

 SEARCH

THE AUSTERITY KITCHEN
BY CHRISTINE BAUMGARTHUBER

Where the alimentary is elementary.



A Contrary Image of Steaming Excrement

By CHRISTINE BAUMGARTHUBER

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Image from *The Royal Book of Pastry and Confectionary* (1874)



CAKES AND TARTLETS

1. Pain de la Meque—2. Chou with almonds.
3. Fauchonnette with currants.—4. Madeleine.—5. Chou with pistachios.
6. Sponge cake glazed with coffee icing (*Moka*).—7. Apricot tartlet.
8. Peach tartlet.—9. Meringue tartlet (*Hirsson*).
10. Glazed genouise cake (*Espirance*).

“The ladies in hats glanced, ate, and spoke simultaneously. An unappetizing, much caricatured, yet innocent picture. In view of so much simultaneous and continuous gluttony, an outside observer, Scherbaum for instance with his preconceived opinion, was bound to infer a corresponding process: simultaneous and continuous bowel movements; for this obsessive abundance of apple strudel, almond crescents, cream kisses, and cheesecake could only be counterbalanced by contrary image, by steaming excrement. I rose to new heights. ‘You’re right, Phillip. Colossal priggishness ... Monumentally repulsive ... And yet, we mustn’t forget, it’s only a partial aspect.’

“Scherbaum said: ‘There they sit.’

“I said: ‘It’s worry that makes them stuff.’

“Scherbaum: ‘I know. They paste cake over everything.’

“I: ‘As long as they eat cake, they’re happy.’

“We stared for awhile at the mechanism of the loading and unloading cake forks and registered innumerable little bites with detached and uplifted little finger. (‘Pastry hour,’ they call it)

“I tried to undermine Scherbaum’s disgust (and my own): ‘When you come right down to it, it’s just funny.’

“But Scherbaum saw interrelations. ‘There you see adults. That’s what they wanted and now they’ve got it. Freedom of choice and second helpings. That’s what they mean by democracy.’

—Günter Grass, *Local Anaesthetic* (1969)



TIDBIT

Previously by
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Coweye Burgers and Plastic Malts

Dinner with Caligula

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