

Peter Vandermeersch

## **Polarities in Nutrition and How to Overcome Them**

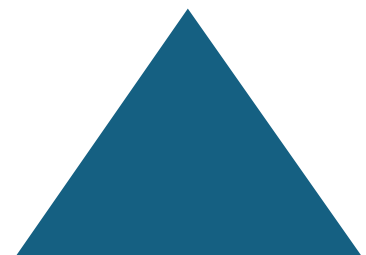
I have been giving vegetarian cooking courses for 20 years, and the same question arises in almost every course. Because we are always categorizing our food as either healthy or unhealthy, people ask, Is it good to eat this or not? What about cereals? Are they good, or is it better not to eat them? And what about soya, butter, milk, potatoes, tomatoes, coconut fat? And much more. These questions come every time, but it's always the same question: Is it good for us, or is it bad for us? It became clear to me that although there is a lot of information about food in the world, most people can't find a way through this jungle of information. People don't know what they can eat or what is healthy or not. For every food, there are science-based studies that go both ways.

The way we think of food today is: What ingredients are in it, and what is it good for? This way of thinking is very common—we can't seem to get out of this thinking habit. I had to search for a way to deal with food so that we do not just divide it into good or bad, for or against. I was looking for a whole new approach to food—our current way is just giving us a lot of information. Never before have so many people been concerned with nutrition as they are today. And never before has there been so much confusion about what to eat or not to eat. How can we deal with food in a way that isn't just: is it healthy or not, what's in it, and what is it for?

Out of this dilemma, I started to work with a whole new approach. I came to the conclusion that we need a new food culture that is not based on the contents of food and what they are good for but based on a concrete spiritual way of looking at food. This specific, scientific approach to a more spiritual view has to be very concrete and very practical. So, I began an intense study. I am quite familiar with the thoughts of Rudolf Steiner and the work of Heinz Grill, and I was interested in connecting with the Eastern approach to food of Michio Kushi.

With this as a basis, I started to develop a new approach to overcome the polarity and came to the interesting principle of the triangle. Imagine the base of the triangle: it is a line between two points. If we stay at this level, then we are always in the polarity: we are stuck in the judgment between healthy or not healthy; it's not that bad or it's good. In practice, most people are looking for a middle point between good and bad, between healthy and not healthy. They are searching for a point around the middle of the line between the polarities, meaning we eat it a bit but not too much—we want both/and instead of either/or.

What I found is that if we really want to overcome this level of polarization, we have to make a connection on a higher level. We must take a step to come to this higher point that connects both polarities on a higher level. This makes the triangle: in the figure of the triangle, the top point connects the two polarities that are on the base line.



As a result, we don't have to ask the question: is it a good food or a bad food? Is it healthy or not healthy? We have to ask an odd question. There are two aspects that seem interesting in how we come from this mid-point on the base line to this top point of the triangle. The first is that we are looking from a wider, holistic view at the human being. This is something I found expressed in a very detailed way by Rudolf Steiner. It doesn't consider the physical body as the only or the first thing. Spirituality and conscious development are central. So, the central point for the human is not only their physical body but the potential that they might become conscious. And when we make this the central point, we come to a completely different question—not what ingredients are in food or what is it good for on the physical level, but food in relation to our physical body, to our energetic or etheric forces, and to our consciousness and the forces of consciousness: thinking, feeling, and willing. So, we have some instruments as human beings that we can develop. This is the view of the human that is described in detail by Rudolf Steiner. He speaks of the creative power of the human, which is also known as the higher self or the 'I'; he speaks about consciousness and the forces of consciousness; and he speaks about the etheric forces and the physical body.

The current questions of today are almost entirely about food in relation to the physical body. We can open a whole new perspective of food in relation to the etheric forces and the energetic potential of food in relation to consciousness and the forces of consciousness. This is a completely new question for the future. We are widening the current question to a new field in which a lot of research can be done in the future. We no longer have to ask: What's in it? What is it good for on the physical level? We can ask: How does a food work? How does it work on the physical level? How does it work on our etheric forces or life forces? And how does it work on our consciousness? And if we know how a food is working, then we can decide how to integrate it into our food system. This doesn't have to do with good or bad. The question is how it works from a holistic view of the human. For this, we have to connect on a deeper level with our food.

We often think that we “know” a food when we know its ingredients. It's the same as if we think that we know a man or a woman by what's in their blood. If we really want to know someone, we cannot start by looking at what's in the blood. We must connect with them. Same with food. So, yes, we have to look at what kind of information there is and what's in it. But then there is the next level: the plant behind the food and the etheric forces that are working on a specific food. That's one new field where we can do research. Then we have another field where we can do research: how food works on our consciousness. So we widen the normal question to a totally new field, and for that, the view of the human being that Rudolf Steiner describes must become alive. It cannot stay just in books. We must bring it to life, and it must become very practical and concrete. This is then a holistic view, and if we bring it in connection with our food, then we have a completely new field for the coming years, the next 100 years, in which to do research.

Therefore, we should create a broader view of the human that is interesting for future research and that overcomes the polarity of the current times and also a broader, holistic view of food. In a new food culture, it would be a new quality criterion for nutrition that we not only know the ingredients but also the etheric forces—that we look at food not only as a sum of ingredients but also from the point of view of the etheric forces that are in the food.

When we look at a watch, for example, we can analyze this watch: we can disassemble the watch into all its specific parts, and if we reassemble them, then the watch should work again as a watch. We can do that with a car. Or with a bike. Or



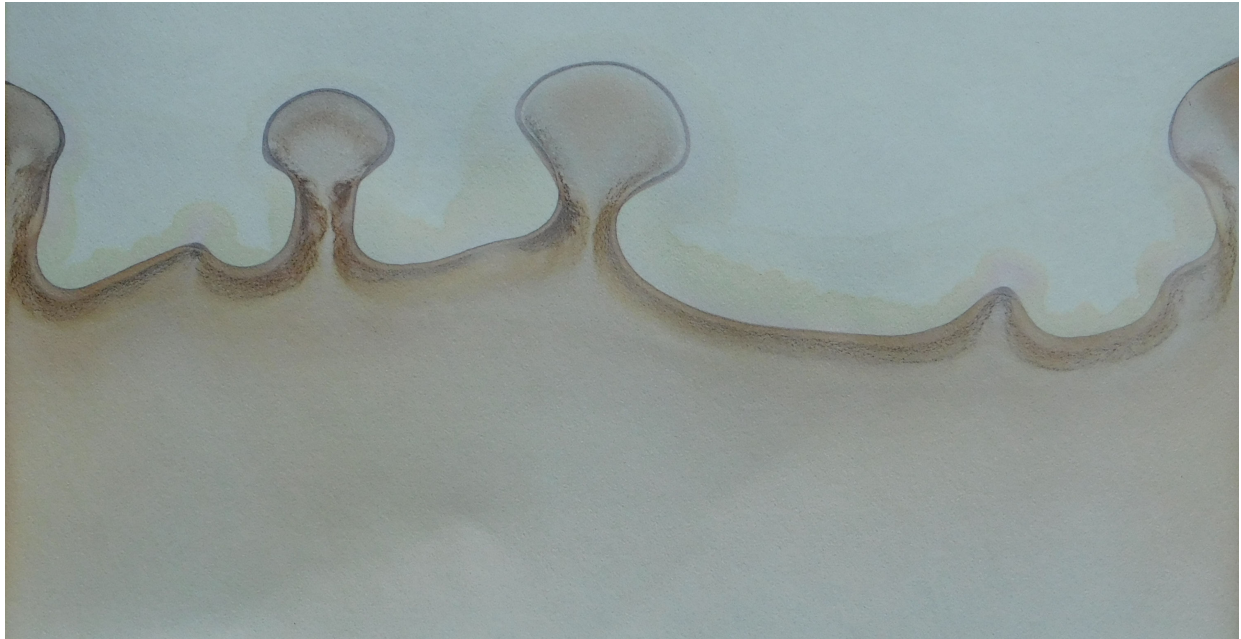
with a computer. But if we try to do that with food, e.g. a carrot—if we disassemble a carrot into its ingredients and then try to reassemble it—it won't work. And that's interesting, because we see that a carrot is more than its ingredients. There are forces working in it that are more than just the ingredients. This we can research. If this worked in the same way as the watch, then we could make our food in factories—apples wouldn't grow on a tree, we would produce them in factories. That's an interesting new perspective for looking at food. Which forces are working in it? And which forces are we taking up with our food, along with the ingredients?

I have an interesting example from a colleague in Holland, Roelant de Vletter. He did an experiment with food plants grown on a specific surface: not in the ground or in the soil but in an artificial soil we commonly find in agriculture nowadays. He made an image of it (using Lily Kolisko's method of capillary dynamolysis) and found that there was no movement in its expression; in the area of the etheric life forces, there was nothing. So there were ingredients in the food, but when it was looked at from the point of view of the etheric forces, he saw no movement.



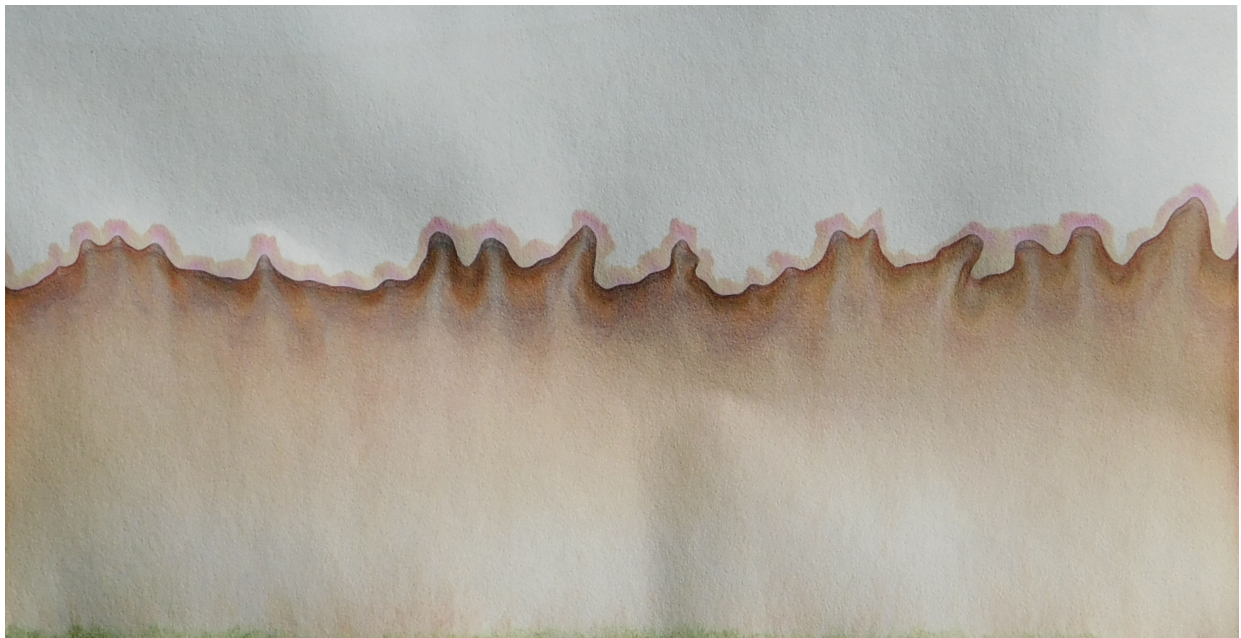
Picture of red radish leaf grown in a chemical substrate and with LED lighting with capillary dynamolysis method.

Then he put the food plant in soil, and after 4 days, he made a new image. Then he saw the first movement in the etheric forces in the plant:



Picture of red raddish leaf after 4 days grown in soil with capillary dynamolysis method.

After 8 days, the movement of the etheric forces became more intense:



Picture of red raddish leaf after 8 days grown in soil with capillary dynamolysis method.

All pictures from Roelant de Vletter, <https://www.stijgbeeld.nl/>



He did a lot of experiments, like this one, to show that food is more than just the ingredients.

If we want to overcome the polarities in our current food culture, we have to deal with food not as simply ingredients but in a practical and a concrete way—we have to deal with the etheric life forces in food. We have to develop a new vision. And this vision is based on a broader view of human beings and also a broader view of food. With this vision, it is possible to open a completely new field where the question is about how food works on these different levels—on the physical, on the energetic or etheric, and on the consciousness and our forces of consciousness. So it's not about good or bad, healthy or not healthy, but how food works on the different levels. In my courses, I have several practical examples from specific foods—that's also my research. How are the cereals working on the different levels? How are different proteins working on these levels? How are the vegetables and the oils working on these levels?

That's the challenge we have for the future, and what I want to develop further: the practical conversion of the deeper thoughts from Rudolf Steiner and Heinz Grill that, for me, are the basis for creating a new kind of food culture where food is looked at from a spiritual perspective. It's the triangle principle and how to overcome the level where we are constantly between polarities in our culture—that we learn to move to this upper point that connects for and against. We don't have to search for the middle on the base level. This is what I call the soul part of the triangle, and the part above that connects both is the spiritual part of the triangle, and the base is the physical part. When we succeed in changing our thinking from this physical level to a soul and spiritual level, then we shape the basis for a new food culture, where it's not good or bad, but where we can start from the question: How does something work?

We can look at our ingredients, and we can use the scientific method. If we want to look at the etheric forces and what's behind a plant or what's behind a food, then we also have to develop another way of thinking. Therefore, Rudolf Steiner, and also Heinz Grill, gave exercises for this. In my courses, I work with meditation to develop a new kind of thinking, where we learn to work with our consciousness forces—we learn to work with our thinking, our feeling, and our will. Rudolf Steiner developed exercises for this, and he also spoke about meditation. It's not only opening or widening our perspective, but at the same time, it's developing a completely new way of thinking. And that's something that we can practice individually.

So we can look at the information—that's the normal way we think. And if we want to think behind what we see, then we need new ways of thinking, and therefore the works of Rudolf Steiner and Heinz Grill are very interesting. It's a slow way that takes years, step by step, to develop. But we have time in the future to develop these things, and the development is central. In a new food culture, not only is health central, but really, the development of the human being is too. That's what I'm looking for; that's my work at the moment.

# Conclusion:

- a wider concrete vision about man
- a wider concrete vision about food

the question: how food works on the different levels:  
physical, etheric, soul and on the consciousness.

It's the practical conversion of the deeper thoughts from  
spiritual teachers as Rudolf Steiner and Heinz Grill.



Peter Vandermeersch is a chef in Belgium, and action researcher, author and lecturer. He runs a School for Natural Vegetarian Nutrition, Consciousness Development & Health.

<https://dezonnekeuken.be/home>