

# **“Eat ye, O people”: The role of food and hospitality in Baha’i intercultural relations**

**Marie Gervais, PhD  
August 8, 2009 DRAFT**

## **ABSTRACT**

John Walbridge (1996) states that Islamic societies place great emphasis on hospitality, and ‘Abdu’l-Baha emphasized hospitality as a means to reduce the distrust between nations. Internationally, Baha’i food and hospitality stand out as exemplary in the minds of many who encounter it for the first time. This paper explores how intercultural bonds are initiated, sustained and deepened through the intertwined roles of food preparation, food offering, food sharing and hospitality in the context of religion. It also examines academic literature on fear of new food, tensions between cultures, dominant and minority relationships, and hospitality as a consumer expectation. Finally it considers the sociocultural context of the Baha’i Faith and how Baha’is are responding to injunctions of the Baha’i Writings to reframe patterns of intercultural relationships- to the point of offering sincere, loving hospitality in unexpected and difficult circumstances. Baha’i Writings, current research surrounding the role of food in intercultural relations, and the author’s own experience with food and relationship building in various cultures, are combined to demonstrate the significance of that most social of human events: eating together.

## **PAPER**

### **Section One: What’s for dinner?**

#### ***Introduction***

Multiculturalism has been criticized for what has commonly been called the 3D trivializations of diet, dance, and dress, considered to externalize culture to the “other” while upholding the dominant culture’s perception of reality (Gabriel, 2005; Bissoondath, 1994). It is important not to gloss over the obvious problems of trivializing culture through superficial and dismissive methods. At the same time, from my own complex experiences with accepting, offering, eating and cooking food in different cultural contexts, I contend that we have simply not explored the potential of food and hospitality in intercultural relationships. Food, eating, food behaviors, food social norms, and the act of hospitality, inherent in the offering and accepting of food are intimately connected to cultural identity and deeper cultural concepts (Scholliers, 2001; Lentz, 1999; Kanafani-Zahar, 1997; Fischler, 1988). Understanding the multiple roles of food in a variety of cultures and experiencing food from both cultural and religious perspectives (Fieldhouse, 2005; Walbridge, 1996) can provide inroads into building shared cultural

experience. In order for food exchanges to serve as cultural ‘barrier busters’, I submit that they should be simultaneously connected on physical, spiritual and social planes.

Towards an illustration of this concept, the present paper combines sacred writings and key teachings of the Baha’i Faith, references to examples from other world religions and thematically clustered multidisciplinary examples from the academic literature to explore intercultural relationship building through food. The problem with this approach of course, is that religious writings consist of admonitions, advice, teaching metaphors and mystical allusions whereas academic literature is largely empirical and/or theoretical. Sacred Writings are considered to be inspired by a Higher Source, backed by the power of Divine authority whereas academic writings are generally secular and come under the umbrella of the powers of science, reason and research. Using the two types of writing as supports to my position can be considered counterproductive, or like comparing proverbial apples and oranges. The way I have addressed this problem is to offer each type of reference in its own right without trying to compare or show similarity of intent between the two. In this way I attempt to bring both apples and oranges to the table of intercultural relations. Additionally the topics of food, hospitality and intercultural relations tend to lend themselves to this kind of multiple realities approach as Lynn Harbottle (2004) in her study of Iranian settlers in Britain also states:

An understanding of the significance of food in peoples’ lived experience cannot then be adequately achieved by a rigid discipline-bound focus, such as that of nutritionists or of some social scientists. Rather this text argues for and illustrates a more holistic and critical approach to the study of food and eating, an approach which encompasses political, economic, and socicultural analyses...(p. 15).

I would add to the Harbottle “more holistic” list topics of hospitality, religion, spirituality and intercultural communication to truly understand the interesting position of food in people’s lives.

This paper unfolds with an exploration of personal intercultural experiences and food, then moves to ideas of religion and food, and those Baha’i teachings related to both intercultural understanding and food. Key themes emerging from a multidisciplinary literature review of the relationship between food, hospitality and intercultural relationship building will be highlighted, with a foray into the spaces of private and public hospitality. Finally a brief consideration of the Baha’i context of food, intercultural interactions and hospitality will be offered as a threshold of possibility for more mutually satisfying intercultural relations.

To begin, a narrative of one of my intercultural food experiences:

### ***Intercultural food experience #1: cassava root fofou in Edmonton***

*She watched me intently as she explained how to properly eat fofou. "Pick it up in your fingers like this," she showed me, taking food from a common platter in the middle of the table. "Then you roll it in your fingers, not your whole hand- that isn't polite- and use it to scoop up the soup." I looked for what I understood soup to be and saw a thick sauce, dark green in color with an unfamiliar smell. The family stood and watched me as I tried to use the fofou as a scoop and got the sauce all over my hand and the tablecloth. They laughed and said I would learn it over time. I felt intensely uncomfortable with all this scrutiny and with my clumsiness in trying to eat the way I was instructed. Additionally I didn't understand why no one else was eating with me and I was ashamed that in the back of my mind I was a bit worried about hygiene – how many people had already dipped their fingers into this platter and how many germs were floating around in it? Mentally I kicked myself for not just taking in the experience without being judgmental and I resolved to figure this out. "You have to swallow it whole," my hostess explained next. "We never chew fofou." I tried to swallow it whole and proceeded to gag and choke. I was a failure! Finally I said to my hostess, "I think I have a lot to learn about how to eat fofou properly. And I have never swallowed anything without chewing it so I don't know how to do it right. Could you eat together with me?" So she did. But the rest of the family members left the room instead of joining us, which felt strange to me.*

*Over the next few weeks I found out a few things that helped me better understand my fofou experience. The guest eats first and other family members eat later according to age, gender and status with the older males going first and the youngest female children last. Fofou is swallowed whole because it takes 12 hours to digest – where food is scarce it is important to find ways to stave off hunger as long as possible and swallowing without chewing extends food's capacity to do that. Hands are washed before and after eating, frequently each person's dish is washed immediately after use to make sure there are enough plates or bowls for people coming to eat later. People don't just plunge their hands into the fofou, they deftly pinch off pieces, using it to scoop up other foods. Eating is supposed to be felt with the body and its enjoyment is intimately connected to bringing food from hand to mouth. The green soup, which I actually quite liked, was a mixture of cassava leaves and potato leaves, hence the green color. It was combined with various meats and fish in small chunks and spiced with hot peppers. I understood that my acceptance into the family and the culture would be much more intimate if I mastered the food behaviors and showed appropriate appreciation for both the food and cultural norms surrounding eating traditional foods.*

### Culture and food

Although the experience of one's own culture is largely unconscious and unexamined, to experience the culture of another is a place of heightened feeling and awareness that brings our own hidden cultural experience from the tacit to the explicit. I became acutely aware of my own cultural limitations as I attempted to eat fofou. It occurred to me that eating with one's fingers is an art akin to learning to eat with chopsticks. Unfamiliarity with the food, the terms of reference and the social norms surrounding the food caused me to think about what my own food cultural behaviors are. In the intercultural experience, we actively seek to reduce uncertainty, discomfort and unfamiliarity to establish a beginning relationship between cultures; we search for common human experiences upon which to build links across difference.

Culture demands to be felt and experienced just as music demands to be heard. Culture is embodied, meaning it is felt in the body; in the way we move, how and what we eat, the cadence of our speech, the length of silence between statements, the way we touch or avoid touching each other, our relationship with clothing and objects around us. It is felt in what are considered appropriate and inappropriate behaviors easily recognized by culturally and psychologically sound members of any given culture.

Moving outside of the familiarity of one's own culture can be exciting and filled with the promise of new opportunities. But it is also uncomfortable, frustrating and disorienting. Frequently in intercultural encounters that begin positively, people are enthusiastic about meeting and greeting each other and they overlook differences they do not understand or know how to negotiate. But keep that diverse group of people together over a period of days, weeks or months and they will begin to self-segregate into groups of similar traits. Differences will become increasingly difficult to negotiate and misunderstandings will become more pronounced. As communications between people become more comprehensive, opportunities for confusion also multiply. As many diverse workplaces have found out, simply bringing people together across difference does not mean they will get along.

### ***Intercultural Food experience #2: rice in Japan***

*I experienced a group self-segregating and food-limiting process first hand in an intense, multicultural immersion context during a three-month stay at the United Nations University in Tokyo, Japan. We were studying international development together in a country we did not know and there were 58 of us from 50 different countries. I was disheartened to see our initial openness reduce to regional, national and racial affiliations as our stay together unfolded. Yet interestingly, following this experience several years later, the group is still in virtual contact via*

*the internet and when anyone travels they connect with one of the people from our cohort as opportunities provide themselves. Several have even worked with each other or formed more intimate friendships after subsequent encounters in various places around the planet. We did connect after all through our initial common experience, but the hunger for familiarity at the time, especially for those who had never left their country previously, must have been overwhelming. I noticed that for some, there was initial judgmentalism towards the Japanese host culture, which was alleviated after our home-stay visits with individual families. Others had suspicions about each other based on historical conflicts, long standing anger about gender issues, or things they had been brought up to believe. There were confrontations that at times seemed insurmountable yet in spite of the setbacks we were all deeply appreciative of the opportunity to get to know and learn from each other in this unique context.*

*I prided myself in being the only participant to consistently eat with chopsticks and willingly try all Japanese foods. I was not very tolerant of the other participants' suspicion of Japanese food or their apparently ethnocentric food attitudes until I had the most unsettling experience of developing an intense aversion to rice after three weeks of eating it at every meal. It was as if my body simply went on strike and I couldn't bear the sight or smell of rice. At that time I understood for the first time why expatriates go looking for food markets from their own countries. My mind was open, but my body was in food shock. I had to find a more gradual way to ease my body into eating like the Japanese and so I went looking for an "American" grocery to find something familiar. It was several months after returning to Canada that I was able to eat and enjoy rice again.*

In both the fufou and the rice stories, I was more than willing to experience food in an embodied culturally appropriate manner. But as must be obvious by now, food is not so easily positioned or understood and its complexities bedevil the best of intentions. How much more so with intercultural communications. We are in a world of increasing interaction across difference and the pace and variety of human cultural differences to which we are exposed is increasing exponentially. New foods and food experiences are available to us at a dizzying speed. How do we negotiate all this diversity? How can we, the diverse peoples of the human race learn to really live and work together? What would help to make us feel more comfortable together? What could smooth the food experience transitions within intercultural food encounters? Let us turn momentarily to the theme of food in religion to begin answering these questions.

### Religion and food

All religious teachings speak to the importance of treating the stranger with kindness and emphasize offering hospitality as a practical demonstration of spiritual principle. Even the story of Adam and Eve centered around offering and

accepting to eat a fruit from the tree of knowledge. Although this story is widely considered to imply disobedience towards God and used to explain the existence of suffering in the world, it nonetheless remains the first story of hospitality: Eve offered the apple to Adam, who accepted it and they both ate it together. Food symbolism in the sacred writings of the world religions abound, frequently drawing parallels between physical and spiritual food (Turner, 1996; Walbridge, 1996; Toomey, 1994). Below are two examples of Baha'i food symbolism invoking religious feeling and principle:

O my Lord! Make Thy beauty to be my food, and Thy presence my drink, and Thy pleasure my hope, and praise of Thee my action, and remembrance of Thee my companion, and the power of Thy sovereignty my succorer, and thy habitation my home, and my dwelling-place the seat Thou hast sanctified from the limitations imposed upon them who are shut out as by a veil from Thee. (Baha'u'llah and the New Era, p. 100.)

The heavenly food is needed successively; be thou a server of the food and direct thou the people of the world to present themselves at that table and guide them to partake thereof. (Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Baha, p. 423.)

Throughout the history of religion, food has been sacrificed for spiritual reasons and abstention from food in the form of fasting for spiritual purposes exists in all religions in various forms. Food and religion are evidently intimately connected on a variety of levels.

John Walbridge (1996) writes that hospitality in the form of food for guests has been considered virtuous throughout history. He maintains that in the Middle East at the time of Muhammad, hospitality towards travelers mediated the lawlessness of the desert. In Christianity there is, in addition to the many parables of Christ that make mention of food, the famous image of the last supper and His statements about eating bread and drinking wine as if they were his blood and his flesh in memory of Him. It is part of many religious rites to share food or a meal or to eat special foods for certain occasions, as well as using blessed foods for physical and spiritual nourishment, cleansing, purification and healing.

#### *Baha'i attitude towards food and intercultural relations*

In the Baha'i Faith 'Abdu'l-Baha on a number of occasions compares the teachings of Baha'u'llah, Founder of the Baha'i Faith, to a banquet table:

As the teachings of Baha'u'llah are combined with universal peace, they are like a table provided with every kind of fresh and delicious food. Every soul can find, at that table of infinite bounty, that which he desires. (Peace, p. 8.)

Most religions have food prohibitions and adherents base a certain aspect of their religious identity on these prohibitions. For example in Islam and in Judaism it is forbidden to eat pork, and in Hinduism to eat beef. Many forms of Buddhism forbid any meat consumption. In contrast there are no food prohibitions in the Baha'i Faith, (other than the law to abstain from alcohol and hallucination inducing drugs to ensure clear thinking and to reduce effects of addictions on society). In Gleanings, Baha'u'llah writes with regard to food:

Eat ye, O people, of the good things which God hath allowed you, and deprive not yourselves from his wondrous bounties (p. 346).

Baha'is are not to abstain from enjoying the many natural pleasures offered by the Creator, provided those enjoyments do not come between us and God. In this respect the Baha'i food attitude differs from that of other world religions; all food is open to all and to be enjoyed, appreciated and regarded as one of the many gifts from God to humanity, without sanction or prohibition. Connected to the Baha'i food attitude of opening all foods to all people to enjoy, two of the foundational and inter-related principles of the Baha'i Faith are the injunctions to abolish prejudice and to promote the unity of the human race through a celebration of its diversity. Adherents of the Baha'i Faith are from all cultures, races and backgrounds and the Baha'i teachings encourage Baha'is to appreciate and preserve cultural identity and to celebrate the rich diversity of the human experience while working towards common goals and recognizing our common humanity. All human beings are to be considered friends and worthy of our love and kindness irrespective of race, religion, creed or any other difference that has divided us in the past. The offering of hospitality freely and openly to all peoples is strongly encouraged in Baha'i teachings. Friend and stranger alike are to receive the same loving treatment, irrespective of race, creed, religion or mental capacity. This attitude can be seen in the following passages:

Baha'u'llah writes:

It is incumbent upon everyone to show the utmost love, rectitude of conduct, straight forwardness and sincere kindness unto all the peoples and kindreds of the world, be they friends or strangers. So intense must be the spirit of love and loving kindness, that the stranger may find himself a friend, the enemy a true brother, no difference whatsoever existing between them. For universality is of God and all limitations earthly (Baha'u'llah and the New Era, p. 261).

In another passage 'Abdu'l-Baha writes:

Cleanse ye your eyes, so that ye behold no man as different from yourselves. See ye no strangers; rather see all men as friends, for love and unity come hard when ye fix your gaze on otherness. And in this new and wondrous age, the Holy Writings say that we must be at one with every people; that we must see neither harshness nor injustice, neither malevolence, nor hostility, nor hate, but rather turn our eyes toward the heaven of ancient glory. For each of the creatures is a sign of God, and it was by the grace of the Lord and His power that each did step into the world; therefore they are not strangers, but in the family; not aliens, but friends, and to be treated as such. (Selections From the Writings of `Abdu'l-Baha, p. 25)

Another foundational Baha'i concept that can be attributed to the general attitude of openness in Baha'i teachings is the concept of progressive revelation. Humanity is considered to be one family moving through various developmental stages throughout history, each having cultural gifts to offer and requiring a different aspect and measure of divine teachings appropriate to that people at that time. God sends Messengers successively to all peoples to guide and educate them. Each Messenger has spiritual teachings to impart that are similar to those of other, previous Messengers, but the social teachings vary dependent upon the needs and exigencies of culture, context, time and place. Within this concept, all religions are on an equal footing with regard to truth, none is more or less true than another, and all reinforce each other in their foundational aspects, but differ in their specificities.

The mission of the Baha'i Faith is to guide humanity to a realization of its essential oneness, and to the oneness of religion; like rays of the sun, flowers of a garden, rooms in a house, chapters of a book, grades in a school – all freely expressing our unique cultural and personal views and spiritual insights yet needing to learn to work together with unity of purpose. The capacity of humanity to come together at a threshold of equality and mutual appreciation, is considered the place of human maturity to which we are currently called. As time progresses and the human race becomes capable of more and more challenging progress in the realization of its divine potential, it receives more detailed information from the Messenger of the time. Baha'u'llah explains that today's requirements are those of unity in diversity. This concept of progressive revelation and oneness of religion is explained through food imagery in the following passage:

It is milk that strengthens the babe so that it can digest more solid food later on. To say that because one Prophet is right in giving a certain teaching at a certain time, therefore another prophet must be wrong Who gives a different teaching at a different time, is like saying that because

milk is the best food for the newborn babe therefore milk and nothing but milk, should be the food of the grown man also... (Baha'u'llah and the New Era, p. 123).

The problem with the Baha'i teaching to treat all human beings as family members is that it is not necessarily a natural inclination. Learning to see "all men as friends" is a complex learning adventure. It involves maturity and willingness to be vulnerable in our learning with and about others. And there are many barriers between cultures that get in the way of seeing those who are different from us as family. Food, it would appear, is a testing ground for intercultural relations on multiple levels as we shall see.

### *Barriers to intercultural relationships*

Culture is the longstanding effect of people living in groups. Because people are all in some way associated with some kind of a group, it is not possible to avoid having developed cultural norms. Unless one has somehow survived alone in a forest with no human or animal contact, we have a common human experience in culture. However each human group that has evolved a culture, has a different take on how that system works, what it feels like and what is acceptable or unacceptable according to the norms of that particular culture. When we stay within the cultures we know, communication can still be tricky or frustrating. Even with no language barriers, misunderstandings occur. Adding cultural elements increases the likelihood of misunderstandings. As can be seen from my example of learning to eat fufu, the common human experience of eating we all had in common became problematic for me in the intercultural context until I had some tools to understand the norms surrounding it, not to mention the hand-motor technical skill required to get the fufu into my mouth. My judgements of colleagues' food attitudes in Japan backfired when I was confronted with my own inability to adjust to change in diet.

Within intercultural experience, there appears to be a particular phenomenon of seeking the universal (eating food together) while recognizing and appreciating the particular (fufu). Conversely, in the intercultural experience we live the particular (Want to try some fufu?) while understanding it in the context of the universal (What do all those things I don't understand about this experience mean? How does this experience affect my understanding of my own culture? How does this affect my understanding of your culture? What does my experience tell me about crossing cultures? Will knowledge of eating fufu help me to figure out new food experiences and cultural norms in other cultures?). The experience of food in culture provides this kind of particular/universal context most poignantly: eating is a similar but dis-similar experience across cultures. Everyone eats, but foods are different and everyone eats differently and has different norms, parameters and sensations that contribute to the eating

experience. Partaking of food from diverse cultures together allows us to be both comfortable with the familiar process of eating and food and to stretch our ideas of what is familiar and what is comfortable within our repertoire of food experiences. It provides all those eating together with a shared sensory space, social event and moment in time that can be used to build further places of commonality or to explore further differences. Baha'u'llah uses the metaphor of the body to remind us that humanity is one and refers to eating as a unifying principle:

...to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land (Baha'ullah, Hidden Words, Arabic #68, Willmette Publishing Trust, 1985, p. 20(1)).

Participation in the experience of a culture that is unfamiliar to us requires a posture of attraction, of learning, of humility and of desire to be united with others. Because of this, spiritual, social, cultural and technical learning are all united in the act of eating with others. This is why sharing unfamiliar foods with unfamiliar people can be both a buffer and a probe to intercultural relationship building. It can be a buffer behind which to hide when one does not want to go further in the relationship or a probe to move into a more intimate understanding with someone who is perceived of as dis-similar.

The following section is a literature review clustered around themes illuminating various aspects of how human beings relate to each other across cultural difference within the context of food attitudes/behaviors and offering hospitality. The four themes are:

1. Unfamiliar food and fear of novelty,
2. Acculturation and change of eating patterns in minorities
3. The tenor of dominant and minority group interactions
4. Hospitality as a consumer expectation.

## **Section Two: Themes from the literature – food and people, people and people, and people's expectations of people**

### *Theme #1: "What is this stuff?": unfamiliar food and fear of novelty*

Eertmans, Victoir, Vansant and Van den Bergh (2005) conducted a study to measure food neophobia, food involvement and motives for food choice and food intake. Food neophobia, or fear of unfamiliar foods, has been related to a personality trait that is negatively associated with "experience seeking" according to the Zuckerman (1979) Sensation Seeking Scale. A number of studies have linked the two personality traits and found that people who are afraid of trying new foods are likely to also avoid new situations, new people and new

experiences in general (Pliner & Hobden, 1992; Pliner, Lahteenmaki & Tuorila, 1998).

The Eertmans et al. study solicited 324 psychology students (85% female participants) to complete surveys about preference and consumption of 10 food groups. They looked at two determinants of food choice: food-internal (sensory aspects of food) and food-external (cognitive information, physical environment, social factors). Findings showed that food involvement had a positive effect on choice of spices and milk but not on any other food groups. Food neophobics tended not to choose spicy foods but did choose milk. Spices are higher on the “experience seeking” scale and milk is close to the bottom. The authors found that for highly food involved participants, sensory appeal was high and spicy foods were a more frequent choice among highly food-involved individuals. Food neophobics on the other hand tended to be negatively associated with food involvement or health related decisions about food. The study suggested that for food neophobic individuals, frequent exposure to novel foods and pairing of novel foods with familiar ones would increase familiarity and decrease fear. Authors also suggested that positive taste experiences affect the relationship between anticipated and actual liking or disliking of novel foods and that positive taste experiences may affect neophobia over time, but not food involvement attitudes.

Henriques, King and Meiselman (2009), used internet and phone recruitment strategies to attract a broad consumer based sample of 389 adults, 75% female. The study asked several questions about food behaviors and attitudes online or by phone and then required participants to come to a central location to taste six novel salad dressings. Their their likes and dislikes of the samples were recorded at that time. Authors found that both neophobic and non-neophobic groups rated the same flavor of dressing highest and lowest; guava honey received the highest rating and wasabi ginger was at the bottom for both groups. However the neophobic group rated all the dressings significantly lower than the non neophobic groups. Unfamiliarity was the highest predicting factor among neophobic choices and was based on “expected acceptability” or rather anticipated instead of actual likes and dislikes. The neophobic participants did not think they would like something with which they were not familiar, so they were reluctant to try it and when they did, rated the experience less positively than the non neophobics.

The Rajogopal and Hamouz (2009) study attempted to link food related attitudes with possible intercultural sensitivity. They surveyed 111 (out of 463 solicitations) hospitality management students from four public universities in Midwestern United States who were 19 years of age or older. Participants completed an online survey for which they received a \$10.00 gift certificate for a local retail store of their choice. The survey was constructed using three scales; the Attitudinal Behavioral Openness Scale (ABOS) (Caligiuri, Jacobs & Farr, 2000),

the Tolerance-Intolerance of Ambiguity Scale (TIA) (Budner, 1962) and the Food Attitude Behavior Openness Scale (FABOS) developed specifically for this study. This study considered race and income but not ethnicity or gender in its analysis. Participants were 95% white and the majority were from middle class homes where families shared meal times together as children.

Four factors emerged from participant responses:

1. Lack of willingness to try: nervousness, preference for familiar foods, unwillingness to try new foods or new cuisines
2. Seeking novelty: initiative to seek new experiences with both food and daily life activities
3. Enjoying novelty: comfort and enjoyment of new experiences
4. Conditional openness: certain criteria had to be met prior to openness to try new foods. Familiarity or sense of comfort had to be established, after which the new food or cuisine would be considered.

Findings supported other studies that linked food neophobia with reluctance to seek out experiences with unfamiliar people. Authors concluded that the sample in this study was generally not open to new foods or new people. They also inferred that openness to different kinds of foods would necessarily transfer to openness to intercultural experiences and that open individuals would demonstrate intercultural sensitive behavior. "Interculturally sensitive" as a term was not defined and there were no real measures to test openness to new people against openness to new ethnic or racial groups or sensitivity towards those groups.

What is not explicit in the above three studies is that a majority of white, middle class and mostly female American participants were used to generalize consumer behaviors, and to take the personality trait of food neophobia into the arena of intercultural relations without adequate research into gender, racial and ethnicity considerations. In two of the three studies, university students were used as sample populations. This further restricts generalizability of findings. Although regional positioning was briefly mentioned, there were no considerations of the American context itself. One can only conclude that young to middle-aged white women in the United States who are food neophobic appear to be neophobic otherwise. If a study on food, willingness to meet new people and intercultural relations does not consider ethnicity, race and contextualized experience, it cannot tease out the specifics and complexities of a phenomenon outside of the status quo. This leads us to the second theme.

Theme #2: “You are what you eat (maybe)”: acculturation and change of eating patterns

One aspect of food and intercultural relations is to compare the degrees and conditions under which minority groups change their ethnic eating patterns as they are integrated into the dominant culture economically and socially. To explore this one needs to consider a particular minority’s sense of ethnic identity as well as their degree of identification with the dominant culture; two considerations that fall squarely into the field of cultural relations. From the consumer and food studies perspective, it is necessary to consider ethnic minority food consumption patterns and influences on those patterns over time. Because each ethnic group and each dominant group are different and have different consumption patterns, it is helpful to look at one minority group and the dominant context within which that group lives.

A recent study with this specific aim, is the Cleveland, Laroche, Pons and Kastoun (2009) exploration of integration of Lebanese Canadians living in Quebec. Both the Lebanese and the Quebecois share French language as a commonality, but their diets and cultures are radically different. To measure integration into French Canadian food and culture, the authors administered surveys to 250 mainly affluent and educated, Christian Lebanese Canadians living in Quebec, from immigrant, first and second generation Canadian samples and with a wide age distribution. 60% were male, in contrast to the previous studies that had overwhelmingly female participation.

Cleveland et al (2009) constructed the survey in two parts; the first measuring identification with Lebanese culture and the second measuring individual consumption of Lebanese and French Canadian food products and cuisines. Demographic considerations were carefully considered so that amount of time in Canada, age and economic status were factored into the statistical analysis. The Lebanese cultural component had both traditional and current influences. Themes were: Lebanese language use, Lebanese media exposure, social interaction with Lebanese, Lebanese identification and pride, Lebanese customs, habits and values, Lebanese family structure and sex roles and desire to maintain Lebanese culture. They found that five factors accounted for 77% of statistical variance: Lebanese media exposure, identification and pride, language use, family structure and social interaction. Respondents fell into four categories of acculturation patterns, three integrative and one assimilative. Their findings were interesting from a number of perspectives.

Authors found that food consumption was positively identified with Lebanese and French Canadian food products and that even after controlling for age and gender, number of years in Canada and affluence, strong identification with Lebanese foods and culture did not diminish with strong identification with French

Canadian food and culture. Generally, across ages, the wealthier Lebanese ate a wider variety of foods from both cultures. Age did affect reasons for food choices to a certain extent: income affected older Lebanese Canadian food choices more significantly whereas desire to belong to the mainstream culture influenced younger Lebanese Canadian food choices more significantly. The authors found that for most participants, sense of ethnic identity and sense of belonging to the host culture were separate factors, developing independently or parallel to each other, neither canceling out the other. Predominantly strong food items associated with Lebanese identity and remaining popular choices were: hallom, hummus, shish tawuk, manakish, albni, kibbi, shawarma, ater, mehchi, baklawa and shorbit adas. Strong French Canadian food choices were: sliced bread, maple syrup, cold cereal and poutine. Most households ate combinations of Lebanese and French Canadian foods and the greatest variety was evident in the wealthiest households.

The study did not investigate convenience, popularity, media influence or availability factors in the strongest food choices. For the French Canadian choices, one may assume that since the noted food items are available almost anywhere in the province of Quebec and widely advertised, and that of the four items, three are most frequently breakfast choices, convenience and availability are likely related to choice. The study noted that less frequently prepared Lebanese items fell from popularity as French Canadian acculturation took place. It makes sense that the variety of foods available locally in any region will influence consumption and that length of time to prepare and general popularity within cultural food preferences are also likely influences on food item choice. Additionally food items that are equally convenient such as cheese and pita bread in Lebanese cuisine and sliced bread and cold cereal in French Canadian cuisine appeared to be chosen equally in homes where both were readily available. This strengthens the authors' argument that the acculturation process does not necessarily diminish either identity.

Although the Cleveland et al (2009) study did not cover aspects of hospitality that this paper is concerned with, its usefulness to understanding food and intercultural relations is that identity with one's ethnic group and identity with the dominant culture can develop either simultaneously or independently and do not necessarily cancel each other out. Why is this important? Because it is popularly assumed that one needs to "lose" one's culture in order to function and integrate within a dominant culture. In my work, dominant culture members frequently mention fear that minorities will "take away our culture" (read: a minority group's mere existence in the dominant culture, causes the dominant culture to fear extinction). In reality, the dominant culture with its entrenched position of power and control over resources is hardly even *aware* of minority culture trends and tendencies until minority numbers reach statistical significance. The minority group is much more likely to suffer "cultural loss" in a dominant context. However

even when minority populations are badly mistreated with dominant intent to destroy their cultures, and even when individuals deny their cultural roots and assimilate completely into the dominant group, aspects of minority culture remain. Culture appears to be resilient and flexible in spite of obstacles and even overt attempts to stamp it out.

On the other hand is also common for minorities to fear losing their cultural identities in associating with and learning from either the dominant culture or other minority groups. We all know of people who have lived in a country for over 20 years without learning the language or associating with people outside their family and ethnic group. And stories of prejudice between minority groups are as common as those between dominant and minority groups. So although culture is resilient and flexible, it can also rigid and self-contained.

The Cleveland et al (2009) study is important in that it shows that the vast majority of Lebanese in Quebec do not lose their identities even as they take on French Canadian jobs, homes, schools, attitudes and patterns of food consumption. A comparison might be that parents can love several children equally but differently; each child is loveable but unique. I have never heard a parent say that they could not have a second or third child because that would mean they would have to stop loving the first one. Cleveland et al (2009)'s research demonstrates that one can enjoy Lebanese food and French Canadian food with no loss of enjoyment to either cultural food experience. The study infers that integration from a food perspective appears more to be a question of expanding one's repertoire to include a larger "family" of foods than entirely substituting one thing for another.

The findings of this study are similar to those of Lynn Harbottle (2004) in her exploration of ethnic and gender identities in the Iranian immigrant community in Britain. She found that minority communities generally and the Iranian immigrants in Britain specifically, put significant effort into maintaining traditional foods as a way to impart a sense of ethnic pride in their families, as means of gaining social status in the Iranian expatriate community, as ways to offer gifts in intercultural exchange gestures, and as boundary markers for identity and belonging in a variety of contexts. Her explanation of cooked foods as culturally significant, showed how shared cooked foods between cultures were validating in intercultural exchanges. One comment by an Iranian participant from one part of the country with relatives in five or six other middle eastern national groups, talked about how certain dishes were common to all, others were different and interesting, and still others were imitations of the "real" dish from her own region, suggesting intercultural food exchanges and ethnic pride associated with food.

The study noted that most British foods became parts of the breakfast or lunch repertoire of Iranian families whereas the family dinner, even if it was only served

once a week because of conflicting work schedules, was the “real” meal, after which they “felt no hunger”. This corresponds with the Lebanese/Quebec study where the cross-over foods were usually found in breakfast, lunch or take out when time constraints prevented a home cooked meal. The home cooked meal represented an offering of love, a cultural strong hold and frequently a symbolic gesture of moral stance against what was considered the unhealthy/over processed foods in Western society. Another similarity between the study findings was that men from both cultures were actively involved in cooking and serving of food in the home, although women maintained control over the management of food in the home and most Iranian restaurants were run by men. Harbottle writes:

...the symbolic potency of food may itself be highly variable, such that food practices may be of relatively minor significance in relation to identity-formation within the ethnic majority. However, for minority groups, such as these Iranian settlers, for whom identity-construction may be a more conscious and potentially a more problematic process, food consumption may be ascribed much greater symbolic weight (p. 7).

For example, *ghormeh-sabzi* and *chello-kebab* are two dishes that are considered part of Iranian culture throughout the country, although there are many variations. When Iranians have a special event, or when offering a cooked food item for other cultures to sample and enjoy, these two dishes are highly likely to be present. They are both a cultural marker (this is *real* Persian food, to be distinguished from other kinds of foods) and a gift of the very best the culture has to offer. In this way, the cultural dishes keep cultural identity and pride intact and are an offering of highest hospitality to guests. The special dishes represent an invitation into the culture and a boundary to mark it as distinct from others. In this context, the offering of a store-bought cake instead of a home-cooked dish may mean less investment in the relationship.

But what about the reverse? At what point do dominant cultures begin to try, enjoy and then incorporate ethnic food items into their diets? What internal and external factors contribute to this kind of integration? Although this particular aspect of acculturation has not yet been considered from a food perspective, there is significant literature on the topic of intercultural relationships from dominant and minority perspectives. To shed insights onto the question of intercultural relations generally, we will now turn to another set of studies within social psychology. In psychology, what kind of personality traits lend themselves to intercultural relationships? From a sociological standpoint how do groups of people interact and under what conditions? How do dominant and minority populations perceive each other and consequently interact? Food behaviors aside, what do we know about intercultural personalities and group identities?

Theme #3: "Never mind the menu, who is going to be there?." The tenor of dominant and minority group interactions

To consider what conditions lead to productive intercultural relations and what kind of personality traits intercultural competent individuals have, Caligiuri, Jacobs and Farr (1999) began by exploring the cultural implications of what are known in psychology as "the big five" factors of personality: extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness. From these five traits, the authors concentrated on the category of "openness" to draw correlates between openness as a personality trait and intercultural interactions. They developed a scale to test openness, tested it as a pilot project and then applied it to two sample populations of university students.

Sample one featured a large rural Mid-Atlantic American university of undergraduates from various programs, with an average of 19.7 years of age. Sample two featured a large urban Mid-western American university of upper level management students with an average age of 28.4. Sample one was mostly white and female, sample two mostly white, but with a third visible minority participants, of that group mostly black, and almost equal numbers of males and females in the total sample. The method was survey with self-assessment questions. Categories covered: attitudes, past experiences, comfort with power distance and participation in cultural activities. Findings determined more specific attitudinal categories of: internationalism, liberalism, ethnocentrism/national smugness/nationalism, international relations, consumer ethnocentrism, patriotism, tolerance of ambiguity, personal need for structure, interpersonal orientation, self-monitoring, autonomy, optimism, intellectual curiosity and focus on negative or positive affect.

Based on these categories the authors defined "openness" in the context of the intercultural personality as: having a positive attitude towards others, a sense of unity among nations, real experiences with other cultures and liberal attitudes towards them, high self-monitoring and high intellectual curiosity. They found, similar to previous studies, that with a majority of white participants, there was not much evidence of openness. However some interesting details of their findings help understand the kind of orientation that is required to engage in intercultural experiences for those of all racial and cultural groups who demonstrated openness to other cultures.

Firstly, people have to be exposed to diverse populations to become familiar with other cultures and lose their fears about losing their own cultural identities. This mirrors the food neophobic study suggestions that frequent and increased exposure to novel foods makes those foods feel more familiar to neophobic individuals. Secondly, people who engage in intercultural activities have two strong tendencies: they have high self-monitoring capacity and high intellectual

curiosity. This means they think about their reactions and make adjustments to their behaviors based on inner reflection. It also means they are interested in finding out about people on other people's terms rather than requiring familiarity and comfort to interact with others. A person with high intellectual curiosity and high self-monitoring will *intentionally* seek out ways to have intercultural experiences and develop intercultural relationships *whether or not they find these experiences enjoyable or comfortable*. This is different from people who are tolerant of ambiguity and lack of structure, but may not necessarily seek out intercultural experiences. Tolerance of difference in this study was not equated with openness to intercultural relations, which is a very important distinction. Finally, people with strong intercultural capacity either consider themselves bi-cultural or have weaker identification with their primary culture. This final point is considered by a completely different study on parental ethnic identity and pre-school children's adaptive behaviors.

Calzada, Brotman, Huang, Bat-Chava and Kinston (2008) conducted a study to compare parents (all with competent English language skills) and their children across single minority ethnic identity, single USA dominant ethnic identity and bi-cultural ethnic identities. They found that parents with strong ethnic identities generally had children who demonstrated better adaptive behaviors (ex. Knew how to monitor and self-correct behavior, were pro-social and responded appropriately to disciplinary actions) but that the best adapted pre-school children in the study had parents who demonstrated bi-cultural identities and behaviors. Children of minority ethnic parents tended to internalize behaviors, meaning they associated behaviors with self and disciplinary actions with being more or less worthy as people. Children with strong American identities tended to externalize, meaning they did not accept disciplinary actions as affecting them personally and would blame others or outward circumstances for their own actions. Bi-cultural children however, did neither; they considered the disciplinary action, made adjustments and did not either suffer reduced self esteem (internalization) or blame others (externalization) for their actions.

Another significant study in the intercultural relations field is also of interest within the category of social psychology. Piontkoski, Florack, Hoelker and Obdrzalek (2000), conducted a study of dominant and non-dominant group attitudes towards each other in several European contexts. The study uses analysis tools of social psychology with particular emphasis on Gudykunst and Hammer's (1987) work on dominant and non-dominant group relationships. The authors examined characteristics of acculturation generally along the lines of assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization and applied these categories to findings of attitudes between the following groups:

**Dominant/Non-dominant**

Germans towards Turks  
 Germans towards Yugoslavians  
 Swiss towards Yugoslavians  
 Slovaks towards Hungarians

**Non-dominant/Dominant**

Yugoslavians in Germany  
 Yugoslavians in Switzerland  
 Turks in Germany  
 Hungarians in Slovakia

No matter where you are, it is wearing to be a minority. Anxiety and insecurity are typical responses of non-dominant groups to the stress of having to always adjust one's natural tendencies to that of the dominant group's expectations. Groups vary in their general tendencies of response to cultural discomfort. Note that this is the flip side of the position of simply choosing to avoid contact with unfamiliar (read: minority) foods and cultures. Minority individuals cannot avoid association with the dominant culture so whether or not they find things comfortable or familiar, they have to deal with dominant expectations. This holds true everywhere since there are dominant and minority populations in all countries. Dominant cultural expectations become the water in which the fish of all groups are required to swim.

As was previously mentioned, people tend to look for similarities when they interact and frequently consider those who are dis-similar as inferior, resulting in conscious or unconscious discrimination. According to social psychology theory of dominant and non-dominant groups, the tendency of outgroup discrimination *decreases* if: a) groups expect to receive some benefit from each other and b) they perceive each other as similar in some way(s). Individuals develop their identities based on their sense of affiliation with their own group(s). Basic self-esteem comes from comparing oneself to others. If the in-group (or own-group) identification is strong, individuals are likely to see other groups as dissimilar and to evaluate them negatively. In-group identification that is weaker allows individuals to consider the other as more similar and to evaluate them positively. Strong in-group identification usually implies greater sense of group distinctiveness and desire to protect group distinctiveness. Concurrently, similarity in background, race, ethnicity, occupation, age, attitudes, values and personality traits are related to increased liking and positive evaluation of others. Both in-group identification and tendency to seek out similarity in interpersonal relationships tend to influence people towards self-segregation. A third criteria of dominant and non-dominant relationships is that intercultural contact *without* a common goal increases intergroup hostility. It is important to bear in mind that most contact between groups without cooperation or a common goal is *indirect* and intergroup conflict appears more frequently based on misconceptions than actual experience (Moghaddam & Solliday, 1991).

Two other concepts affect intergroup relationships. One is permeability and the other is outcome. If a group is perceived of as having permeable boundaries, possible interactions can occur. And if the outcome of intergroup relationships is perceived of as likely to have positive or negative outcomes, this will also influence the degree and quality of interactions between groups. Note that in all these categories, intergroup relations are based entirely on categories of *perception*. This means that most people, whether they are from a dominant or a minority group, are relating to each other or not relating to each other based on their own imaginings more than on any real empirical experience. Similarities can be drawn between food neophobia and dominant/non-dominant group relations. In intercultural relations however, four main patterns have been identified, with their variations between dominant and non-dominant tendencies indicated below:

Table 1: (adapted from Piontkoski, Florack, Hoelker, Obdrzalek, 2000, p. 6)

DOMINANT GROUP	NON DOMINANT GROUP
<p><b>INTEGRATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-low identification with own group</li> <li>group</li> <li>-low ingroup bias</li> <li>-perceived impermeability of group</li> <li>perceived of as</li> <li>boundaries</li> <li>-expected positive outcome</li> <li>own group</li> <li>-high self-efficacy</li> <li>-contact with non-dominant group</li> <li>accepted</li> </ul>	<p><b>INTEGRATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-high identification with own</li> <li>group</li> <li>-perceived ingroup high vitality</li> <li>-group boundaries</li> <li>less permeable</li> <li>-perceived high vitality of</li> <li>own group</li> <li>-high self-efficacy</li> <li>-contact with dominant group</li> <li>accepted</li> </ul>
<p><b>ASSIMILATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-high own group identification</li> <li>-high in group bias</li> <li>-perceived similarity of non-dominant</li> <li>group</li> <li>-Perceived permeability of boundaries</li> <li>-expected negative outcome</li> <li>-perceived low vitality of non-dominant group</li> <li>- contact with non-dominant group accepted</li> </ul>	<p><b>ASSIMILATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-low own group identification</li> <li>-low ingroup bias</li> <li>-perceived similarity of dominant</li> <li>group</li> <li>-perceived permeability of</li> <li>boundaries</li> <li>-perceived ingroup low vitality</li> <li>-contact with dominant group</li> <li>accepted</li> </ul>

SEPARATION	SEPARATION
-high own group identification	-high own group identification
-high group inbias	-high ingroup bias
-perceived impermeability of boundaries	-perceived impermeability of boundaries
-expected negative outcome	-perceived high vitality of own group
-perceived high vitality of non-dominant group	-low self-efficacy
-low self-efficacy	-no contact with dominant group
-no contact with non-dominant group	
MARGINALIZATION	MARGINALIZATION
-high ingroup bias	-low own group identification
-perceived dissimilarity with non-dominant group	-perceived dissimilarity with dominant group
-expected negative outcome	
-low self-efficacy	-low self-efficacy
-no contact with non-dominant group	-no contact with dominant group

From this model, a healthier integration or acculturation pattern is dependent upon the dominant group having low ingroup identification, high permeability, a high sense of agency (meaning control over one's actions, destiny and outcomes) and an expected positive outcome *while* the non-dominant group has strong ingroup pride, high sense of agency and high group vitality (structures of healthy social and cultural life). *Both* groups have contact with each other.

In the less desirable scenarios where groups remain either entirely separate or marginalized, the dominant group has high ingroup bias and identification, sees no permeability, is threatened by perceived minority vibrancy, and expects outcomes to be negative *while* the non-dominant group equally demonstrates low agency and low permeability and has either high ingroup bias like the dominant group or low ingroup bias and low vibrancy. *Both* groups have no contact with each other.

Calzada et al (2008), set out to test this model by applying it to the various European dominant and non-dominant groups indicated earlier. 1194 participants were part of the study; 300 Germans, 153 Slovaks, 193 Swiss as members of dominant groups and 135 Hungarians, 110 Turks and 303 former Yugoslavians (187 living in Switzerland and 116 in Germany) as non-dominant groups. Two questionnaires were constructed and translated into all pertinent languages by completely bilingual representatives of each respective country. Questionnaires contained items measuring acculturation attitudes, various demographics and the

eight acculturation variables of: perceived similarity, contact, identification, self-efficacy, perceived outcome, permeability, vitality and ingroup bias. Discriminant analyses were included for all groups to distinguish integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization attitudes.

Findings had some generalizable characteristics: expected outcome and ingroup bias were related and to a lesser degree, pride and similarity went together for the dominant groups whereas permeability and typicalness were prominent for non-dominant groups. What was most interesting however, was that each group of dominant/non-dominant pairs had distinct and context specific relationships which varied depending upon the integration orientations of individuals, and their circumstances (ex. Having to look for work in another country out of desperation or displacement is not the same as re-locating to a new country to a job for which you have already been hired). Authors concluded:

...unique patterns of variables are found in each group, indicating that the relationships between dominant and non-dominant groups are different in each country and for each cultural group. The different patterns reflect the cultural diversity of the investigated groups and may make it easier to understand the difficulties people from different cultural groups experience when they have to adapt to each other (p. 23).

Even more intriguing is the complete lack of acculturation pattern found among Hungarians. None of the study variables covered the situation of Hungarians in Slovakia. Hungarians were the only minority group who are not immigrants; in former times they were likely the majority. Authors mention that other socio-historical factors seem to require an entirely different scale development for Hungarians.

Finally, the study explained that authors did not examine how attitudes of dominant and non-dominant groups towards each other actually refer to and affect each other. This missing link was also mentioned in the Lebanese Canadian food choice study. Authors complete their article with the statement:

...as the results of the study show, a conflictual relationship may...arise through anticipation of negative outcomes, perceived dissimilarity between hosts and immigrants, high identification with the respective ingroup, and distinctive preference of one's own group (p. 24).

In summary, the intercultural personality type has characteristics of openness, but groups have different attitudes towards each other based on whether they are in a dominant or minority position and what socio-historical contexts caused them to be in proximity to each other. By now it should be quite clear that there are both psychological and sociological obstacles in the path of those who wish to

pursue intercultural relations. Kielbasiewicz-Drozdowska and Radko (2006) neatly sum up these obstacles as:

- a) unawareness of values, beliefs and norms in own and other cultures
- b) uncertainty and fear in interaction with strangers
- c) difficulty in predicting the reaction and behavior of the person we are attempting to communicate with
- d) attitude towards other cultures (elimination, assimilation, marginalization, intertation etc.)
- e) ethnocentricity, prejudice, stereotypes and hatred.

It does seem bleak to consider how much fear of difference, limited perspectives and misconceptions interfere with real interactions between people from different cultures. But the news is not all deterministic; groups can and do learn to get along. Perhaps not so surprisingly, I discovered hope for change of intercultural behavior in the research about culture and service in the hospitality industry.

*Theme #4: "This is costing me, so it better be good": hospitality as consumer expectation*

Rogers and Steinfatt (1999) noted that ethnocentricity in tourists decreases when they experience learning another language, make friends across cultures, have long lasting intercultural contact including various friendships in the new culture, work and live in another culture, or develop increased knowledge about and respect for another culture.

Hearns, Devine and Baum (2007), describe how hospitality employers rely upon a multicultural workforce to "meet and greet" the needs of leisure and business tourists from a wide variety of cultures. Most countries have experienced a large flow of migrant and guest workers from various countries, who find easily accessible employment in the food and hospitality industry. This international migration phenomenon has created similar challenges for hospitality employers everywhere. Integration, socialization and support for international and local employees need to be considered. Additionally it has become imperative for workers from various cultures to communicate with and adequately serve a variety of people from around the planet and employers are by in large not prepared for the increasingly complex communication demands.

An example is the scenario of a French waiter being disciplined for slow service while working in Ireland. To the waiter, he was providing measured service indicating that he would not rush customers through their meal, considered excellent service in France. To the Irish employer, the service was slow and irritating to customers who needed to eat and get on with their day. Cultural

differences increasingly have to be considered if one is to keep customers from various cultures. Manzur and Jogaratnam (2006) write:

Today's hotel and restaurant customers have more options for spending their money, have better defined expectations of quality, and are less tolerant of poor service. Therefore it is important to deliver superior levels of service, because once the service is delivered, customer's perceptions are difficult to change (p. 2).

According to Tung (1993), necessary skills for intercultural communication are a willingness to acknowledge that differences do exist across cultures, a genuine attempt to understand such differences and a desire to value the diversity of others and between groups. These skills are developed by perceptive and open hospitality workers because their jobs depend upon it. However, Hearn et al (1999), propose a hospitality curriculum that overtly teaches intercultural skills and focuses on meeting specific interpersonal, communication, cultural knowledge, negotiation skills and diversity values outcomes to employees in order to increase workforce intercultural capacity.

A useful study to understand service expectations across cultures, is the Manzur and Jogaratnam (2006) research measuring employee behaviors during "service encounters" with various cultures. The authors propose that an employee in the hospitality industry has only a few minutes to make a first and lasting impression on a client. Knowledge of various cultural expectations could help employees improve their retention of clients if they could adjust behaviors appropriately. As was previously mentioned, hospitality employees are motivated to adjust their behaviors because keeping their jobs can depend on it. Additionally, Manzur and Jogaratnam (2006) note that people quite naturally are constantly changing their behaviors based on the varying responses of those they communicate with. For example if I am speaking to you and you seem tired, I am likely to ask about your health and mention that I don't want to take much of your time. But if you seem very happy to see me and don't appear rushed, I am likely to talk longer about a variety of topics and ask you more questions. People influence the perception and behavior of others by controlling the information others receive and the manner in which they deliver information. Since all interpersonal communication requires learning responsiveness it can be inferred that intercultural responsiveness can also be learned.

The study used previously defined employee service behaviors to build a questionnaire for Americans, Chinese, Japanese and Korean travelers. Employee behaviors during service encounters were: *ingratiation* (getting others to view them favorably), *intimidation* (creating a dangerous and intimidating sense of superiority), *self-promotion* (acting smart, competent and successful to make a positive impression on others), *exemplification* (giving the impression of

integrity, self-sacrifice and willingness to go the extra mile) and *supplication* (attempting to look bad or weak for the purpose of soliciting help or sympathy). 85 Americans, 63 Chinese, 55 Japanese and 85 Koreans filled out a survey recalling a recent visit to a hotel or restaurant. They reported on their levels of satisfaction with regard to 25 different service behaviors.

Findings showed that ingratiation was the preferred behavior from all cultural groups. Caring attitudes were most valued by Americans and Koreans, intimidation was disliked by all groups but least problematic for the Japanese. When employees demonstrated a superior attitude, Americans and Chinese were most dissatisfied. Most respondents appreciated the self-promotion attitude with highest satisfaction from Koreans. Japanese and Koreans most appreciated employee attempts at small talk whereas Americans found small talk the least satisfying. Exemplification was appreciated by all groups but mostly by Americans, followed by the Chinese. Americans were most happy when employees volunteered to help them. All respondents disliked supplication especially if employees conveyed the impression of being overworked. (Japanese particularly disliked this). Frequent smiles were most satisfying to Americans although Asian groups didn't mind the smiles. Asians appreciated employee kneeling behavior when taking restaurant orders whereas Americans found it distasteful.

The study concluded that to encourage hospitality employees to better serve customers in the sample groups, they needed to realize that ingratiation and smiles were most frequently appreciated across the cultural groups sampled and that employees needed to monitor reactions to kneeling behavior, physical touching and eye contact to respond to various cultural expectations. Supplication, intimidation and impressions of being overworked were universally negatively received in this sample.

What is interesting to me about the hospitality studies featured here is firstly that hospitality as a concept has moved from offering food and service to others as part of the natural course of human interactions, to consumer expectations that an industry of hospitality strives to meet. Just as Algerian bread making has been transformed from a daily home activity to national production, hospitality has emerged as a fee for service concept that would surely have been perplexing to our ancestors. I found the optimism in these studies with regard to changing behaviors for the purpose of developing intercultural responsiveness, a refreshing change from identifying seemingly insurmountable obstacles to positive intercultural experiences based on lack of openness in personality and/or dominant and minority group tendencies. Of note is the opportunity for travelers and migrant workers in hotels and restaurants to experience food from various cultures without really having a truly "embodied" intercultural experience. Although it may not promote friendships between cultures, customers and

employees alike are exposed to a greater variety of foods and food experiences, likely decreasing food neophobia and increasing enjoyment among greater and greater segments of traveling and relocating populations world wide.

To return to the original idea of this paper, hospitality is basically a concept that emerges from religious teachings and traditions. In a science-informed world, the hospitality discourse appears to have moved from the private to the public sphere, but I suspect that its return to daily interactions between an enlarged human family circle could promote first steps in the ideal of “See ye no strangers; rather see all men as friends,” exhortation of Baha’u’llah cited at the beginning of this treatise. The following section opens the discussion about intercultural relations from the standpoint of hospitality in both private and public contexts, and brings religion back into the concept of hospitality.

### **Section 3: Social theory and the Baha’i Faith together take on hospitality, religion, spirituality and intercultural relations**

#### *Hospitality in the “private” domain*

Hospitality is a concept like food, existing virtually between and within multiple realities, yet very much a part of concrete daily interpersonal relations. It involves private and public arenas, which in turn move from the religious and social to the political and within considerations of space, time and place. I may offer hospitality in the way I receive invited guests to my dinner table, but hospitality is also the place where unanticipated strangers appear in our lives with human needs for asylum, medical attention or hunger. Birth, illness, death and other human needs come uninvited into our lives impacting others. Because of this common human experience, we have a relational obligation to receive others going through these same human experiences, since at some point in our lives we will all be in the same position.

According to Jacques Derrida (Dikec, Clark, Barnett, 2009) the spirit of hospitality is associated with a host of “attentive, generous, and responsive” (p. 3) virtues such as “forgiveness, confession, bearing witness, gift relations, mourning, justice, friendship” (p. 3). These virtues are all emphasized time and again in the world religions where admonitions to show hospitality to the stranger abound. Historically, hospitality has been a religious and ethical duty. It is a commandment to live generously, to provide aid and to show charity. In the Exodus 22, 21 strangers are not to be mistreated. In Deuteronomy (10, 17-20; 24, 17-18) it is a duty to take care of widows and orphans and to ease hunger, show hospitality to strangers and grant asylum to those in distress. The ancient Greeks believed that a beggar or stranger coming in need might be a god coming to test the hospitality capacity of humans thus proving their virtue. As such all

strangers were to be offered the utmost hospitality since any stranger could be a manifestation of the Divine.

In the Baha'i Writings, "each of the creatures is a sign of God...therefore they are not strangers, but in the family" (Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha, p. 24). In this quote, not only humans are to be received as family, but all "creatures", since all created things manifest some aspect of the Divine, a concept that is also central to Buddhism as the idea of reverence shown to all sentient beings. Baha'u'llah writes: "it is incumbent upon everyone to show the utmost love, rectitude of conduct, straightforwardness and sincere kindness unto all the peoples and kindreds of the world, be they friends or strangers" (Baha'i World Faith, p 445). This quote shows the typical Baha'i attitude of the "enlarging" of one's circle of acquaintances beyond family, creed and nationality to embrace everyone, all of humanity, the "peoples and kindreds of the world". It is also typical of exhortations in the Baha'i Writings which tend to be quite specific about the kind of attitude and behavior expected: not just kindness, but *sincere* kindness, not just love, but *rectitude of conduct* and *straightforwardness*. This specificity has the effect of some required change in cultural behavior for everyone reading or hearing about the requirement. If it is easy personally and/or culturally for me to show kindness, I must ensure that my kindness is truly sincere. If I am loving, then I must also show rectitude of conduct – the injunction to fulfill all three of the specific requirements thus becomes both confirming and challenging at some level for every culture, uniting the particular context with the universal principle.

Hospitality is reciprocal and relational. It may be offered unconditionally, but when it is abused by the recipient, conditions and limits become more and more important. Across cultures the reciprocity of hospitality is stated in surprisingly similar ways. John Lyly in 16th century England said, "guests and fish stink after three days", and Bedouin Arabs are obligated to offer hospitality to a stranger for three days without even asking his name, after which certain reciprocal behaviors are expected. A Swahili saying is "Treat your guest as a guest for two days. On the third day give him a hoe." (Dikec et al, 2009, p. 5), implying that one should not expect ongoing gifts and services without doing one's share of the work. Among the ancient Greeks was the saying: "No one can be so welcome a guest that he will not become an annoyance when he has stayed three continuous days in a friend's house" (Miles Gloriosus (III, 3, 12). Across cultures there is the sense that although hospitality is a virtue, one should not overstay one's welcome, and that one is only a stranger or a visitor for a time after which one is expected to participate as a responsible citizen or leave. But what if social and political conditions and circumstances make hospitality problematic?

*“Public” hospitality*

Critical theorists and philosophers have written about whether hospitality should be unconditional or conditional, whether it is a moral duty or a human right, a religious obligation or an act of human reciprocity. Heirdrun Friese (2009) traces the evolution of hospitality from the private to the public spheres to illustrate how with the modern nation state and massive international flux, hospitality has become central to political debate on territories, movement and migration of peoples:

Historically, hospitality has been considered as a religious duty, a sacred commandment of charity and generosity to assign strangers a place – albeit ambivalent – in the community. With the development of the modern nation state, these obligations have been inscribed into the procedures of political deliberation and legislation that determine the social spaces of aliens, residents and citizens (p.3).

The debate between whether hospitality is a right to which every human being is entitled, hence completely unconditional, or whether it is a responsibility (divine or humanitarian) to offer assistance with limitations and conditions, or both, has much to do with issues of territory and freedom of movement, as well as opportunities to live, own property, open a business, attend school and reap the benefits of citizenship. Politically and logistically, hospitality has many places of tension. If thousands of refugees enter a country, who pays for the cost of housing, feeding and providing medical assistance? And for how long? How are local people to deal with the strain on limited resources? And in another context, what about a business or tourism initiative that imposes unwanted social ills on local inhabitants who had no say in the initiative to begin with? Private hospitality implies a responsibility not to overstay one’s welcome and to respond with appreciation and/or reciprocity to the degree possible. But a country that has mass exodus of citizens, another that receives them voluntarily or involuntarily, transnational business development and the agency of international organizations, policies and war/peace considerations all pose tense and problematic conditions around both the offering of hospitality and reciprocity. Dikec et al (2009) write:

The figures of human finitude –the vulnerable, the destitute, those whose flesh and organs fail them—and the figures of political abjection –the exiled, the undocumented, those seeking refuge—rub shoulders...So too do the invited guests, the pleasure-seeking travelers, the traders in search of good return cross paths with others who journey furtively, under duress, or without clear destination (p. 13).

The authors describe with poignancy the phenomenon of increasing contact of people in many different circumstances, displaying varying needs and cultural norms, all coming into contact with each other, effectively “rubbing shoulders” together. Hospitality then can be private between family and friends, religiously motivated between local people and strangers, consumer based within the norms of the hospitality industry and political in policies of immigration, citizenship and response to disaster. This is the current condition of our globalized world, where we are at the crossroads of having to make decisions about how we are to interact, and whether we are to build better or worse relationships on both micro and macro levels.

From a theoretical perspective, the concept of “threshold” may be a useful foundational concept. If hospitality stands at a threshold, it stands in a specific place, time and space with cultural norms and expectations behind it that are part of our identities and boundaries. It also opens itself at the front to the “realms of the possible”, the unknown, the gift without conditions, the desire to greet, address and name a person who has his or her own boundaries behind and possibilities in front. “It requires that the guest be welcomed as a Somebody, not as a serialized nobody” (Dikec, 2009 p. 9). Thresholds are the opening for responsiveness, hospitality and responsibility. They are not the final answer, but they are a beginning place that has the possibility of satisfying resolution. In a similar manner, food between cultures serves as a threshold of both norms and limitations but also endless possibilities, a beginning point for the development of responsiveness between human beings. Levinas (1987) pinpoints the specific attitude required to step to the threshold of hospitality. There must be a desire for contact and togetherness, a critical moment where one human being feels bound to the other. This moment is the birthplace of the virtues all religious teachings associate with hospitality, a space where each sees in the other their common spiritual heritage and longs to come home. Once we feel bound to another on this spiritual realm we enter the threshold of responsiveness from which empathy can develop, and generosity, charity and openness can find room to grow. In this respect the Baha’i Writings offer critical insights to both the private and public spaces of hospitality.

‘Abdu’-I-Baha wrote:

Liberalism is essential in this day—justness and equity toward all nations and people. Human attitudes must not be limited; for God is unlimited, and whosoever is the servant of the threshold of God must, likewise be free from limitations (The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 397).

In this quote we see the political attitudes of “liberalism”, “justness” and the ideal of “equity toward all nations and people” required at the threshold of hospitality. We are also called to develop “unlimited” (read: opening the realm of the

possible) human attitudes, to free ourselves from limitations that stop us from establishing justice, since in justice is a space of unequal power relations within which hospitality cannot flourish. Furthermore the nefarious effect of limitations, or artificial boundaries between us and others, is clearly outlined along with those virtues required to counter limitations and develop responsiveness:

To keep aloof from people, to shun them, to be harsh with them, will make them shrink away, while affection and consideration, mildness and forbearance will attract their hearts toward God (The Secret of Divine Civilization, p. 60).

The difference between sacred teachings and secular thought on hospitality is that within the sacred framework, humanity is compelled to obey a Divine injunction. This injunction is a requirement of behavior that carries the weight of moral and ethical responsibility born out of the ancient concept of the Covenant. Within the Covenant made between God and man, the Creator made a pact not to leave humanity without Divine Guidance, but humanity must show reciprocity by accepting to follow that guidance. Failure to do so is like trying to work against gravity, ultimately disastrous. In a world where people are *not* motivated by the *religious* impulse to provide hospitality, the *spiritual* conditions for the “threshold” of responsiveness to which Levinas referred, are not as likely to be created. If “every man for himself”, or even so-called “enlightened self-interest” prevail among the majority of human beings, relationships cease to be bound by religious norms that ensure respect of human rights, reciprocity upheld, and virtues developed; a problem we have regularly seen in lip-service agreement to international human rights standards with little or no change to inhuman conditions on the ground. Certainly there are important political, social, economic and citizenship limitations that have to be considered in the macro aspect of reciprocity. But people in desperate situations are not often in a position to be able to move towards reciprocity until their basic needs have been met and they are able to negotiate on a more even playing field. The injunction to show hospitality to friend and stranger alike is a Divine call to step up to the plate, to stand and deliver practically on principle. It is a place where the ideal meets real people with names, bodies, hearts and spirits, in an act of offering and receiving.

Hospitality is absolutely critical in the development of thresholds of intercultural encounter where strangers can meet and greet each other, offer solace and bring joy. I contend that hospitality without the weight of religious imperative however, is like food without taste or smell, or kindness that is insincere. The idea then, is to show how intercultural relations can be oriented towards the “more” rather than the “less” satisfying, if they are infused by a higher, sincere sense of religious obligation and within that framework begin evoking the development of spiritual feelings and virtues conducive to responsiveness. Two contrasting examples of better and worse ways of living with regard to hospitality can be seen in a public

transport experience in two different cities. In Bern, Switzerland, an old woman politely asked a young man in a train if he would mind letting her sit down. He responded, “No, I was here first,” in spite of her obvious age and frailty. In contrast a New York train passenger purchasing a ticket to go to work for the day, paid for and handed a second ticket to a street person with the words, “Hope this helps you to get around for the day.” None of these examples involved food but they certainly involved an attitude of better and worse hospitality.

Historically religion considers hospitality a virtue but virtue cannot exist without a social, cultural context where it can be demonstrated and practiced. Consider the following possibility: within the concept of a religious, spiritual and virtue foundation to the social context of human interactions, all the realms of common human experience can be brought to the table of intercultural problem solving whether from the private or public sphere. We are attracted to each other across difference through our common recognition of the Divine in each other which is reflected in our common humanity, and feel called by religious duty to show hospitality to friend and stranger alike, which brings us to the threshold of spiritual feelings of love and generosity. Physical food is shared in a social, common human experience context, surrounded by novel experiences of cultural flavors and norms, and providing a sense of solidarity and spiritual sustenance through which appreciation and responsiveness are born. Under these mutually complimentary conditions, it becomes not only possible, but likely that intercultural relationships will move beyond the limitations of cultural boundaries or food neophobic personality traits to the threshold of consultation to overcome barriers, meet common needs and work together towards common goals.

Within the Baha’i community context, the above possibility is an ongoing reality. Because so many Baha’i events involve sharing food and the intercultural context of Baha’i membership almost guarantees that different cultural groups are increasingly exposed to each other’s food, novel foods seem more and more familiar and similar. Pot-luck dinners accompanying both formal and informal Baha’i contexts with mixtures of Baha’is and their friends make this kind of threshold experience a regular occurrence. Offering of food and hospitality is considered a Baha’i obligation generally, and it is embedded in the Baha’i calendar specifically, with Intercalary days where hospitality and charity are offered to friends and strangers alike for four days prior to the month of fasting.

No matter what the response, Baha’is are encouraged to befriend and show hospitality to immigrants, refugees, orphans, widows, the poor and destitute, international students, people of prominence and any like-minded associations that promote the unity of humankind. In fact, failure to do so is associated with the ongoing suffering of humanity and the perpetration of prejudice. Baha’is are admonished to work “ceaselessly” and “fearlessly” to bring communities to reflect all the diverse elements in the general populations that surround them. In several

Sacred Writings, Baha'is are warned that failure to sincerely establish the bonds of love and unity across race, culture, religion, social class and difference of temperament and thought will be "judged by God". Although Baha'is, like every other group in the world today, still have much to do in order to reach the lofty ideals of the Baha'i teachings with regard to loving intercultural, interracial and interreligious relationships, the multiple opportunities to do so offer frequent thresholds of encounter. They provide a space, time and place within which to practice these concepts in an ongoing rhythm of community life. A transforming moment of the power of deeply spiritual hospitality in my own life, was the experience of being served by the members of the Universal House of Justice during my Baha'i pilgrimage to Haifa, Israel where the Baha'i World Centre is located.

### ***Intercultural food experience #3:***

*On the second last day of our pilgrimage, together with my husband and children and our pilgrim tour group, I entered the seat of the Universal House of Justice, located on Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel. We were ushered into a large hall, immaculately clean. where chairs had been set up for us and the fragrant perfume of freshly cut roses was everywhere. At exactly the appointed time, the nine members of the Universal House of Justice, the supreme governing body of the Baha'i Faith, emerged from their offices, stood as a group and greeted us formally but with the utmost simplicity, humility and love. They then individually moved to tables around the room and poured cups of Persian tea into specially made porcelain cups and saucers with the inscription "Universal House of Justice" on the bottom. Individually, they carried golden tea, cups and plates to all 50 of the pilgrims and served us English biscuits and oranges from the Haifa gardens, stopping to meet, greet and inquire personally about each of us with great sincerity and attentiveness. I was deeply moved by this sense of spiritual and physical hospitality and completely overwhelmed that such imminent and distinguished individuals would serve us so personally in this humble and self-effacing manner. The food choice and manner of service showed the influence of several cultures but with an infusion of divine love that I had never before experienced. I could not imagine the Prime Minister of Canada, the Counselors of the City of Haifa or any other world leader or government doing anything remotely similar. Additionally, I knew that the members of the Universal House of Justice performed this touching act of service with groups of complete strangers, every two weeks for nine months of the year, no matter what their work load, and without any trace of weariness or boredom. My heart felt so full it could have burst and my face was wet with tears. I thought it was the most delicious tea and juiciest orange I had ever tasted. My experience in Haifa awakened in me a deep desire to show that kind of loving kindness to everyone I meet. To me this was the power of Divine hospitality.*

At the risk of sounding too idealistic however, I hasten to add that my experience in the Baha'i community outside of that special moment described above, has been mixed, and fraught with the disappointing limitations that human beings everywhere have in their relationships across difference. Even with the weight of Baha'u'llah's teachings on hospitality, Baha'is fall into a variety of patterns of intercultural relationship behaviors strikingly similar to the dominant/minority group patterns described earlier. They may insist on the essential oneness of humanity, yet make no efforts to cross cultural boundaries or befriend those who are different from them. They may have prejudices against other groups and expect negative outcomes from interactions with them, unconsciously reinforcing negative social patterns. Or they may be tolerant of ambiguity and newness but not cross the threshold into offering solace and bringing joy to others. Being a Baha'i does not automatically transport one's behavior into the realm of sainthood. It is a complex and difficult thing to continuously apply the divine call to step up to the plate and show divine hospitality. To demonstrate, I will add a final food experience within two threshold opportunities, one that moved forward and another that was less successful, both occurring at the same event.

***Intercultural food experience #4:***

*One of the local white Baha'is organized a surprise engagement party for a Rwandan Baha'i who was traveling to Rwanda to get married and then return to Canada with her spouse. The organizer invited key cultural leaders in the Rwandan community who were friends with the bride to be – an all-black group, and various Baha'i friends, a racially mixed group. Participants were encouraged to bring money gifts to defray the costs of the international travel and the wedding. Rwandan women cooked traditional food and brought it to the Baha'i Centre, Baha'is helped set up the hall and sound system. All organizers from both groups arrived on time, but many of the African participants came between one and three hours late, including the honored guest. This contributed to a souring of the general mood since people came excited and hungry but ran out of small talk when neither the honored guest nor eating appeared to be on the horizon. Finally everyone was present and people dug into the food and the intercultural meeting and greeting opportunities with enthusiasm. A few prayers and some short congratulatory comments were made and as the eating slowed down, dancing began, including some informal dance lessons between the Rwandan experts and those Baha'is who were not of Rwandan descent.*

*All was going very well and conversations between people were becoming increasingly animated and interesting. Then two Aboriginal street people who had heard the music and smelled the food entered the hall. Most participants looked at the uninvited guests with suspicion or pretended they did not see them. In sharp contrast, one of the white Baha'is jumped to the door and shook their hands warmly, welcoming them to the Baha'i Centre. She told them what the*

*event was and mentioned that it was a private party however they were most welcome to have a meal and to meet people. Graciously she led them to the food table, made sure they were generously served and sat with them to find out who they were and a little bit about their lives. Her example was beautiful and engaging, but neither the Baha'i group, nor the Rwandan group followed suit. One Baha'i brought the couple some juice and sat to chat for a while, all other people in the hall moved slightly away or closed their circles of conversation. After the couple had finished their meal, they thanked the two Baha'is who had welcomed them and left. The event was successful with regard to bringing two very different groups of people together at a threshold of hospitality, but less successful in it's collective capacity to respond to an unexpected encounter with human need.*

In summary, within the Baha'i framework, guidance on intercultural relations and abolition of prejudice, admonitions to develop a spirit and practice of hospitality, and the creation of regular opportunities to practice intercultural relations within a multi-ethnic food-sharing context, do provide a unique setting to bring people together across difference. But it takes time and effort to change patterns of social interaction and to learn to overcome fear of difference.

## **Discussion**

In this paper I have provided a circular route to understanding the Baha'i concept of friendship with all people. I presented this through a mixture of secular and religious understandings of hospitality and intercultural relations, more or less within the context of offering, accepting and sharing food together. We explored the context of hospitality as it emerged from world religions, using Sacred Writings from the Baha'i Faith and other religions. This was combined with academic studies about food, intercultural relations and hospitality. We then came back full circle by comparing the divine injunctions with the sociocultural context of the Baha'i Faith.

I showed how food neophobia research provides insights into some demographic tendencies towards openness or lack of openness to new experiences and new people, but is not conclusive in combining fear of food or lack thereof to intercultural relations. I looked at general tendencies of dominant and minority relations depending upon their opportunities to interact, community attributes, attitudes towards integration and reasons for being there, as well as the adaptation of minority populations to dominant food items and patterns of association between ethnic food, identity and acculturation. Of note was the Lebanese/Quebec study that suggested parallel or independent processes of ethnic identity and preference for ethnic foods, and adaptation and sense of belonging to the dominant culture.

Unable to consider changes in dominant population food patterns from the effect of minority presence and food items, I then turned to the hospitality industry to show how hospitality's move to consumer demand is affecting the development of intercultural communication skill among travelers and those who serve them. It appears that people can and do modify their responses to others and develop useful intercultural skills when regular opportunities to practice are available and required for their jobs.

We then came to a discussion of hospitality from a social theory stand point that recognized religion as the originator and motivating force behind hospitality, identified the contexts of intercultural relationship building and simultaneously questioned practicalities within the public and private considerations of both offering hospitality and showing reciprocity. Finally we returned to the Baha'i Faith with its strong encouragement to offer loving hospitality to all peoples, with concurrent warnings to those who fail to do so. In spite of the emphasis in the Baha'i Writings and the many opportunities to practice hospitality afforded to adherents of the Baha'i Faith, Baha'is themselves are not immune to the social and cultural forces that surround them. Considerable effort is required to re-pattern social tendencies in order to reach the high standards set by the Baha'i teachings.

In conclusion, the argument that religion is required to infuse intercultural threshold experiences with loving hospitality and openness is portrayed as problematic in the last intercultural food experience where two Baha'is out of the entire group were able to welcome an unexpected opportunity to offer solace and bring joy to downtrodden individuals. One cannot judge the collective situation harshly however, considering the number of unknowns the majority of people in that room were already contending with: new and unfamiliar food or conversely offering traditional foods in the hopes they would be accepted and appreciated; various races who were strangers to each other trying to have a party; differences of language and levels of English; minority immigrant, refugee, Aboriginal and white dominant cultural elements together; social classes from a widely varied spectrum; the difficulties of intercultural communication; and lack of familiarity with dances and rituals or concurrently offering such dances and rituals to a population who may reject them – are there many contexts where so many different people have to negotiate such a breadth and depth of newness? It is certainly to the credit of all the people in that room that they came to the event with open hearts, tried to respond to each other and were successful according to their own comfort levels and capacity to deal with unknowns. They ate together. Cooked food from one culture was offered and accepted with appreciation. An embodied intercultural encounter within a spiritual and social context occurred. It feels like a good beginning, shall we start here?

## Bibliography

'Abdu'l-Baha. (1978). *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha*. (compiled by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice. Translated by A committee at the Baha'i World Centre and by Marzieh Gail). Haifa, Israel: Baha'i World Centre.

Baha'i Publishing Committee. (1943). *Baha'i world faith: Selected Writings of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha*. Wilmette, Illinois: Baha'i Publishing Committee.

Baha'i Publishing Trust. (1976 revised edition). *Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah*. (translation by Shoghi Effendi). Willmette, Illinois: Baha'i Publishing Trust.

Baha'u'llah. (1992 edition). *The Hidden Words* (translation by Shoghi Effendi). London: Nightingale Books, an imprint of The Baha'i Publishing Trust.

Bennett, Milton J. (2004). Handbook of Intercultural Training. (Dan Landis; Janet M. Bennett; Milton J. Bennett. Eds.) *Embodied ethnocentrism and the feeling of culture: A key to training for intercultural competence*, p. 249-265.

Bissoondath, Neil. (1994). *Selling illusions: The cult of multiculturalism in Canada*. Toronto: Penguin Books.

Caligiuri, Paula, M.; Jacobs, Rick, R.; Farr, James, L. (1999). The Attitudinal and Behavioral Openness Scale: scale development and construct validation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 24(1): 27-46.

Calzada, Esther, J.; Brotman, Laurie Miller; Huang, Keng-yen; Bat-Chava, Yael; Kinston, Sharon. (2008). Parent cultural adaptation and child function in culturally diverse, urban families of preschoolers. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* 30(4): 515-524.

Cleveland, Mark; Laroche, Michel; Pons, Fran; Kastoun, Rony. (2009). Acculturation and consumption: Textures of cultural adaptation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33(3):196-212.

Dikeç, Mustafa; Clark, Nigel; Barnett, Clive. (2009). Extending hospitality; Giving space, taking time. *Paragraph*, 21(1):1-14.

Eertmans, Audry; Victoir, An; Vansant, Greet; Van den Bergh, Omer. (2005). Food-related personality traits, food choice motives and food intake: Mediator and moderator relationships. *Food Quality and Preference* 16(2005): 714-726.

Esslemont, J.E. (date). *Baha'u'llah and the new era.*

Fieldhouse, Paul. (2005). *Food, justice and the Baha'i Faith*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Manitoba, 2005. [http://bahai-library.com/file.php?file=fieldhouse\\_food\\_justice](http://bahai-library.com/file.php?file=fieldhouse_food_justice). Accessed July 15, 2009, 2:45 p.m.

Fischler, Claude. (1988). Food, self and identity. *Social Science Information*, 27:275-92.

Friese, Heidrun. (2009). The limits of hospitality. Political philosophy, undocumented migration and the local arena. *Paragraph*, 32(1):51-68.

Gabriel, Sharmani Patricia. (2005). "Between Mosaic and Melting Pot": Negotiating Multiculturalism and Cultural Citizenship in Bharati Mukherjee's Narratives of Diaspora. *Postcolonial Text* 1(2). <http://postcolonial.org/index.php/pct/article/view/420/827>. Accessed July 20, 2009, 2:49 p.m.

Gundykunst, W.B., & Hammer, M. R. (1987). Strangers and hosts: an uncertainty reduction based theory of intercultural adaptation. In Y.Y. Kim & W. B. Gundykunst (Eds.), *Cross-cultural adaptation: Current approaches*, pgs. 106-139. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Harbottle, Lynn. (2004). *Food for health, food for wealth: Ethnic and gender identities in British Iranian communities*. New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Hearns, Niamh; Devine, Frances; Baum, Tom. (2007). The implications of contemporary cultural diversity for the hospitality curriculum. *Education and Training* 49(5): 350-363.

Henriques, Ami S.; King, Silvia C.; Meiselman, Herbert L. (2009). Consumer segmentation based on food neophobia and its application to product development. *Food Quality and Preference* 20(2009): 83-91.

Jansen, Willy. (2001). French bread and Algerian wine: Conflicting identities in French Algeria. In Scholliers, Peter. (Ed.) (2001). *Food, drink and identity: Cooking, eating and drinking in Europe since the middle ages*. Oxford/New York: Berg, 195-218.

Kanafani-Zahar, A. (1997). 'Whoever eats you is no longer hungry, whoever sees you becomes humble': Bread and identity in Lebanon. *Food and Foodways*, 7(1):45-71.

Kielbasiewicz-Drozdowska, Iwona; Radko, Sylwia. (2006). The role of intercultural communication in tourism and recreation. *Studies in Physical Culture and tourism* 13(2): 75-85.

Lenz, C. (1999). *Changing food habits. Case studies from Africa, South America and Europe*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Manzur, Luz; Jogaratnam, Giri. (2006). Impression management and the hospitality service encounter: Cross-cultural differences. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* 20(3/4): 21-32.

Moghaddam, F. M., & Solliday, E.A. (1991). "Balanced multiculturalism" and the challenge of peaceful coexistence in pluralistic societies. *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 3(1): 51-72.

Piontkowski, Ursula; Florack, Arnd; Hoelker, Paul; Obdrzalek, Peter. (2000). Predicting acculturation attitudes of dominant and non-dominant groups. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 24(2000): 1-26.

Pliner, P., & Hobden, K. (1992). Development of a scale to measure the trait of food neophobia in humans. *Appetite*, 19(2): 105-120.

Pliner, P., Lahteenmaki, L., & Tuorila, H. (1998). Correlates of human food neophobia. *Appetite*, 30(1):93.

Rajagopal, Lakshman; Hamouz, Fayrene. (2009). Use of food attitudes and behaviors in determination of personality characteristic of openness: A pilot study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33(2009): 254-258.

Rogers, E.M.; Steinfatt, T.M. (1999). *Intercultural communication*. Illinois: Waveland Press.

Scholliers, Peter. (Ed.) (2001). *Food, drink and identity: Cooking, eating and drinking in Europe since the middle ages*. Oxford/New York: Berg.

Toomey, Paul Michael. (1994). *Food from the mouth of Krishna: Feasts and festivals in a North Indian pilgrimage Centre*. Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology. Delhi: Hindustan Publishing Corporation.

Tung, R. (1993). Managing cross-national and intra-national diversity. *Human Resource Management Journal* 23(4): 461-77.

Turner, B. S. (1996). *The body and society, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. London: Sage Publications.

\_\_\_\_\_. (1984). *Waging Peace: A compilation of the words of Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha, and Shoghi Effendi*. Los Angeles: Kalimat Press.

Walbridge, John. (1996). *Sacred acts, sacred space, sacred time*. Oxford: George Ronald.

Zuckerman, I. (1979). *Sensation seeking: Beyond the optimal level of arousal*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.