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Printed Cookbooks: Food History, Book History, and Literature

Abstract

We have witnessed, in the last twenty-five years, a marked increase in the study of culinary and gastronomic literature from historical, social and linguistic perspectives. The present article discusses the role played by cookbooks in culinary history, the characteristics of this kind of literature, the importance of bibliographical groundwork, as well as the problems encountered in translating this literature and the relative position of cookbooks in the hierarchy of literary genres.

Keywords
Cookbooks
Recipes
Literature
Literary genres
Europe
National identity
Translation

Résumé

Les dernières décennies ont démontré un intérêt toujours grandissant pour les aspects historiques, sociaux et linguistiques de la littérature gastronomique et culinaire. Cet article discute le rôle que jouent les livres de cuisine dans l'histoire culinaire, les caractéristiques de cette littérature, l'importance des études bibliographiques, les problèmes de traduction dans le cas de ce genre de textes et la place occupée par les livres de cuisine dans la hiérarchie des genres littéraires.

Mots-clés
Livres de cuisine
Recettes
Littérature
Genres littéraires
Europe
Identité nationale
Traduction

We have witnessed, in the last twenty-five years, a marked increase in the study of culinary and gastronomic literature from historical, social and linguistic perspectives. In this brief account of the developments that have occurred during the last decade I will concentrate on some literary and "book history" aspects, because they provide an important and in some cases absolutely necessary background if the texts are to be used as sources for historical and cultural studies. Consequently, this is not meant to be an exhaustive survey of all the studies published in the field of food history and the conclusions they have presented.

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Cookbooks and other household books have been important commercial products for centuries, but were never treated with the same respect and esteem as other literary genres. Even antiquarians took a long time to include these books in the category of valuable collectors' items. The exception were books with illustrations of high quality, woodcuts and engravings, but such books represented a very small part of cookbook production; illustrations only became important on a large scale with the use of photography.

Cookbooks were often judged by historians to be of limited value as sources of the history of food habits because their main priority was another and more didactic one: to spread knowledge about how culinary preparations could best be accomplished, not to document if and how these preparations were actually followed by cooks and housewives. Gradually the attitude of historians changed, maybe as a reflection of the (albeit somewhat faltering) establishment of food history in academia as a field of historical research on the same level as the history of war or the history of medicine. Scholars discovered and acknowledged that cookbooks, in fact, gave much useful information about the availability of certain foodstuffs, the introduction of new technology in the kitchen, questions of health and nutrition and the predominant theories of cooking held by the culinary actors in between or even within the recipes. It also became apparent that it was possible to extract relevant information about food habits, especially among the upper levels of society, from yet other books on "food and drink" such as those on the arts of baking, brewing, viticulture, on dairy products, as well as on court administration, household management, carving, table-setting, table manners, all subjects described either in specialised books and booklets or in specially dedicated chapters in encyclopaedic household works traditionally known as "economic literature".[1]

Increasingly cookbooks and other practical household books have also been studied as sources for fields beyond food culture. They are also important sources to document aspects of current mentalities, moral attitudes, ideology, national identity, and gender roles as can be seen in a recent French collection of essays discussing national identity, gastronomic and culinary literature of the early nineteenth century.[2] The avowed aim of the book is "d'examiner plus systématiquement les constructions de l'identité culturelle française à travers la gastronomie." The editors call attention to the fact that the great majority of food history studies have been concentrating on "les pratiques alimentaires",

[1] In many bibliographies these books are referred to as "gastronomic literature", but this expression is also used for books about dining and refined taste in early nineteenth century France.

[2] Françoise HACHE-BISSETTE, Denis SAILLARD (eds.), *Gastronomie et identité culturelle française. Discours et représentations XIX^e^-XXI^e^ siècles* (Paris, 2009).

taking for granted French gastronomy as part of a cultural tradition, *le champ culturel*, without realizing that it is "indispensable de considérer l'identité culturelle comme une construction".[3]

Already in 2004, one of the contributors to this anthology, Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, had published a volume on French cuisine and the construction of national identity.[4] Among the various sources Ferguson uses there is also gastronomic and culinary literature and, thus, in a chapter called "Inventing French Cuisine" she takes a closer look at Antonin Carême, the famous early nineteenth century chef, and his writings. Her basic idea is that "cuisine cannot exist without food; nor can it survive without words". Therefore we must look to culinary texts when we want "to investigate the special role that food plays in constructing both the cultures in which we live and our place in them".[5]

Construction of national identity is also discussed in a study of Swedish "culinary icons" – among them smorgasbord and meat balls – by Jonathan Metzger who analyses how the concept of "national cuisine" has been interpreted in cookbooks for some 300 years and, in particular, since the end of the nineteenth century. The purpose of *I köttbullslandet* (In the land of meat balls) is to investigate the historically discursive construction of "Swedish" and "foreign" in the culinary field, primarily during the period 1900-1970. Metzger shows how the selection of dishes included in books designated as "typically Swedish" is often determined by factors other than the historicity of the dishes in question.[6] Relevant to this discussion is the distinction drawn by Annie Hubert between national cuisine and regional cuisines and even more between national cuisine and national dish, which implicate "une pensée politique, un exercice de pouvoir, une idée centralisatrice".[7]

The gender question is important in *The Recipe Reader*, a collection of essays about recipes "in their cultural contexts". The aim is to bring together "some of these disparate contexts and debates, in order to demonstrate the multiple ways in which the recipe illuminates the cultural worlds in which it appears (...)".[8] In their introduction the editors point out – among other aspects – the new

[3] Op. cit. pp. 18-19.

[4] Priscilla Parkhurst FERGUSON, *Accounting for Taste. The Triumph of French Cuisine* (Chicago, IL, 2004).

[5] Ibid, p. 18-19.

[6] Jonathan METZGER, *I köttbullslandet. Konstruktionen av svensk och utländsk på det kulinariska fältet* [In the land of meatballs. Construction of Swedish and foreign in the culinary field.] (Stockholm, 2005).

[7] "(...) a political thought, an exercise of power, a centralizing idea (...)" Annie HUBERT, "Cuisine et Politique: le plat national existe-t-il?" http://www.revue-des-sciences-sociales.com/pdf/rss27-hubert.pdf

[8] Janet FLOYD, Laurel FORSTER (eds.), *The Recipe Reader* (Lincoln and London, 2010, reprint of first edition, Aldershot, 2003), p. 1.

idea that cookbooks are also considered "as a form available for women's creative expression". Feminist historians, particularly Anglo-American, have brought to light moments in history and cultures when women were "empowered rather than disempowered by their relationship to food", but here the perspective is widened. The cookbook is seen "as an opportunity for women to creatively record and inscribe individual lives and situations, for example in the many private, personalized cookbooks never intended for publication."[9] This is an important and interesting observation, but it is actually a question if this observation is valid for manuscripts before the nineteenth century. It is also necessary to remember that recipes were not exclusively collected by women. Three examples of prominent male recipe collectors in seventeenth century England are John Evelyn, John Locke and Kenelm Digby. According to Elaine Leong, who has studied 250 manuscript recipe collections of mixed contents from between 1600 and 1700, among the identified authors 82 were women and 78 were men.[10]

Origin and development of the "modern" cookbook

Cookbooks are able to provide useful information about a lot of relevant subjects, but they also deserve to be studied as cultural products in their own right, not only as a source for something else. The history of cookbooks is part of the history of literature; the texts belong to an important branch of non-fiction, the manual or handbook (how-to book). Recipe collections – with instructions for cooking, medicine, distilling, navigation, production of paints and colours – contained knowledge collected and developed within the guilds of the different "mechanical arts" during the Middle Ages. Much of this knowledge was transmitted orally among the members of the guilds. Cookery instruction was passed down from master cooks to apprentices in the kitchens of courts, monasteries, hospitals, inns, and taverns, but also from mothers to daughters and from female cooks to cook maids in private homes. In some cases princes – proud of their splendid banquets - ordered the chefs to let the recipes be written down. This is described in the prefaces of several books, for example in the fifteenth-century French manuscript by Maître Chiquart (ordered by the duke of Savoy), in the sixteenth century German book by Frantz de Rontzier (ordered by the duke of Brunswick), and in the Spanish version (but not the Catalan) of Ruperto de Nola's work (ordered by the king

[9] Ibid. p. 5.

[10] Elaine LEONG, *Medical Recipe Collections in Seventeenth-Century England: Knowledge, Text and Gender*. Unpublished D.Phil. thesis (Oxford, 2005), p. 22, pp. 25-26. I owe this and several other references to Gilly Lehmann who has contributed invaluable information and reflection to this article.

of Naples).[11] Even if the ambition of the princes was to show off gastronomic status, both Chiquart and Nola claim that the recipes are recorded in order to give young and inexperienced cooks adequate instruction; in other words, the real motives are still open for discussion.

With modern printing techniques the commercial aspect became more important. Printers and booksellers soon discovered that the recipes were valuable commodities, and many of the early books were printed in several editions and reached an ever-increasing public. Some of the recipe collections were referred to as "secrets" coming from the "closets" of the aristocracy or from royal palaces. This was particularly relevant for collections with medical and dietetic prescriptions. Much of this literature belonged to a tradition known as "books of secrets": books where recipes and practical formulas are part of a "popular science", in William Eamon's words.[12] One important new element was that the medical information was written in the vernacular instead of in Latin. Physicians protested because "secrets" from their profession were thus revealed to the public; Nicholas Culpepper had to defend himself in the mid-seventeenth century against such criticism when he published his books in English. But also the revelation of "secrets" in cookery was controversial and risked attacks by cooks from the guilds. In the preface of William Rabisha's cookbook, first printed in 1661, the author admits that many in "the Fraternity of Cooks" will attack him because he makes knowledge available to "every Kitchen wench", but he retorts that the same accusation can be made against "all other Arts and Sciences", and he mentions astronomers, mathematicians, navigators, physicians and surgeons, who all published their knowledge at this time.[13]

Cookbooks had a double origin, in the dietetic tradition of medical specialists and in the culinary tradition in the kitchens of the courts. This fact inevitably leads to the question of how the printed cookbook developed, from its beginnings in the late fifteenth century into the cookbooks of today. A lot of different conclusions are drawn in recent books and articles about the chronology of modern cookbooks. Margaret Beetham claims that during the period 1860-1900 "the characteristics of the cookery book as we understand it [...] were laid down." Sandra Sherman calls her study of the eighteenth-century

[11] Maître CHIQUART, *Du fait de cuisine*, manuscript from 1420 in the Médiathèque du Valais, Sion, with shelfmark S 103. Frantz de RONTZIER, *Kunstbuch von mancherlei Essen* (Wolffenbüttel, 1598), fol. [a]3. Ruperto de NOLA, Libro de cozina (Toledo, 1525), fol. A1 verso.

[12] William EAMON, *Science and the Secrets of Nature. Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 4-5.

[13] William RABISHA, *The Whole Body of Cookery Dissected* (London, 1682), fol. A4. A facsimile edition has been published by Prospect Book (Totnes, Devon 2003).

English texts *The Invention of the Modern Cookbook*, while Elizabeth Spiller refers to "the Invention of the Cookbook, 1600-1660".[14]

What is one to make of all of this? Is one century more important than another? Does the expression "invention" of the cookbook refer to cookbooks in general or only English or British cookbooks? It is without a doubt possible to point out periods in history where new technology, new ideas and new features have changed faster and more dramatically than in other periods. But in a long perspective, developments are gradual, sometimes even with temporary setbacks. The term "invention" does not seem appropriate here: cookbooks were not "invented", but grew from their beginnings as sets of cryptic instructions, intended as much for household officials and physicians as cooks in medieval times, to the semi-standardized format we know today. If we look at English cookbooks today, the format of a list of ingredients with quantities, followed by step-by-step instructions, is less universal than one might expect. Elizabeth David's recipes are often imprecise, encouraging the reader to experiment with the recipe as source of inspiration rather than a peremptory guide; Nigel Slater and Jane Grigson offer similarly discursive approaches.

Sandra Sherman writes that the innovations in the eighteenth century "emerge in stark relief when compared to earlier texts."[15] Sherman has many new and intriguing observations, but her conclusions about what is typical for the eighteenth-century English cookbooks might be valid for earlier cookbooks as well, and actually for cookbooks in other European countries from the same time or earlier. The development of the English cookbook did not take place in splendid isolation. What is most striking in some of the articles and books discussing the cookbook, is not that the examples are limited to one country (or one language), but that general conclusions are sometimes based on limited material. When Sandra Sherman writes about carving instructions in eighteenth-century England, she seems to be completely ignorant of the rich literature in this field on the continent. It flourished in France in the eighteenth century, even more in Italy and Germany in the seventeenth century and, to a certain degree, in the Iberian peninsula in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. This continental literary history of carving methods is really worthy of the epithet "invention".[16]

[14] Margaret BEETHAM, "Of Recipe Books and Reading in the Nineteenth Century: Mrs Beeton and her Cultural Consequences", in Janet FLOYD, Laurel FORSTER (eds.), *The Recipe Reader* p. 16. Sandra SHERMAN, *The Invention of the Modern Cookbook* (Santa Barbara, CA, 2010). Elizabeth SPILLER, "Recipes for knowledge: Maker's Knowledge Traditions, Paracelsian Recipes, and the Invention of the Cookbook, 1600-1660", in Joan FITZPATRICK (ed.), *Renaissance Food from Rabelais to Shakespeare. Culinary Readings and Culinary Histories* (Burlington, VT, 2010), p. 55.

[15] Sandra SHERMAN, *The Invention...* E-book, loc 202-5.

[16] Ivan DAY, "From Murrel to Jarrin: Illustrations in British Cookery Books 1621-1820", in Eileen WHITE (ed.), *The English Cookery Book. Historical Essays* (Totnes, Devon, 2004), pp. 98-150. Ken ALBALA, *The Banquet* (Urbana, ILL, 2007), pp. 153-159. Enrique de Aragon, Marques de VILLENA, *Arte Cisoria* (Madrid, 1766).

Some claims of inventions or innovations seem particularly difficult to justify. Beetham refers to the "innovations" made by Mrs. Beeton in her classic *Book of Household Management* first published in 1860-61: for example the arrangement of recipes and exact measures. But the arrangement of recipes alphabetically was no new method; it was already used in an Italian book from the fourteenth century, later in a French book by Massialot dated 1691 and in the English translation of this book from 1702.[17] Beeton's lists of ingredients at the top of the recipe may be more systematic than those in other books, but it is the result of an idea that developed gradually. Beeton had certainly picked it up from Eliza Acton's *Modern Cookery* from 1845, where ingredients were occasionally listed at the bottom of the recipe. In her preface Acton referred to this as an innovation ("novel features"). But the basic idea was already in the air. Thomas Gloning has found a recipe in a manuscript from around 1770, where the ingredients are written in a vertical list, the way we know it today, but not yet used by Mrs Beeton.[18] The German gastronomic writer Karl von Rumohr had in his book *Geist der Kochkunst* from 1822 presented some of the recipes in two parts, first *Quantitäten* (quantities of ingredients) and then *Verfahren* (preparation).[19] Ingredients listed at the top of a recipe are also found in a Danish cookbook from the 1820's.[20] Even in Russia a cookbook from 1861 listed the ingredients separately and very systematically in separate vertical columns at the bottom of each recipe.[21]

The use of exact measures also developed gradually but varied considerably from country to country and from author to author. All the same, it is a fact that recipes for medicines and various remedies were more exact that the average culinary recipe. This was firmly established in England after the publication of the official *Pharmacopoea Londinensis*, as Elizabeth Spiller demonstrates in her analysis of cookbooks, books of secrets and other recipe collections in the early seventeenth century. Of course this does not mean that exact measures were absent earlier. In the English cookbooks attributed to Thomas Dawson from the 1580s and 1590s there are instructions like this one: "Take Rennish wine a quart, or Spanish wine a pint, rose water a pint and

[17] "Anonimo veneziano del trecento", in Emilio FACCIOLI, *L'arte della cucina in Italia* (Torino, 1992), pp. 69-97; MASSIALOT, *Le cuisinier royal et bourgeois* (Paris, 1691) and *The Court and Country Cook* (London, 1702).

[18] (Thomas Gloning to the author).

[19] Particularly in the fourth chapter on bakery. Karl von RUMOHR, *Geist der Kochkunst* (Frankfurt am Main, 1978), pp. 123-124.

[20] Caroline NYVANG, "Medie og måltid – danske kogebøger i 1800-tallet", in Ole HYLDTOFT (ed.), *Syn på mad og drikke i 1800-tallet* [Conception of food and drink in the nineteenth century] (Copenhagen, 2010), p.158. The article is based on her thesis rewarded with the gold medal at Copenhagen University in 2007.

[21] Elena MOLOKHOVETS, *Podarok molodym khozyaykam* [Gift to young housewives] (Kursk, 1861).

a half, Sinamon brused a pound and a halfe...".[22] Exact measures were often used in works on confectionery, for example in a Spanish book from 1592, where a recipe calls for one pound of anis, six pounds of sugar and three pints of water.[23] There may have been different attitudes to this matter depending on geography. Marx Rumpolt, private cook to the Elector in Mainz, writes in his German cookbook from 1581 that the Italians measure everything (*Die Welschen nemmen alles nach dem Gewicht*).[24] He probably based this on his experience from Italy; two prominent Italian cookbook authors before Rumpolt's time often give exact measurements: Bartolomeo Scappi and Christoforo Messisbugo. Messisbugo has a recipe where he prescribes 25 pounds of pork, 2 ½ pound of cheese, 4 ounces of pepper, one ounce of cinnamon, one ounce of ginger, 1/2 ounce of cloves, 1/2 ounce of nutmeg, 1/8 ounce of saffron, and ten ounces of salt.[25] And this is neither medicine nor confectionery, but a sausage. Differences between countries obviously continued, to judge from a remark by the Russian Elena Molokhovets in the preface to her book, repeated as late as in the 1901 edition. She says exact measures were considered strange and even comic, particularly by the lower classes, and among them the cooks, who were still mostly illiterate.[26]

The above examples show that the pace of innovation varied considerably from country to country, and it is difficult to attribute to one book, much less to one author, the "invention" of a particular feature. The arrival of the "modern" form of the cookbook (if indeed there is such a thing) cannot be dated to a particular moment in time, as Beetham, Sherman and Spiller suggest. Therefore I feel more inclined to agree with Anne Willan, who considers four centuries "that made the modern cookbook".[27]

Book history and bibliographical groundwork

Incorrect conclusions may easily be drawn without solid knowledge about all aspects of a book and about the context in which it is written, edited and printed. Book history, which has developed as a specialised field of study in the course of the last decades, takes a broad view of print culture in the shaping of society, of the transition from orality to text and of the future of the book

[22] Thomas DAWSON, *The Good Huswifes Jewell* (London, 1596), fol. 46.

[23] Miguel de BAEZA, *Los quatro libros del arte de la confiteria* (Alcala de Henares, 1592), libro 2, capitulo 20.

[24] Marx RUMPOLT, *Ein new Kochbuch* (Frankfurt am Main, 1581), fol. XLII.

[25] Christoforo MESSISBUGO, *Libro novo* (Venezia, 1557), fol. 96.

[26] Elena MOLOKHOVETS, *Podarok molodym khozyaykam* [Gift to young housewives] (St. Petersburg, 1901), p. II.

[27] Anne WILLAN, *The Cookbook Library. Four Centuries of the Cooks, Writers and Recipes That Made the Modern Cookbook* (Berkely, CA, 2012).

in an electronic age. But in order to situate the book in its cultural field, a study of the book as a material object is necessary, and this has led to a further development of the long-established science of bibliography. Basic details of a culinary work may provide fundamental information for the food historian. Several studies of medieval texts have demonstrated how important all different aspects of the book are for the understanding of the various functions of the cookbook manuscripts.[28]

Such thorough studies of texts are just as necessary when researching books from later centuries. Gilly Lehmann has analysed "Cookery books, cooking and society in eighteenth century Britain".[29] Before outlining and discussing the development of different "culinary styles" in the course of the century, she examines systematically the most important works under the caption "Authors and readers". A similar approach is taken by Caroline Nyvang in her study of nineteenth century printed Danish cookbooks.[30] Before analysing how the books express attitudes to dominant medical theory, economy, gender etc, she gives a historical overview of cookbook production, the frequency of editions, the background of authors and she discusses the development of different markets, in other words, readers.

Titles and prefaces of cookbooks give indications of what market the authors (or their publishers) were aiming for even though this is no proof of who the readers actually were. Reception history is extremely important, despite the fact that good sources for readership statistics are very difficult to come by. Lehmann regrets the lack of information about ownership of cookbooks in English inventories and wills, but she has studied cookbooks in libraries where names of earlier private owners are inscribed and comments to the recipes are added. All of the information obtained this way has been compared with percentages of literacy in different population groups and with the prices of different books. Lehmann's conclusion is that the history of cookbooks in the eighteenth century "is of a gradual descent down the social scale: aimed largely at the gentry class at the beginning, at the middle classes and a growing readership among servants by its end." In this case even the title is an indicator: the word "lady" is gradually replaced by "woman". The same downward development was true for manuscripts. Old aristocratic handwritten recipe collections were passed on to servants.[31] This is information not easily accessed through a study of the texts alone.

To identify the authors of the early books is often complicated, because the production of a cookbook does not always – to put it mildly – depend

[28] See for example Bruno LAURIOUX, *Le règne de Taillevent* (Paris, 1997).
[29] Gilly LEHMANN, *The British Housewife* (Totnes, Devon, 2003).
[30] Caroline NYVANG, "Medie og måltid..." pp. 145-230.
[31] Gilly LEHMANN, *The British*...pp. 61, 106, 72-73.

entirely on the person responsible for the recipes in the kitchen. Editors became extremely important, particularly when new editions were prepared. Lehmann shows how a court cookbook by Patrick Lamb, originally printed in 1710, the year after his death, was published under his name six years later, greatly expanded with new recipes, most of them taken from the French cookbook author Massialot and with the recipes organized alphabetically as in Massialot's work.[32] We have every reason to believe that this revision was made by one of the publishers, Abel Roper, who was a professional writer. Nyvang documents how Danish printers and publishers towards the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth century used material from older cookbooks in their compilation of new works.

The important part played by the person responsible for the production and distribution of the book, printer/ publisher/ bookseller, was a characteristic phenomenon from the very beginning of printing and is found in several countries. One example is from Germany where the first printed cookbook, *Küchenmeisterei*, went through many revisions with substantial additions and the reorganization of the chapters by such new publishers as Christian Egenolff (Strassburg and Frankfurt am Main) and Hermann Gülfferich (Frankfurt am Main). The "hand" of the printer is found in Czech, Dutch, French and Hungarian books as well.[33]

Printers and publishers collected recipes themselves or got other people to do it. In several cases they encouraged family members to compile recipe collections from existing books or recipes circulating in their social group. In a Nürnberg cookbook from 1691 the wife of the publisher Endter in all probability did the compiling; in a 1772 Dutch cookbook the sister-in-law of the publisher was responsible; and in a Norwegian bestseller from 1887 the work was carried out by the wife of the bookseller and publisher Aksel Olsen.[34]

The practice of collecting recipes from earlier books raises of course for us today the question of originality and plagiarism. But when understood as "imitatio" in the classical sense, this is not very different from the old scribal culture where changes were continually introduced. As a result, manuscripts might contain many variants of the "original" text. This tradition continued in the early modern period as a form of "scribal publication", where recipes from manuscripts circulated within limited social circles. Some of these

[32] Ibid. pp. 90-91. Patrick LAMB, *Royal Cookery* (London, 1710, 1716). For Massialot see note 17.

[33] Henry NOTAKER, *Printed cookbooks in Europe 1470-1700* (Newcastle, DE, 2010), p. 219, 221 (German), p. 33 (Czech), pp. 47-48 (Dutch), p. 149 (French), p. 279 (Hungarian).

[34] *Vollständiges Nürnbergisches Koch-Buch* (Nürnberg, 1691), titlepage verso. *Vriesche Keukenmeid*, compiled (verzamelt) by Catharina Zierikhoven (Leeuwarden, 1772); the family link with the publisher according to Anne van't VEER, *Oud hollands kookboek* (Utrecht, 1966), p. 186. ANON, *Kogebog for hvermand* (Kristianuia, 1887); the family link according to Hjalmar PETTERSEN, *Norsk Anonym- of Pseudonym-Lexicon* (Kristiania, 1924).

recipes were eventually included in printed cookbooks, with or without the consent of the "original writer or owner". But after the invention of printing we find in addition quite a few examples of cynical "theft" of other people's work: entire books were sometimes reprinted by another bookseller, but in a number of cases recipes from other books were adapted in a similar way to how Shakespeare and Molière adapted plots and themes from other literary works, without damage to their artistic creativity.

One English example is Martha Bradley, a cook in Bath in the mid-eighteenth century, who took most of her recipes from other books, but re-worked them and added her personal remarks. "These remarks are invariably Mrs Bradley's own and owe nothing to her original sources", Gilly Lehmann concludes, after a comparison with the recipes she started from.[35] There seems to be a high degree of consciousness of the necessity to improve existing recipes. A Danish author admits that his readers probably will recognize recipes from older books, but adds that comparisons will show that there always is an improvement made, thanks to the assistance of professional cooks. In the German classic by Henriette Davidis published in 1845, the author stresses that she does not present everything as her own creation, but everything is repeatedly tried and improved and she has only included recipes she knows are correct.

Unfortunately the original manuscripts by authors of printed cookbooks are almost non-existent, but in the case of Hugh Plat, an English gentleman, The British Library holds some of his handwritten notes relating to the subject matter of his printed book *Delightes for Ladies*. This is one of the successful miscellaneous household works of the early seventeenth century, containing recipes for cookery, confectionary, medicine, cosmetics and more. Malcolm Thick has compared the book to the notes, and has detected other sources behind Plat's book, most important among them recipes by a person with the initials T.T., also held by the British Library.[36] Thick has also identified recipes contributed by friends and acquaintances, some of them from abroad. Putting these details carefully together, Thick is able to explain how the work was composed. He demonstrates how Plat put considerable effort into perfecting recipes that were not originally his own, in the same way as other authors, editors, printers and publishers did.

This dialogue between manuscript and print started early on, a fact that has been demonstrated recently in the case of *Küchenmeisterei*. This book was printed in more than a dozen editions before 1500, and these printed books co-existed with manuscripts of the same "family". An interesting question would

[35] Gilly LEHMANN, *The British*...p. 222.

[36] Malcolm THICK, "A close look at the composition of Sir Hugh Plat's *Delightes for Ladies*", in Eileen WHITE, *The English Cookery Book*... pp. 55-71.

be whether one or more of the manuscripts are the basis for the printed versions. As a matter of fact, it may easily be the other way round. A recent study proves that at least one early manuscript, located in the Zentralbibliothek of Solothurn in Switzerland, is copied from one of the incunabula editions.[37]

In later centuries many housewives copied recipes from printed books, added their own comments, changed ingredients and quantities, and then sent their manuscript to a printer.[38] Documentation of such zigzagging between manuscripts and prints undermines the idea of a linear progression from orality to print, invoked by some scholars. Sandra Sherman writes that the printed cookbooks "take up where manuscripts leave off, imitating but also outdating them in the amount of detail that recipes can provide".[39] But she neglects – or ignores – that there are important exceptions to this rule. Some of the manuscript copies of Edward Kidder offer more recipes than the print versions, and sometimes more detail.[40] Timothy Tomasik sees the history of transmission of culinary recipes as dots on a line; they started "as orally transmitted knowledge, became transcribed in manuscripts and later reworked and revised to suit the tastes of a print-culture public".[41] It is of course correct that many printed cookbooks were based on manuscripts not originally written with the intention of being printed, but were often old manuscripts that had circulated for a long time. This goes for all kinds of books, including culinary literature. Most incunabula cookbooks – and many from the sixteenth century – were based on old manuscripts, some of them going back more than a century. It is also true that written texts, in manuscript or print form, created other demands than the oral tradition. But the fact is that all the three "dots" co-existed. The oral and manuscript culture continued long after the new printing methods started, and which recipes went into print and which did not, was pure coincidence. The three different forms of expression actually

[37] Marco HEILES, "Der Solothurner Codex S 490: Eine 'Küchenmeisterei'-Abschrift", in *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, vol. 140 (Stuttgart, 2011), pp. 501-504. See also the introduction in Trude EHLERT (ed.), *Küchenmeisterei: Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar zweier Kochbuch-Handschriften des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main, 2010).

[38] In Norway this can be found as late as in Andrine LARSEN, *Huusholdningsbog* [Book of household management] (Fredrikshald, 1846).

[39] Sandra SHERMAN, *The Invention*...E-book, loc. 87-9

[40] Simon Varey, "New Light on Edward Kidder's *Receipts*", *PPC* 39 (1991), pp. 48-49 [there are more recipes in the Clark MS than in the printed versions but also some omissions of recipes from printed versions]; Gilly Lehmann has compared another MS version bearing the ownership inscription "Sarah Prince & Mary Princes", published by the University of Iowa Press in 1993, to two of the printed versions, and has found extra recipes, and some recipes with more detailed instructions, in the Prince MS (private communication to the author from Gilly Lehmann).

[41] Timothy J. TOMASIK, "Translating taste in the vernacular editions of Platina's *De honesta voluptate et valetudine*", in Timothy J. TOMASIK, Juliann M. VITULLO (eds.), *At the Table. Metaphorical and Material Cultures of Food in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout, 2007), pp. 189-210.

still exist today in TV studios, blogs and books. An interesting question might therefore be: do the TV cooks represent the same form of orality as the cooks teaching apprentices in former courts or the domestic science teachers in school kitchens? Or does this new orality just consist in written texts learned by heart? How influenced are the TV chefs by the cookbooks they certainly have a good knowledge of or have themselves already prepared for publication in the wake of the TV shows? The blogs may be closer to the oral tradition with readers' comments and additions to a recipe, a form of written dialogue – a kind of conversation through social media.

The effects of transfer and translation

Another question that needs to be asked is: viewed in a historical perspective, who is responsible for the transmission of oral text to written (handwritten or printed) form? And what happens during this transition? In his introduction to the culinary memoirs by Auguste Escoffier, Pascal Ory describes this famous French cook as an exception because "le cuisinier sous le nom duquel paraît un ouvrage est la plupart du temps assisté, voir totalement supplée, par un porte-plume".[42] Through the centuries many cooks have been, if not totally illiterate, at least lacking the necessary proficiency in writing. Several prominent cooks in princely households dictated their recipes to scribes, for example Maître Chiquart and Frantz de Rontzier, both mentioned earlier on. How much influence did the scribes have on the final product? One specialist of paleography and codicology has observed that "inside many a scribe there lurked a compiler struggling to get out".[43]

A famous Italian cook and cookbook author, Bartolomeo Scappi, obviously knew how to write, but not necessarily as well as his cookbook *Opera* from 1570 may suggest. June di Schino, who has made a great contribution to the biography of Scappi, by discovering new sources that help to reconstruct his life, reproduces in her book a receipt written in Scappi's own hand. His hand writing is without the elegance that distinguishes the scribes of the time, and even if di Schino attributes the plan of the book and the collection of recipes to Scappi himself, what she calls *la messa in bella* of the material was in her opinion probably executed by a reviser at the behest of the publisher, certainly a person from the Veneto, judging by the presence of lexical and semantic forms which are typical of that region.[44]

[42] Pascal ORY, "Préface", in Auguste ESCOFFIER (ed.), *Souvenirs culinaires* (Paris, 2011), p. 7.

[43] Malcolm B. PARKES, *Scribes, scripts and readers* (London, 1991), p. 69.

[44] June di SCHINO, Furio LUCCICHENTI, *Il cuoco segreto dei papi. Bartolomeo Scappi e la Confraternita dei cuochi e dei pasticcieri* (Roma, 2007), pp. 18-19.

Closer to our times is an example from the USA, where southern cooking was influenced by African-American cooks in the households of the big plantations, but no ante-bellum cookbook was written by one of these cooks. One of the first African-American authors in this field was the still illiterate former slave Abby Fisher, whose recipes were published in 1881. She dictated the recipes, and according to a scholar the transcription of her oral text by professional editors strove "to extinguish all semblance to orality from its text".[45]

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Another example of a transfer of knowledge is a text translated from one language to another. The question of what happens in the process of such transfers has been the subject for studies of cookbooks translated in the Renaissance and the early modern period. Do the books change character during this process? Are the recipes modified in order better to adapt to a new cultural context? Do the translations represent a real diffusion of culinary practice or only a diffusion of texts?

One illuminating example is a small cookbook published in Dutch in 1612 in the city Leuven/Louvain (in today's Belgium). 141 of the 170 recipes in the book are based on the Italian work by Bartolomeo Scappi, which contains more than a thousand recipes. But the author, known only by his pseudonym Antonius Magirus, made his personal selection and adaptation. He changed some of the recipes to make them more suitable for people in Flanders, where many of the Italian ingredients were unavailable. A new commented edition of the cookbook brings statistics and a concordance ("Concordatietabel") with indications of which recipes were translated literally and which were more or less re-worked by the author.[46]

Timothy J. Tomasik has compared Platina's Latin work *De honesta voluptate* with the French translation, discussed earlier by Mary and Philip Hyman, and the Italian translation, that – as he correctly points out – has rarely been studied seriously by scholars.[47] In fact, the Italian translation is particularly interesting, because the recipes in Platina's Latin book were originally a translation from an Italian text by the cook known as Martino (Maestro Martino, Martino da Como, Martino de' Rossi). Tomasik demonstrates clearly with a wealth of examples how the translators adapted certain

[45] Andrew WARNES, "Talking Recipes: What Mrs Fisher Knows and the African-American Cookbook Tradition", in Janet FLOYD, Laurel FORSTER (eds.), *The Recipe Reader...* p. 65.

[46] Jozef SCHILDERMANS, Hilde SELS, Marleen WILLEBRANDS, *Lieve schat, wat vind je lekker? Het Koocboec van Antonius Magirus (1612) en de Italiaanse keuken van de renaissance* (Leuven, 2007), pp. 15, 212-217.

[47] Timothy J. TOMASIK, "Translating taste...," pp. 189-210.

recipes to regional tastes in France and Italy, and he comments on how the dietetic information is played down in the Italian translation ("taste triumphs over health") but is substantially expanded in the French.[48]

Tomasik's observations are interesting and illuminating, but I have certain difficulties with one of his conclusions. He claims that the French translation – published in fourteen editions between 1505 and 1586 – was successful "because it had been adapted to French tastes". But it is not clear if this is based on studies of the editorial history. Fourteen editions in 80 years is not necessarily a success, particularly compared to other contemporary books. Platina's French edition was printed only three times before 1528, while the old *Viandier* had twice as many editions during these years. In the 1540s new texts sold far better than Platina. The success of a book depends on a lot of factors. Book history research suggests that Platina may have been successful because the publishers had a more sophisticated or learned public in mind. The book was printed in folio or quarto format – typical for academic books – whereas *Le Viandier* had already changed to the more popular octavo, and in the 1540s Platina's typeface was switched to roman when the other cookbooks still stuck to the more popular gothic. But it is true that the French edition was more successful than the Italian one, printed only five times in thirty years. This is not easy to explain when we know that the next Italian cookbook, *Epulario*, based on another version of Martino's Italian text, was published in ten editions between 1516 and 1526.

Tomasik has not included the German translation of Platina in his study because "German is outside my linguistic competency, but also because appearing as it did in only one edition, Platina's text seemed to have only a muted impact on German culture".[49] This seems to me a relevant argument. He does not mention the Dutch translation of 133 of Platina's recipes in Gheeraert Vorselmann's cookbook from 1556.[50] A quick glance at the German and Dutch translations reveals that many of Platina's personal and dietetic commentaries are omitted, but in the naming of the recipes it is possible to spot different cultural or national attitudes. What Martino simply called "salsicce" (sausages), became "Lucanicae" in Platina's text (a Roman name for sausages). While the Dutch translator calls them "Ytalieansche woorsten", which gives them a foreign air, the German translator calls them "Schibling". *Schübling* was an established type of sausage in Southern Germany. In other words, the

[48] The sources for the dietetic expansion is discussed in the introduction to a facsimile edition of the first French edition: Jean-Louis FLANDRIN, Silvano SERVENTI, "Preface. Au nom d'Epicure", in *Le Platine en françois. D'après l'édition de 1505* (Paris, 2003).

[49] Timothy J. TOMASIK, "Translating taste... ", p. 190, note 3.

[50] Gheeraert VORSELMANN, *Eenen nyeuwen Coock Boeck* (Antwerpen, 1556). A reprint with modern typesetting of the Library of Congress copy of the second edition from 1560 was published in Wiesbaden in 1971 with an introduction and commentaries by Elly Cockx-Indestege.

translator made the dish less foreign through its name, but he kept exactly the same text in the recipe with the same seasonings, fennel and black pepper.

Hopefully these translations will be studied more closely and the findings compared to Tomasik's. But there may be a need for a more systematic, scientific approach when the results of a translation in a new cultural context are studied. Andrea Wurm, a German scholar in translation science (Übersetzungswissenschaft), has developed a theory and a method in her thesis *Translatorische Wirkung* (The effects of translation).[51] To test her concept the author makes a case study of German cookbooks translated from French in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. She has chosen certain parameters to see what happens in these translations and distinguishes between those recipes that use the imperative (in singular or plural mode) and those using an impersonal expression (typical for several Germanic languages). She sorts the dishes according to types of names, for instance fantasy names or geographical names. She also looks into the organization of the material in the books and observes the use of French terms (Potage, Coulis, Jus, Bouillon, Compôte). Finally she has chosen two very common dishes and compared how they are described in the various books. The final result of this study is then compared to cookbooks originally written in German. Wurm seeks a scientific tool for research into all sorts of translations, but her case study reveals a lot about the cookbooks of the period, information that would probably be difficult to extract without her method.

French influence on culinary language and ideas

Strong French influence was evident in other countries than in Germany and inevitably left its traces in many European cookbooks. Lehmann has analysed and discussed this influence in English culinary literature. She points out how difficult it was to replace the French terminology; words were often used without a precise knowledge of what the concepts implied in the French original. What was, for example, the reality behind the use of an expression such as *Ho good Sawces* ("haut goût") in Hannah Woolley's books? Woolley gives her relatively modest readers a chance to be in fashion by imitating French dishes, but were the expressions she used only something she or her publisher had heard pronounced without any real idea of what it really meant?[52] Lehmann

[51] Andrea WURM, *Translatorische Wirkung. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis von Übersetzungsgeschichte als Kulturgeschichte am Beispiel deutscher Übersetzungen französischer Kochbücher in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt am Main. 2007).

[52] Gilly LEHMANN, *The British...* p. 51.

also gives many examples of the ambiguous attitudes to French cuisine in England, a mixture of aggressive attacks and silent adaptation.

In the 1800s French cuisine established a veritable hegemony in international culinary culture; great cooks and gastronomic writers left their imprint in several culinary works. There is good reason to give prominence to three writers without a professional career in cookery, who became famous in their respective countries for cookbooks that today are considered national classics: Charles Emil Hagdahl from Sweden, Angel Muro from Spain, and Pellegrino Artusi from Italy. The most important among them is Artusi, a businessman and amateur literary critic before he dedicated his life to the cookbook. He is also the one who has been studied most seriously, particularly by Alberto Capatti, who has commented in detail on the development of Artusi's great work, *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene*, from 1891 on when it was first published. Capatti has described Artusi's relationship to French cuisine in these words: "Dal canto suo, Artusi ha operato una revisione critica della cucina franco-italiano, con dolcezza, senza dogmatismi. Selezionando techniche e ricette francesi, secondo il loro grado di penetrazione nella consuetudine Borghese italiana, ha avviato una epurazione senza troppi sacrifice".[53] But to Capatti the question of French influence is only one element in a wider perspective: Artusi's linguistic strategy. He wanted to contribute to the development of a national language. At the time of the political unification of Italy most Italians spoke dialects, often only understood in the respective regions, while 2.5 % mastered the printed Italian language. The historian Piero Camporesi, in an introduction to a reprint of the 15th edition of Artusi's cookbook, expressed the judgment that he had done more for national unification than *I promessi sposi* (The Betrothed), Alessandro Manzoni's famous historical novel.[54] Capatti, in a paper in 2005, indicated certain errors in Camporesi's introduction and explained the need for a critical edition of Artusi's work. Capatti demonstrated with a wealth of examples that the 15th edition, the last one Artusi revised before his death, is not as interesting in itself as it might seem if seen in the light of the earlier editions.[55] In a later article Capatti points out how the revisions from 1891

[53] "Artusi carried out a critical revision of Franco-Italian cuisine, with sensitivity and without dogmatism. Selecting French techniques and recipes, according to how familiar the Italian bourgeoisie was with them, he started a purge without sacrificing too much." Alberto CAPATTI, "La cucina francese in Italia. L'improbabile incontro." Paper delivered at Festa Artusiana in Comune di Forlimpopoli 26. June 1999. http://www.pellegrinoartusi.it/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/atti-convegno-1999.rtf (acc. 28. October 2012).

[54] Piero Camporesi, "Introduzione", in Pellegrino ARTUSI, *La Scienza in cucina e l'Arte di mangier bene* (Torino, 1995), p. XVI.

[55] Alberto CAPATTI, "Quattordici o quindici ragioni per una edizione critica di La scienza in cucina". Paper at Convegno in Forlimpopoli 2005:http://www.pellegrinoartusi.it/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/capatti.doc (acc. 29. August 2012).

onwards follow a double development, with the addition of new recipes and the improvement of others, on the one hand, and, on the other, an increasing attention to the national question: both the taste (*un gusto nazionale*) and the use of the national language – *italianizzazione della lingua*. Artusi had in other words two aims, two objectives: a gastronomic one and a linguistic one. A comparison between different editions of a cookbook can reveal important steps in the development, not only of taste, attitudes and technology, but also in the use of language.[56]

A recent study of the Spanish cookbook author Angel Muro illustrates how it is possible to combine French influence with an independent personal and national attitude.[57] Like his contemporary Artusi, Angel Muro was not a professional cook, he was an engineer by education and a writer by profession, and he had the same great editorial success as his Italian counterpart. His *El Practicón* was printed in 34 editions between 1894 and 1928. Frédéric Duhart has investigated the traces of French cuisine and gastronomy in the works by Angel Muro – who spent more than two decades in Paris. Duhart shows how Muro was strongly influenced by the literature of the nineteenth century, the gastronomic writers Brillat-Savarin and Grimod de la Reynière, by the cooks and cookbook writers Antonin Carême and Jules Gouffé, and by Alexandre Dumas' great culinary encyclopaedia. But at the same time Duhart demonstrates how Muro conserves his national identity and pride. With an independent mind he integrates the French recipes into his own culinary theories and his own language, and when he adapts French culinary terms it is only because he realizes that the Spanish vocabulary has no alternatives. *Tournedos* is a French word, he writes, but it has been naturalised into our cuisine. *Civet* needs no translation because it is known in all cuisines and the best recipe is by a French cook, Carême. On the other hand he recommends avoiding the French word *caviar* and use the Castilian *cabial*.[58]

Charles Emil Hagdahl, physician, botanist and a specialist in dairy production, published his book in 1879 with the title *Kok-konsten som vetenskap och konst* (Cookery as science and art). Hagdahl had an independent and personal approach, but in his description of cookery techniques he depends heavily on the same French cooks and writers as Muro, and follows Gouffé's recipe structures. Even the engravings are made after French models since a Swedish artist copied them from *Ecoles des cuisinières* by Urbain

[56] Alberto CAPATTI, "Pellegrino Artusi editore casalingo", in Cecilia ROBUSTELLI, Giovanna FROSINI (eds.), *Storia della lingua, storia della cucina* (Firenze, 2009), pp. 19-28.

[57] Frédéric DUHART, "Une certaine image de la France: cuisine et gastronomie française dans *El Practicón* et le *Diccionario general de cocina* d'Angel Muro", in Françoise HACHE-BISSETTE, Denis SAILLARD (eds.), *Gastronomie et identité*...pp. 163-174.

[58] Ibid. p. 173.

Dubois.[59] Hagdahl also introduced a feature later picked up by other Scandinavian writers: the name of every recipe has the original French name or a French translation in parenthesis.

The current interest in the man and his work is underscored by a new biography[60] and by the establishment of a Hagdahl Academy which has published a new facsimile of the beautiful second edition of 1891.[61] Unfortunately nobody has compared the printed editions to the abundant handwritten material located in a regional Swedish museum.[62] In addition to his French sources Hagdahl based his book on recipes sent to him by ladies of the Stockholm bourgeoisie. In which form did these recipes enter the book, and what was typical of the recipes Hagdahl refused to include?[63] The museum also holds the manuscript behind the revised 1891 edition. A comparison between the different "hands" in the manuscript, some of them probably his daughters', might reveal which of the changes from the first to the second edition Hagdahl himself was responsible for.

French influence was not limited to Europe; it crossed the Atlantic as early as the eighteenth century; cookbooks were even published in French in the USA as of the 1840s. South of the Rio Grande the influence is visible in another form, as Sarah Corona has pointed out in a study of cookbooks in nineteenth-century Mexico.[64] In line with the earlier mentioned articles and books about construction of national identity, Corona's aim is to reveal how the category "Mexican cuisine" is a continuing social construction, a product of searching rather than of finding (*de búsquedas más que de encuentros*). After Mexico's declaration of independence in 1821, the elite – as was the case in other former colonies in Latin America – looked to France rather than to Spain for cultural models and ideas. When the first recipe collections called "Mexican" appeared as of the 1830s, they were edited by French publishers. In 1844, 25 publishing houses in France specialised in the publication of works in Spanish. The French editors combined French recipes (translated into Spanish) and Mexican recipes, sent to them by associates in Mexico

[59] Gösta ADELSWÄRD, *Charles Emil Hagdahl. Försök tiul levnadsteckning* [Charles Emil Hagdahl. Attempt at a biography] (Linköping, 1971), pp. 64-65, 103. Two editions of Dubois's book, one from 1875 and one from 1888, are listed in the catalogue from the auction of Hagdahl's library in Stockholm 21. May 1898.

[60] Ebba WACHTMEISTER, *En man före sin tid. Doktor Charles Emil Hagdahl* [A man ahead of his time – Doctor Charles Emil Hagdahl] (Stockhom, 2009). Swedish and English text.

[61] Charles Emil HAGDAHL, *Kok-konsten som vetenskap och konst* [The cuisine as science and art] (Stockholm, 2004).

[62] Östergötlands Museum, Linköping.

[63] Questions raised by Richard TELLSTRÖM in a review of the new facsimile edition, in *Rig. Kulturhistorisk tidsskrift*, No. 1 (2005) pp. 45-46.

[64] Sarah Bak-Geller CORONA, "Los recetarios 'afrancesados' del siglo XIX en México. La construcción de la nación mexicana y de un modelo culinario nacional", in *Anthropology of Food* (2008).

and transcribed and organized by French specialists. But the French publishers wanted a larger market and added recipes from other Latin American republics, in order to present the books as representative of "American cuisine", something that did not please the Mexicans. There was also French prejudice against certain American products, for example *maíz* (Indian corn). The national cuisine that resulted from these frenchified cookbooks was influenced by international bourgeois cuisine and left out many regional dishes and traditions coming from the indigenous populations. In other words, these cookbooks were not primarily a product of culinary practitioners, but of specialists in publishing based in another country with another culture, in collaboration with representatives of the Mexican nation-builders combining a nationalist attitude with a cosmopolitan outlook. The breakthrough for a more indigenous and popular cuisine only emerged in the twentieth century within intellectual and artistic circles representing an "*indigenista*" ideology.

Availability of ancient books

For a reliable study of cookbooks, whatever their purpose or perspective, there is one basic requirement: the texts must be available. Cookbooks have suffered more than other books from daily use, often in kitchens with smoke and steam and dripping sauces. This is one of the reasons why so few old copies are found. Another reason is their low standing in the literary hierarchy; many copies disappeared before they were found interesting enough to be included in public libraries. A great number of the ancient books exist in one or just a few copies, spread across collections in Europe and the USA. To remedy this problem, important classics have been reprinted and reproduced as faithful copies of the originals using facsimile techniques.[65] Most English cookbooks from before 1700 were microfilmed in the Early English Books project, now online.[66] Several more or less private websites have contributed with transcriptions of medieval and Renaissance manuscript cookbooks.[67] But the most important development in the last decade is without any doubt the explosive growth in the digitization of old books. French cookbooks from Taillevent to Jules Gouffé can be read on the Gallica website of the French National Library.[68] Many old German books are found in digital libraries in Dresden, Göttingen and München. These and other books can be looked up

[65] For example Italian books by Arnaldo Forni Editore, English by Prospect Books, German by Olms Presse.

[66] http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home

[67] One of these is by Thomas Gloning (http://www.uni-giessen.de/gloning/kobu.htm) and he refers to many other sites.

[68] http://www.bnf.fr/fr/collections_et_services/bibliotheques_numeriques_gallica.html

through the Karlsruher Virtueller Katalog.[69] This new development is very promising, and other countries are following, but it will probably take some time before these projects give full value. Much of the research in this field depends on being able to compare different editions, but digitization of all existing editions can hardly be expected in the near future.

Another difficulty for many scholars is the language barrier. New translations of old texts may be a way to meet this problem, making possible a broader comparative study of cookbooks. Until now most such books are translated from a continental language into English, for example the critical editions of Platina and Apicius.[70] The recipes in Platina's Latin *De honesta voluptate* were based on culinary instructions by the master cook Martino. One of the recipe collections attributed to him – Library of Congress manuscript "Rare Books, 153" – has been photographed and is available on a CD-ROM with a translation into English by Gillian Riley and a commentary by Bruno Laurioux.[71] Scappi's *Opera* and the French classic from the seventeenth century, La Varenne's *Le Cuisinier François*, have been translated by Terence Scully, and an interesting French sixteenth century book, *Livre fort excellent de cuisine*, is currently being translated by Ken Albala and Timothy J. Tomasik.[72]

Such translations are, however, not without pitfalls. Gillian Riley, in a critical assessment of Scully's translation of Scappi's *Opera*, writes: "A word by word, phrase by phrase, grammatically correct translation can give strange results – more often betrayal than fidelity to the author's intentions. Sometimes a sentence has to be taken apart, shaken by the scruff of the neck, and put together differently, to get the flow and tone of voice of the author".[73] In the commentary to her own translation of Martino on the CD-ROM she had already stated how problematic new translations are, saying that Martino is not hard to understand, but difficult to translate: "A smoothly flowing version of Martino's recipes would yield the neat, bland, tidy, and impersonal voice of a home economist, while a translation faithful to his non-literary, vernacular style might make Martino seem more rough-hewn than he really was".

[69] http://digital.slub-dresden.de/kollektionen; http://gdz.sub.uni-goettingen.de; http://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/index.html?c=kurzsammlungen&l=de. KVK: http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de/kvk.html

[70] Mary Ella MILHAM, Platina: *On Right Pleasure and Good Health* (Tempe, 1998). Christopher GROCOCK and Sally GRAINGER, *Apicius: A critical edition* (Totnes, Devon, 2006).

[71] Libro de arte coquinaria (Oakland, CA, 2005).

[72] *The Opera of Bartolomeo Scappi (1570), L'arte e prudenza d'un maestro cuoco*. Translated with commentary by Terence Scully (Toronto, 2008). *La Varenne's Cookery*. A modern English Translation and Commentary by Terence Scully (Totnes, Devon, 2006). *The most excellent book of cookery*. An edition and translation of Livre fort excellent de cuisine. Timothy J. Tomasik and Ken Albala (Totnes, Devon, forthcoming).

[73] Review in *Petits propos Culinaires 88* (Totnes, Devon, 2009), p. 106.

A similar problem applies to early books where the spelling and vocabulary is "modernized" – i.e. translated into contemporary language – in order to make the texts easier to read for a public unfamiliar with archaic forms and words. This is the case with the new edition of the Dutch cookbook by Antonius Magirus, mentioned earlier.[74] The editorial strategy is easy to understand: a higher number of readers will buy the book (the commercial aspect) and a larger audience will get information about food history in the area (the cultural aspect). From a scholar's point of view, however, such publications are problematic, particularly when there is only one known copy of the original.[75]

One significant feature of Magirus's language disappears through the modernization: his direct link to Italian and his creation of words that do not exist in Dutch, but are basically Italian with Dutch morphology. Scappi's *pignoli* (pine nuts) is presented by Magirus as *pinghelen*, but modernized as *pijnboompitten*. Scappi's *capretto* (goat) is presented as *cabretteken* (modernized *geitenbok*) and Scappi's *ricotta* is called *recotten* by Magirus, probably because the cheese was not yet known in Flanders, consequently *ricotta* in the modernized version may give wrong historical signals. *Salza reale* and *torta reale*, reproduced by Magirus as *Sauce Reale* and *Toerte Reale* have been modernized to *vorstelijke* (princely, royal) *saus/toert*.[76] It also seems unnecessary to let modern words for glutton and drunkard substitute "Phagesiposian of Slempmeester". *Phagesiposian* has a special meaning because it alludes to a book by the Louvain philosopher Erycius Puteanus about pleasure and moderation, published in Latin with the title *Comus, sive phagesiposia Cimmeria, somnium* (1608). This is explained in the solid historical background material, which compensates for much, but not for the watering-down of style and atmosphere.[77]

Modernized texts result in certain problems, but what about modernized recipes? Historically interested individuals or groups have adapted recipes from old cookbooks in order to give an idea of what people were eating a hundred years ago and earlier. Such adaptations seem to have been rather popular, at least judging from the number of books published, but is this because they have tried to satisfy modern tastes? The American historian Ken Albala is skeptical of watered-down adaptations because they tell us

[74] A special chapter explains the reasons for the modernization and characterises it as more of an interpretation than a literal translation. Jozef SCHILDERMANS et al, *Lieve schat...*, pp. 218-219.

[75] Antonius MAGIRUS, *Koocboec oft familieren Kevkenboec* (Leuven, 1612). Only known copy held by The Royal Library in Brussels.

[76] Jozef SCHILDERMANS et al, *Lieve schat...*, pp. 145, 161, 151, 89, 148.

[77] After this was written, I discovered a digital version of the book on the web: http://www.kookhistorie.nl/index.htm This solves the problems for the scholar, but the basic discussion of problems with modernization of the language is still valid.

"absolutely nothing about the past; it reveals only our modern preferences and prejudices".[78] The ingredients must be replicated exactly and the technology must be as authentic as possible for a relevant analysis of how food was cooked in the past. Albala has chosen a number of recipes from the Renaissance and followed them meticulously step by step, exploring and explaining how the labour was done and even more importantly, why certain preparations had to be carried out.

Albala's basic theory is that the cooking process itself is an important and often necessary tool for research in food history. Through his experiments he hopes to reduce or eliminate the division between on the one hand academic food historians with scant understanding of culinary processes and therefore prone to misunderstand specific food references in historical sources, and, on the other hand, practitioners with technical skills and culinary experience, but who have often been marginalized because they lack the academic credentials.[79]

The recipe – the basic text type

The recipe in its simplest form has a structure showing "la succession des procédures culinaires".[80] There are variants within this basic form until the modern recipe is established in the nineteenth century, structured in three parts (steps, stages): 1. Title of recipe. 2. Quantities of ingredients. 3. Preparation (often elaborated in several parts).[81]

While many of the early recipes were considered a form of "aide-mémoire" to the professional cook, over the centuries "recipes have become more complex, more detailed, more specific, and more wordy", Barbara Santich writes in a study of how the culinary vocabulary has developed, well aware of the fact that changes in the dishes have necessitated changes in the recipes.[82] In her study she has chosen to focus her attention, not on the ingredients and their quantities, but on the verbs which express the method

[78] Ken ALBALA, "Cooking as Research Methodology: Experiments in Renaissance Cuisine", in Joan FITZPATRICK (ed.), *Renaissance Food...*, pp. 73-88. See also Ivan Day's website: http://www.historicfood.com/portal.htm

[79] See also Ivan Day's website: http://www.historicfood.com/portal.htm

[80] Bruno LAURIOUX, *Les livres de cuisine médiévaux* (Turnhout, 1997), pp. 15-16.

[81] Elvira GLASER, "Die textuelle Struktur handschriftlicher und gedruckter Kochrezepte im Wandel. Zur Sprachgeschichte einer Textsorte", in Rudolf GROSSE, Hans WELLMANN (eds.), *Textarten im Sprachwandel – nach der Erfindung des Buchdrucks* (Heidelberg, 1996), p. 226. Ruth CARROLL, "The Visual Language of the Recipe: A Brief Historical Survey", in *Food and Language. Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2009* (Totnes, Devon, 2010), pp. 62-72.

[82] Barbara SANTICH, "'Doing' words: The Evolution of Culinary Vocabulary", in *Food and Language...*, pp. 301-310.

of cooking, the "how" rather than the "what". Santich has compared recipes in two books, one from 1747 and one from 1996.[83] She finds a remarkable difference in chicken recipes that has nothing to do with taste, but with sale and distribution systems: "Industrialization of chicken slaughtering and processing means that contemporary cooks no longer have to wash, singe, draw, and truss their chickens as was standard practice in the eighteenth century." The verbs mentioned here are consequently not used in the 1996 recipe. But there is also another difference, because verbs such as chop, slice, and bruise in the 1996 book are moved from the instruction part to a list of ingredients, a feature absent in the 1747 book. The remaining verbs for the culinary preparation proper also are different, particularly for processes involving heat. Santich explains these differences as a reflection of a greater range of technical possibilities, a more precise terminology, and a greater use of synonyms. When these chicken recipes are compared to cake recipes in the two books, she observes that the cake-making techniques have changed far less than the cooking of chicken.

Santich says about recipes that they are "typically prescriptive, a series of directives", and that the verbs are "typically but not necessarily in the imperative mood." It is true that in English and in other languages the description of culinary preparation is characterized by short sentences starting with an imperative singular or plural: *take*, *nimm*, *prenez*. This particular grammatical form may lead to the idea that the recipe is an order or a command and that recipe collections consequently are examples of normative texts, like statutes, laws, regulations, prescriptions, commandments. But most recipes are more open to interpretation and even variation than such texts. That is why the exact measures have been less important in culinary recipes than in medical prescriptions. What needs to be understood is that the imperative form must be conceived as a "convention", applied in a special context.[84]

One of the early representatives of the linguistic theory of "speech acts", J.L. Austin, states: "An 'imperative' may be an order, a permission, a demand, a request, an entreaty, a suggestion, a recommendation, a warning (...), or may express a condition or concession or a definition."[85] The semiotician Algirdas Greimas, in an analysis of a recipe for *soupe au pistou*, says that "[l]a recette de cuisine, bien que formulée, à la surface, à l'aide d'impératifs, ne peut être

[83] Hannah GLASSE, *The Art of Cookery* (London, 1747) and Stephanie ALEXANDER, *The Cook's Companion* (Ringwood, Victoria, Australia, 1996)

[84] I cannot, however, accept the idea expressed in *The Recipe Reader* (p.6) that a recipe must be understood as an "exchange" because the Latin root of the word means both to give and to take. I think this is a completely ahistorical and ideological interpretation of a technical term. See also *Oxford English Dictionary*.

[85] J.L. AUSTIN, *How to do Things with Words* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 76-77.

considérée comme une prescription (...)".[86] There is nothing of *devoir-faire*, rather of *savoir-faire* in the text. He considers the recipe as a *discours* similar to musical scores or architectural plans, "manifestations de compétence actualisée, antérieurement à sa réalisation". The recipe may also be considered as a contract: "Si vous exécutez correctement l'ensemble des indications données, alors vous obtiendrez la soupe au pistou".[87] Or, to reverse the sentence parts: If you want to make a *soupe au pistou*, follow these instructions. This formula will immediately ring a bell to readers familiar with the so-called hypothetical recipe openings in medieval handbooks. For example in a low German cookbook manuscript from the fifteenth Century: "Wyltu maken eyn moes van wynberen, so nym...".[88] Or in a Venetian text from the fourteenth century: "Se tu voy fare bramager per xii persone, toy 4 libre de mandole...".[89] Or in a Catalan manuscript from the fourteenth century: "Si vols ffer morterol de brou de gualines, se ffa axi: Ffes bon brou de galines... ".[90]

The imperative is the most common grammatical form in certain languages, for example English, and therefore used with success in recipe parodies,[91] but it is far from the only form. For the German language Thomas Gloning shows how other "Formulierungstypen" are frequently used, even in one and the same recipe. In a South German manuscript from ca. 1780 there are imperatives, participles, infinitives, passive constructions, phrases with modal verbs and impersonal constructions with the pronoun *man* ("one") followed by a verb.[92]

But even if different forms may be found in cookbooks from the same period, their relative importance changes in the course of the centuries. According to several studies, statistics based on representative selections of recipes document the imperative form as dominant in the early period until the eighteenth century. Then follows an ever increasingly important use of the passive and the impersonal *man*-construction mentioned above, and these two become dominant in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

[86] "the cookery recipe, although formulated at the superficial level with imperatives, cannot be considered as a prescription (...)" A.J. GREIMAS, *Du sens II. Essais sémiotiques* (Paris, 1983), p. 159.

[87] "manifestations of competence which are actualised before being put into practice". "If you carry out correctly the whole of the instructions, you will obtain a *soupe au pistou*". Ibid. pp. 160, 159.

[88] Hans WISWE (ed.), "Ein mittelniederdeutsches Kochbuch des 15. Jahrhunderts", in *Braunschweigisches Jahrbuch XXXVII* (Braunschweig, 1956), p. 29.

[89] Emilio FACCIOLI (ed.), *L'arte della cucina in Italia* (Torino, 1987), p. 74.

[90] Rudolf GREWE (ed.), *Libre de Sent Soví* (Barcelona, 1979), p. 133.

[91] Manfred GÖRLACH, "Text types and language history: The cooking recipe", in *Text Types and the History of English* (Berlin and New York, 2004), p. 126.

[92] Thomas GLONING, "Textgebrauch und sprachliche Gestalt älterer Kochrezepte (1350-1800). Ergebnisse und Aufgaben", in Franz SIMMLER (ed.), *Textsorten deutscher Prosa vom 12./13. bis 18. Jh. und ihre Merkmale* (Bern, 2002), p. 528.

After World War II the infinitive is more and more the dominant form in German.[93]

An interesting study has been published in Sweden concerning a language where the infinitive is not used in recipes.[94] The imperative dominated there in the seventeenth century, but was substituted in the eighteenth century by passive constructions and the impersonal *man*-construction as in Germany. In the study mentioned these forms are explained as corresponding to the more formal character of the literary language of the period. When the imperative singular returned in Swedish recipes in the 1960s the way people addressed each other had already changed to a more informal character with the use of second person singular instead of the earlier second person plural or even third person singular. But whatever grammatical forms are used, the standard recipe is held in a technical, pragmatic language, "ein Funktiolekt" which receives its particular linguistic structure through its function in culinary practice.[95] As the philologist Gerhard Eis has pointed out in his study of medieval *Fachliteratur*, the aim for the language of this literature is not aesthetic in nature, but clarity, unambiguous meaning and precision of instructions: "Klarheit, Eindeutigkeit und Genauigkeit der Aussage".[96] However, looking more closely at cookbooks it is easy to discover all the exceptions to this standard prose. That is why the question of literary genre is so difficult to decide in this case.

Cookbooks and genre

Is it possible to define the cookbooks as belonging to a specific genre, giving practical information in a technical, pragmatic language, what Gillian Riley calls "home-economic-speak", where short staccato sentences follow each other in laconic statements?[97] Or are the differences between the various

[93] Minna TORTTILA, Heikki J. HAKKARAINEN, "Zum Satzaufbau der deutschen Kochrezepte des 20. Jahrhunderts: Satzlänge und Prädikat", in *Zeitschrift für germanistische Linguistik 18* (1990), pp. 31-42. Elvira GLASER, "Fein gehackte Pinienkerne zugeben! Zum Infinitiv in Kochrezepten", in David RESTLE, Dietmar ZAEFFERER (eds.), *Sounds and Systems. Studies in Structure and Change* (Berlin and New York, 2002), pp.165-183. Anna WOLAŃSKA-KÖLLER, *Funktionaler Textaufbau und sprachliche Mittel in Kochrezepten des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 2010).

[94] Lars JÄDERBORG, "Matrecept från tre sekel – en genrestudie", [Recipes from three centuries – a genre study] in *Språk och stil. Tidsskrift för svensk språkforskning 5* [Language and style. Journal of Swedish linguistics] (Uppsala, 1995), pp. 93-119.

[95] Klaus J. MATTHEIER, "Das Essen und die Sprache. Umrisse einer Linguistik des Essens", in Alois WIERLACHER, Gerhard NEUMANN, Hans Jürgen TEUTEBERG (eds.), *Kulturthema Essen. Ansichten und Problemfelder* (Berlin, 1993), p. 249.

[96] Gerhard EIS, *Mittelalterliche Fachliteratur* (Stuttgart, 1967), p. 53.

[97] *Petits propos Culinaires 88* (Totnes, Devon, 2009), p. 106.

cookbooks so fundamental that they can't be classified under one single label? Some scholars have indeed put certain culinary works in the same "gastronomic genre" as Grimod de la Reynière and Brillat-Savarin. How are we to explain this? It is important to understand that cookbooks in general are not similar to phone books or manuals for electronic devices. We often find a more aesthetic style with metaphors, a more complex syntax, a more learned vocabulary and various text types. Throughout history we meet recipes in dialogues and catechisms, as reports and accounts in travelogues and in scientific treatises, in the form of letters and even in verse. In the nineteenth-century German poet Eduard Mörike's collected works we find among his texts about love, angst and daily pleasures, a poem called "Frankfurter Brenten"[98] in which the author provides instructions for the baking of a cookie, all in rhymed verse:

> Mandeln erstlich, rat ich dir,
>
> Nimm drei Pfunde, besser vier (...) etc.
>
> (Start with almonds, I suggest,/ Take three pounds, or four at best).

So is this a poem or a recipe? Is this a literary work? Does our conclusion depend on the context rather than on the text? Does our attitude to the poem change when we are informed that it was first published in 1852 in a household and fashion journal for women?[99]

The question of context is related to the question of function. When recipes are included in novels they normally have another function than in a cookbook. Even if some recipes in novels are meant to be tried out, as in Simmel's and Esquivel's books,[100] there are other cases where this is not part of the idea. In *Deadeye Dick*, the author Kurt Vonnegut explains in the preface that the recipes – "which are intended as musical interludes for the salivary gland" – are taken from existing cookbooks, but he has "tinkered with the originals, however, so no one should use this novel for a cookbook".[101] But all these recipes are still part of a literary text.

The language in many recipes is quite different from the technical one, for example when the author addresses herself or himself to the reader using personal pronouns such as "I" or "you". The most extreme examples of such "talking recipes" are probably found in recent African-American cookbooks.

[98] Eduard MÖRIKE, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 2 (München, 1985), p. 384.

[99] Ibid p. 960. The journal was *Frauen-Zeitung für Hauswesen, weibliche Arbeiten und Moden*, 1852, Nr. 9, p. 35.

[100] Laura ESQUIVEL, *Como agua para chocolate* (Madrid, 1989). Johannes Mario SIMMEL, *Es muss nicht immer Kaviar sein* (Zürich, 1960).

[101] Kurt VONNEGUT, *Deadeye Dick* (London, 1983), p. 7.

In a study of this literature Andrew Warnes points out an oral quality that he compares to contemporary trends within poetry and novels by African-American writers.[102] One of the recipes he quotes from, is for brains: "Now listen, folks, I have got to admit that I have never put a single brain into my mouth... But this is the most typical dish from the deeeep deeep South and lots of people like it".[103] In another the personal touch goes directly into the naming of ingredients in a dish with pig tails: "Turn the heat high, get 'em boilin'. Add chopped onion, garlic, and I always use some brown sugar, molasses, or syrup. Not everybody does. Some folks like their pig extremities bitter, others, like me, want 'em sweet. It's up to you".[104]

Apart from the recipes themselves many cookbooks include introduction and background material, commentaries, reflections and personal recollections of meals and events. Capatti explains the immediate seduction of Artusi's writing as a result of his use of anecdotes, witty remarks and confidences, an approach that creates an illusion of talking to the readers in colloquial Italian.[105] But in such books the style and tone are getting close to what is typical for the so-called "gastronomic literature", beginning in early nineteenth-century France. This literature has been referred to by scholars as a "genre", but with the discussions and controversies around this concept today, does it really make sense to use it on such heterogenous texts? Denise Gigante characterises this literature as encyclopaedic with "a variety of literary forms",[106] and both she and Stephen Mennell include certain cookbooks in this "genre": works by Alexandre Dumas, Ali-Bab, William Kitchiner, Elizabeth David and Jane Grigson.[107] But what about Pellegrino Artusi and Angel Muro? And why not Christian Isobel Johnstone, a representative of the early Scottish novel and author of a cookbook with references to the French gastronomes? Where do we draw the line between "gastronomic" cookbooks and all those that cannot aspire to such an honourable label? Mennell singles out books that "seem intended to be read as literature", but he admits that the "boundary line can sometimes be difficult to draw precisely".[108] Such boundary lines may even be difficult to draw between some of the French gastronomes and great literary artists in France. Balzac compared Brillat-Savarin to

[102] Andrew WARNES, "Talking Recipes..." pp. 52-71.

[103] Sheila FERGUSON, *Soul Food* (New York, 1989), quoted in Andrew WARNES, "Talking Recipes..." , p. 54.

[104] Ntozake SHANGE, *If I Can Cook, You Know God Can* (Boston, 1998), quoted in Andrew WARNES "Talking Recipes...", p. 55.

[105] Alberto CAPATTI, "Pellegrino Artusi editore casalingo", p. 24.

[106] Denise GIGANTE (ed.), *Gusto. Essential writings in nineteenth century gastronomy* (New York and London, 2005), p. xxxiii, xix.

[107] Ibid. p. 57, 263. Stephen MENNELL, *All Manners of Food* (Urbana, IL, 1966), p. 270.

[108] Stephen MENNELL, *All Manners*...pp. 269-270.

La Bruyère and La Rochefoucault.[109] In Karin Becker's opinion many of the new gastronomic authors in France represented a higher form of literature, close to the belletristic tradition; they created a borderland between technical texts and fiction, "Fachtexten und 'Schöner Literatur'".[110]

Gigante calls attention to the use of "wit" in this literature as a common characteristic, a "lively tongue-in-cheek manner",[111] but did that really start only with the nineteenth century? It is tempting to go all the way back to Platina, who combines practical recipes with so many aspects of history, culture, personal experience and humour, "wit and sarcasm" as he says himself.[112] No wonder that Bruno Laurioux after his work with Platina makes this judgment: "Platina créait en quelque sorte un genre, ou tout au moins la matrice d'où allait sortir le discours gastronomique occidental".[113]

To sum up, the literature about food represents a great variety of themes, forms and personal styles, but there are no watertight partitions between them. Ruth Carroll concludes her study of layout and genre with some reflections on writers who blend genres: "a fitting reminder of the fact that genre conventions are not only constantly shifting and evolving, but that creativity often works by flouting the dichotomies on which existing conventions depend".[114] It is also worth paying attention to the fact that many of the authors do not limit themselves to one kind of writing. A great number of cookbook writers are authors of other works, often non-fiction, but also novels, short stories, and poems. Several names have been mentioned, mostly men, but in the nineteenth century this is also true for women whose cookbooks became classics in their respective countries: Emilia Pardo Bazán in Spain, Dobromila Retikowa in Bohemia, Anne Marie Mangor in Denmark, Hanna Winsnes in Norway, Henriette Davidis in Germany, and Lydia Maria Child in the USA. Would it be possible to investigate the narration in the different texts by these authors? In other words, what distinguishes the language and the narrative techniques in their fiction (for example *Les Trois Mousquetaires*) from those in their culinary works (for example the *Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine*)? Such an approach may perhaps be a possible venue for future research among literary scholars interested in food culture. Their conclusions might shed new light on the question of genres and the shadowy zones between them by looking at this particular branch of literature.

[109] Honoré de BALZAC, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 22 (Paris, 1879), p. 234.

[110] Karin BECKER, *Der Gourmand, der Bourgeois und der Romancier. Die französische Esskultur in Literatur und Gesellschaft des bürgerlichen Zeitalters* (Frankfurt am Main, 2000), p. 289.

[111] Denise GIGANTE, *Gusto*...p. xviii.

[112] Mary Ella MILHAM, *Platina*..., p. 16.

[113] Platina was in a way creating a new genre, or, at the very least, a base from which Western gastronomic discourse would emerge. Bruno LAURIOUX, *Le Règne*..., p. 248.

[114] Ruth CARROLL, "The Visual Language...", p. 70.