For Dr. Grete Bibring, a close friend of Anna Freud and herself a noted psychoanalyst, the dinner table was a place of order and civility in a brutal and harshly competitive world. In Vienna where she was raised, these dinners provided a sense of comfort and community in a city that was becoming increasingly hostile to Jews. In the U.S., they initially helped orient her to unfamiliar terrain. They were a comfort to others as well as to Grete. They nurtured bonds of friendship, loyalty, and collegiality in good times and in bad ones. They provided a continuity between past and present, a bridge between what Grete knew and what she had yet to learn.

For 50 years (1927-1977), Grete Bibring kept notes on the dinner parties she gave, what she served and who she invited. Her young dinner guests in Vienna were to become the world's foremost analysts. She fled the Nazi occupied Vienna, along with the Freuds, only to endure the nightly bombings of London. Nevertheless, she continued her dinner parties there (more modest and fewer) - ones to which Melanie Klein and her followers were not invited. Arriving in Boston in 1940, she quickly became a revered teacher and was appointed first woman professor at HMS. Her entertainments change as she meets new colleagues and tries to adapt to American tastes.

This new biography of Grete Bibring is accompanied by previously unpublished photographs of her and her colleagues, brief accounts of her guests' lives, and 11 authentic recipes from her table.

Books are on sale in the library for $20