this, humans may choose their life ways, staying within the law frame of inanimate nature. Thus individuals may somewhat edge out the moneymaking law that is characteristic for the biosphere.

The above words could be confirmed by the life of the US engineer, entrepreneur, and founder of Apple Inc. - Steven Paul Jobs - born in San Francisco on 24 February 1955.

Biographers note that Steve Jobs uniquely combined highest standards of work and minimum requirements in personal life, the ability to oversee the customers' dreams and the absence of strive to personal gain. His house in the Silicon Valley was pretty modest. He lived near the ocean, yet did not have a personal yacht, like Abramovich did. Being the Beatles fan, Steve did not rush to buy their things at auctions, unlike Vekselberg buying Faberge collections. Continually being in the office, he established his salary as \$1, on contrast to intolerable payrolls of top managers of Russian government corporations, not counting their golden parachutes.

Steve Jobs combined technologies and beauty and proved himself as a life philosophe by saying, "I would trade all of my technology for an afternoon with Socrates." It was Jobs who managed to rise over the moneymaking law and lead the humankind by the hand to the next level of civilization [7.]

One more example is life and career of Bernard Loiseau, born to a poor and large family on 13 January 1951. To become a cook was the dearest dream of the boy who strived to stay in the kitchen, unlike his peers. In 1972 Bernard joined a Roanne restaurant. For many years, he devoted all his time to culinary.

"My goal was to become a great chef, like football players dream of becoming Ronaldo or Pele," said Bernard Loiseau. He strived to cook like no other, never allowed himself a bad flavor of the dish, and continued to be a patriot of the French cuisine. Bernard's taste and ingenuity, together with his drive for creativity and innovation, made his meals just fantastic. [5, 6.]

Bernard Loiseau become extremely famous in 1982, being entrusted with managing the Cote d'Or restaurant and hotel, an oldest yet unprofitable facility. He re-gained success for the restaurant with the delicatessen Burgundy cooking. His restaurant achieved the utmost 20th number in the Gault et Millau Guide that lists 20 best restaurants of the country. Soon, the restaurant was awarded 3 stars by the Michelin catalogue.

Having bought the hotel and restaurant, Bernard Loiseau introduced innovative approaches to the business. He created the brand, arranged trading of cooking secrets and technology innovations, established the network of food shops, souvenir shops and restaurants, and launched the boutique that promoted zest for life with no exceptions. Also, Bernard wrote cooking books that were sold in millions of copies in Europe, USA, and Japan. He began to produce ready meals in vacuum packs and was the first among the French restaurateurs to go to the exchange.

Open for media, loved by the public, awarded by the Legion of Honor, he became a style icon in the gastronomy and culinary world. Yet what was behind this magnificent icon?

The Cote d'Or restaurant was the only extra-class restaurant in France that worked all 365 days a year. Therefore, the chef never had any days out. Bernard Loiseau never slept longer than 5 hours a day and had never been on holidays for about 20 years. The maestro said, "People want joy. If my customers have any troubles, I ought to improve their mood." So people went to him like to a close friend. Being afraid of losing the reputation, this perfect chef said, "If I lose a single star, I will commit suicide." He found easier to leave this world than to accept a potential blow to his restaurant due to someone's biased assessment. To great regret, he was too consistent with his words. The life of the Gorgeous Cook, as he was called by the press, was interrupted. [5, 6]

However, his vast heritage of cooking traditions and secrets, ingenious discoveries of tastes, and daring and innovative creations have been preserved. Moreover, 21 century introduced gastronomy as a study. Now France, Italy, and Spain contest for the origin of a gastronomic university. We do not believe this to be so important, since all these universities were launched just at the beginning of this century. What is much more important is the goal – to maintain and extend traditions of high delicatessen which are renowned as the national achievement. Such universities are regarded as the Culinary Harvard, with the following studies in the curriculum: wine geography, history of gastronomy, hygiene and establishing of tastes, bread, coffee, types of fish, culinary techniques, and gastronomy and tourism. A certain time is devoted to student tours around the world, from California to Morocco, and from Mexico to Australia. Specialty trainings include Cheese or Vegetables. Students have best labs to manage the complicated art of making a taste. After 3 years of study, students become Bachelors in Gastronomy, while after 5 years, they receive Master degrees.

From the Minimum Consumer Goods Basket to Gastronomy Delicacies

As said Count Cagliostro in the perfect movie by Mikhail Zakharov named *Love Formula*, "If you eat less, you will live long, since it is our knife and fork to dig a grave for us." Pretty arguable, since other famous hero of Mikhail Bulgakov, Professor Preobrazhensky was certain, "Food, Ivan Arnoldovich, is a subtle thing. One must know how to eat, yet just think — most people don't know how to eat at all. One must not only know what to eat, but when and how. (Philip Philipovich waved his fork meaningfully.)" The equally perfect is the table description given by Bulgakov: "On gorgeous flowered plates with black rims lay thin slices of salmon and soused eel; a slab of over-ripe cheese on a heavy wooden platter, and in a silver bowl packed around with snow – caviare. Beside the plates stood delicate glasses and three crystal decanters of different-colored vodkas." [4.]

Let us not continue, yet the mere description of Professor Preobrazhensky's dining could make one think that Bulgakov was a genius to foresee the current (2009-2013) trends of the consumer demand in the world food market – fresh food, healthy food, and convenient eating. Now healthy food and drinks are the fastest to grow in the world market.

Thus, consumption of dairy products grew by more than 2 times in the last 10 years, with their marketing becoming more sensitive to regional preferences and other geography factors. Special attributes of certain products are promoted as well. Milk becomes a product customized for tastes and preferences. Innovative producers earn their incomes through better consumer awareness of the positive effect of dairy special components. [3]

Currently, innovative approaches in the agriculture of developed countries allow producing prime type of products in the amounts far exceeding domestic needs and therefore, exporting large batches of agricultural raw materials and food. Productivity of dairy cattle has reached high amounts, with the growing trend continuing. Meanwhile, Russia turned to the innovative development of its agriculture later than other countries and therefore continues lagging behind.

Among food of the consumer basket, products of the animal industry total around 50 percent, with milk and dairy products taking 17 percent. The Russian people's need in milk is satisfied by 86 % only, with the hard cheese imports growing up to 40 % and sweet butter, up to 50 %. [8, 9.]

In 2013 the Kaluga region showed the number of cows as 57,400 (99.1 % of the 2012 level). The annual average milk yield reached up to 4,774 kg per cow. Currently, the Kaluga region produces almost 5 % of agricultural production of the Central Federal District, thus losing to many other neighboring regions. The Kaluga region has too low productions of the animal industry. Meanwhile, the world meat market further develops due to technology improvements which led to three-times growth in the recent 30 years, with the customer preferences getting more varied. At the same time, the Russian population does not consume enough meat – with the biological standard of 75 kg of meat per person annually, Russia has at most 65 kg per person, as assessed by the Russian Meat Union. In addition, the Russian meat balance has a deficit – we consume 7.5 to 8 Mn. tons a year, while producing only 5 to 5.5 Mn. tons. The deficit is covered by imports. For instance, the Kaluga region meat-processing factories use 70 % to 72 % of imported meat. [2, 10]

Agricultural companies with the specialty of meat-cattle production experience worst difficulties. In the Kaluga region (as in the entire Russia), the ratio of milk cattle to meat cattle was 2 to 98. The underdeveloped meat-cattle industry and the deficit of beef meat in the country make a room to boost beef meat production, since the demand is ripe. [1, 10]

Numbers are unbending, useful, yet a bit boring. How does this look in real life?

The framework of the French-Russian cooperation (Dijon - Kaluga) intended to launch a French meat shop, with the prime specialty as high-standard fresh chilled meat. Meat shops concentrate all activities relating to use of meat after slaughtering of animals. A butcher, which often owns the shop, is a meat professional that knows everything from slaughtering to sales to end customers. Butcher is responsible for choosing high-quality carcasses; butchering; separating meat from bones, and dissecting muscles. Normally such shops do not sell much (in average, 3 to 4 carcasses per month) and have a fixed range of products. Butchered carcasses are placed into boxes to be sold to customers via phone or Internet. All beef admirers receive as follows: 2.5 kg of grill meat – entrecote (from the back), steak, or roastbeef; 1.5 kg of minced meat (10 meatballs of 150 gr each); and 1 kg of soup meat.

Our cooperation allowed arranging butcher trainings with a good room for personal initiatives, creativity, and innovations. The training had two stages – at the first, a French professional gave master-classes at the Kaluga Meat Factory during four weeks (two fortnights) and at the second, students had two months' apprenticeship in France. Upon completion, two most capable apprentices went to the special training in France to become Butcher Instructors.

After the apprenticeship, all trainees found themselves in high demand among restaurateurs and mainly went to work in Moscow.

The French butcher arrived to the Kaluga meat factory with his own tools and was met by the colleagues with the famous Russian hospitality. Though Russian butchers did not have so good-looking tools, they managed their work with equal mastership. However, it was the only thing in common. The French butcher was amazed to see Russians slaughtering calves and supposed this to be a tradition of the Russian cuisine. He never understood the explanation that the average weight of cattle-stock to be slaughtered in Russia is 350 kg. For him, Russians had to find a proper-sized carcass in the breeding farm. The Frenchman was happy to demonstrate dissection of the most complicated anatomic parts of the carcass – how to separate muscles, fat, and connective tissue from the bones, as well as other tricks. It was his turn to be not understood when he began to tell about avoiding distress for animals during feeding and slaughtering, since this worsens meat quality. As the Frenchman restlessly asked about the feeding ration and quality of water consumed by animals, and told of benefits of meat chilling rather than freezing, and advantages of meat matured at a certain temperature, it was a shock for Russians. The same went about the ban on eating over-frozen meat. The French butcher reasoned why Frenchmen are real machos. He believed their high sexual potentials to be closely tied with cooking of good steaks. "Slightly roast a steak from one side. Turn and not overdo – the meat ought to be alive!

Place the steak onto a plate, powder with species, and put a slab of sweet butter on top. Remember, you need to put the real sweet butter rather than the ersatz of palm oil.”

While listening to the French butcher, I recollected the ideas of Vavilov and Vernadsky on the integrity of the environment and human beings. An ordinary Frenchman was no scientist or MSc in Gastronomy, yet he represented his nation with dignity and valued tasty life with no exceptions, thus demonstrating good and down-to-earth application of the philosophic idea “We are what we eat.”

However, these picturesque and almost pastoral cases of the Kaluga Meat Factory are in the past. Now the company declared its bankruptcy. The Chair of Board is wanted and suspected in stealing RUB 760Mn. The company assets were transferred to the subsidiaries and affiliates registered at the Cyprus. The workers did not receive any wages from January to August 2012, until the competent authorities protested. The payroll debt totaled RUB 36+ Mn. The barrister representing the factory CEO was arrested by the police for attempting to give a bribe of RUB 250,000 to the investigator and the criminal case was initiated. [10]

Let us ask a rhetorical question. Even on the basis of this brief article, could you imagine Steve Jobs or Bernard Loiseau sending money to offshore accounts, or Steve Jobs stuffing his iPads and iPhones with cocaine to maintain the traffic under the Apple brand, or Bernard Loiseau launching a brothel of 1,000 working places at the Cote d'Or hotel? Such activities do not require too much costs, rationality, or spirits, while generating ultimate profits.

I am sorry for this rhetorical question and esteem very highly the individuals mentioned above, yet I believe the question to be an enlightening one. The answer was found long ago by Igor Sykorsky who was certain that high morale requires healthy life, since your body is a tool to express your spirit in the world. Longevity has the prime goal – to cognize yourself, your higher spiritual nature, and express your individuality for the advantage of the world, showing mature creativity.

Ah, these demographic factors and health!

Whether you like this or not, individual's longevity depends on both biology influenced by hereditary specifics and the social environment, including nutrition, leisure, work, and life ways. Currently, the German consumer basket includes 475 products and services, the US one, 300, while the Russian one, only 156. The average longevity in Russia totals 65.94 years, with male longevity of 59.19 and female one, 73.1. Meanwhile, the average longevity in the EU totals 78.51 years, with male longevity of 75.39 and female one, 81.82. In particular, France shows average longevity of 80.87 years, males 77.39, and females 84.23. [1, 8.]

In the recent 2013, food prices in Russia grew by 2.7 per cent, which makes them 3.9 times higher than those in Europe. Mainly, prices grew for dairy products, cheese, and eggs - by

6.5 per cent (EU countries show the growth of 1 per cent), bread and cereals, by 5.5 per cent, oils, sugar, chocolate and candies, by 5.2 and 5.1 per cent, respectively (the EU average, by 2.3 and 0.3 per cent). If we apply the European calculation method, the number of poor people in Russia would exceed 40 per cent. [8, 9]

Meanwhile, Russia is the world's leader in terms of unequal distribution of incomes, as assessed by Credit Suisse Research Institute. Up to 35 % of the country's wealth is concentrated in the hands of 110 magnates. A similar inequality could be seen in some countries of the Caribbean basin. [8]

We hardly could reach the objectives listed in the 2020 Strategy – to enter the Top5 of most developed countries in terms of the social and economic indicators. The 2020 Strategy expected the year of 2013 to be a breakthrough to the innovative development. However, all we can see now is the indicators inherent to recession and stagnation, coupled with the incessant export of capitals which was assessed as US \$ 50+ Bn. in 2012 and US \$ 60+ Bn. in 2013. [11]

Yet achieving the 2020 Strategy objectives is the only practical way for the country development. In Russia, the variety of life conditions and enormous gap between incomes of the higher and lower social layers pose an urgent challenge of creating a social and economic model which could use creative potentials of each inhabitant of the country. Modernization customized for the majority of the population and thus ensuring mobilization of all human resources – it is the leverage to drastically change the situation. Otherwise, we may stay in the bifurcation point for another 25 years until roll down to a wayside of the world civilization. However, we can and just ought to pass this difficult path from the scarce consumer basket to high delicatessen.

These are the thoughts inspired by this food tour.

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