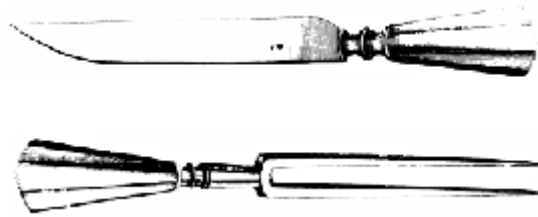


The Pursuit of Happiness: from Colony to Republic



XIth Symposium of Australian Gastronomy
26-29 September 1999, Hobart Tasmania



*'The destiny of nations depends
on how they eat'*

Brillat Savarin Aphorism III

The Pursuit of Happiness: from Colony to Republic
Proceedings of the XIth Symposium of Australian Gastronomy
26-29 September 1999, Hobart, Tasmania

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Committee: Scott Minervini (convener), Anne Ripper (secretary/registrar), Peter Althaus, Robin Black, Anne Bright, Stephen Bryan, Sue Dyson, Mike Jones, John Levett, Liz McLeod, Roger McShane, Graeme Phillips, Karen Pridham, Michele Round, Kathryn Wakefield, Mary Walker

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Foreword

Scott Minervini

Symposium Convenor

It is with a sense of daring tempered with commonsense, that the committee of the XIth Symposium of Australian Gastronomy present these proceedings as an electronic document; but daring has been a part of all Symposiums. Our reasons were very straightforward: we wanted to minimize the use of paper; we wanted to include as many colour photographs as possible; and we wanted to include the video presentation of Michael Symon's paper. A fourth reason was to include edited sound highlights of the *salon* discussions and question and answer sessions, but alas the DAT recordings of papers, salons and Anita Stewart's wonderful "incantation" were lost (stolen) during the course of the symposium.

The Symposium of Australian Gastronomy has always had an eye to posterity, either manifestly or unconsciously, and can we hope that this format will enhance future ideas for presentation at Symposiums,- performance art, presentations of meals, music, poetry, discussion may all have a place if we want them to. Note however that the proceedings are in the PDF format which facilitates easy printing of any or all of the text and photographs.



The XIth Symposium of Australian Gastronomy had several ideas to explore; it was prior to the Republic referendum of November 6 1999 and thoughts of national identity and a new beginning were alive-we hoped to see gastronomy as part of the debate as Brillat-Savarin proposed and we had the notion that Utopian ideas had to be aired and talked about to keep them alive.

We wanted these ideas to have a political voice, (perhaps lacking in Australia since the time of Don Dunstan) hence our interest in Thomas Jefferson, and the Tasmanian politician and aristologist Edward Abbott; many of our simple thoughts were given flight and extended during the Symposium by several papers and discussions, notably Gay Bilson's talk on Fourier.

A few notes on the meals

The meals of the Symposium began bawdily (or so we hoped) at the Hope and Anchor Hotel, one of Hobart's Australia's oldest pubs with Tony Marshall's introduction to Edward Abbott, the ritual cutting of the Heidi gruyere and Robin Black's introduction to her Sunday night tea.

The ‘preserves’ lunch at Stoney Vineyard in the Coal River Valley, one of the earliest settled areas in Australia, was an appreciation of preserving, not only of vegetables and fruit but meat of all kinds. The dishes were planned in February 1999 but it was on a foggy and chilly day in May 1999 that this meal came together, as we spent many, many wonderful hours together in the kitchens of the Wursthau with fat, offal, blood, flesh and steam.

Anne Ripper’s eggplant and goat or *Levant* dinner: The venue in an early nineteenth century warehouse on Salamanca Place, now the Long Gallery was a meal of elegant simplicity with a party atmosphere. Anne exploited the aubergine, so un-Tasmanian a fruit, that it speaks of the transport of food and ideas and “abroad”, a homage to immigration and our enrichment by it. We had music from John Vincent reunited with friends.

A school lunch in the play ground at Friends’ School- apple juice freshly pressed from the Channel area with a cut lunch prepared by Liz Mcleod and Michele Round.

The midden by Wilmar Bouman and Symposium banquet by Graeme Philips on the stage of Theatre Royal saw Graeme guide us through 200 years and more of dining, with the oyster as the meal’s *leitmotiv*, taking us from the pre-Colonial to a future Republic.

The breakfast at Elizabeth Street Pier by Jenny Williams and Val Monaghan was to-highlight the best products from Tasmania, new and old, in a new building in an old Australian port. Was it a breakfast that Edward Abbott might have recognized?



We would like to thank all of those who attended the Symposium and all of those who helped us; particularly Michael Symons and Gay Bilson. We are especially grateful to the Symposium elders and all who lent encouragement during the 10th Symposium in the Grampians.

Scott Minervini (convenor) for the Committee

Hobart

January 2004





Symposium Program

As the 11th Symposium of Australian Gastronomy convenes in Australia's second oldest city, Hobart we are reminded that it was home to Edward Abbott, the Aristologist. Abbott was the author of Australia's first cook book and his life and writing are part of a rich food history.

Today Hobart is capital of Australia's bountiful cool temperate region where salmon is farmed, saffron cultivated, cheeses created, truffle cultivation is nascent and cool climate wines with a genuine appellation are produced.

Against this backdrop, in the final years of the millennium and with a republic imminent, we can look forward and backward. Do we now live any better than Edward Abbott? 'Living standards' have continued to rise yet our tables are less gracious. What was so special about Van Diemen's Land in 1864 that such an unrivalled treatise on the good life could emerge?

How should we pursue happiness in Australia in the new century? Is there a position in any constitution or bill of rights for a gastronomic statement? Do we merely make an indulgent response to food and drink or can we become a cultivated nation? How can we persuade Australians to take Brillat-Savarin's Aphorism III more seriously?

The venues, the wine, and the food will enhance these themes, being redolent of the past but speaking to the future.

Committee

Scott Minervini convenor

Anne Ripper secretary/registrar

Peter Althaus, Robin Black, Anne Bright, Stephen Bryan, Sue Dyson, Mike Jones, John Levett, Liz McLeod, Roger McShane, Graeme Phillips, Karen Pridham, Michele Round, Kathryn Wakefield, Mary Walker

The Talking, Food and Wine

Sunday September 26

Hope and Anchor Tavern, 65 Macquarie Street

- 4pm Registration and Drinks
Food: Kathryn Wakefield and Cumquat Staff – Tasty Morsels
- 6.00 **Scott Minervini - Welcome.** Ceremonial cutting of the Gruyere.
- 6.45 **Tony Marshall - Edward Abbott and aristology**
- 7.30 *Food: Robin Black – Supper of Soup*

Monday September 27

Peter and Ruth Althaus' Stoney Vineyard—Campania

- 8.45 Start **Setting the scene** - Panel discussion with Stephanie Alexander, Mary Walker and Rosemary Stanton. Moderator John Levett
- 9.40–10.00 **Jean Duruz - Rewriting the village narratives**
- 10.20–11.20 **Colin Sheringham - Making a meal in the new millennium**
Paul van Reyk - Colonisation, fetishisation of non-western cuisine
Sheri Clewlow - Simple satisfying flavours=complete feeding fulfilment
- 11.20–11.45 Overview and discussion.
- 11.45–1.15 **Lunch.** Moderator Anne Bright
Food: Karen Pridham and Mary Walker - Remembrance of things past and preserved
- 1.25–1.45 **Gay Bilson - Utopia in the age of Brillat-Savarin**
- 1.45–2.05 Brief discussion and questions
- 2.15–3.45 **The Salons The notion of paradox ...**
Marieke Brugman - Regionalism v globalism
Dur-é Dara - Gourmet fast food: an oxymoron?
Jean Duruz - Restraint v pleasure; dietary dogma and doctrine
Barbara Santich - Vicarious food experiences v the reality of cooking
- 7.30 **Dinner at the Long Gallery**
Food: Anne Ripper and friends: Dinner from the Levant
-

Tuesday September 28
The Friends' School Hodgkin Hall

- 8.45 Introduction to the Friends' School by Anne Bright. Moderator Dur-é Dara
- 8.55–9.10 **Michael Symons - Pursuing happiness together**
- 9.10–9.30 **Rosemary Stanton - The products of the food industry**
- 9.30–9.50 **Barbara Santich – Edward Abbott's Scrapbook**
- 9.50–10.25 Discussion
- 10.25–10.55 **Morning tea.** Moderator Anita Stewart
Food: Friends School Students
- 11.00–12.15 **Panel session**
Anne Hazell - Notions of gastronomy in adolescent fiction
John Kelly - The swans are black
Lynn Martin - Happiness and wine making in the 16th century
- 12.15–12.30 Overview and discussion
- 12.30–1.45 Lunch. Moderator Barbara Santich
Food: Michele Round and Liz McLeod – A Packed Lunch
- 1.45–2.00 **Hamish Maxwell-Stewart - Food and convicts**
- 2.00–2.30 **Anita Stewart - From continent to country**
- 2.30–2.55 Brief discussion and questions
- 3.15–4.15 **The Salons The Furies** - In old Hobart rooms (Lebrina, Collegiate, Runneymede) with Madeira (Sercial & malmsey).
Gay Bilson - Clotho: What is the modern 'thread of life' (at Runneymede)
Sarah Stegley – Lachesis: Who dispenses destiny? How does it impact on the food we eat? (at Lebrina)
Anne Bright - Alecto: The fury of the C20th consumer (St Michaels Collegiate)
Catherine Kerry - Atropos, the inexorable: The dogma of vegetarianism and abstinence (at Lebrina)
- 7.00 **Dinner at the Theatre Royal**
Food: Graeme Phillips and friends - Plate Études
-

Wednesday September 29

- 8.15 **Breakfast at Elizabeth Pier**
Moderator Lynn Martin
Food: Breakfast for the New Millennium
- 9.00–10.10 **Tasmanian Producers Panel:**
Terry and Nicky Noonan: Tas-Saff
John Bignell: Tasmanian Highland Cheeses
Bruce Poulson: Herbs/garlic
Duncan Garvey: PerigordTruffles
- 10.00–10.05 **Coffee/tea top up**
- 10.05–11.00 **Salon leaders report**
- 11.00–11.30 **Open discussion from the floor**
The next symposium - Any proposals?
- 11.30am **Close**



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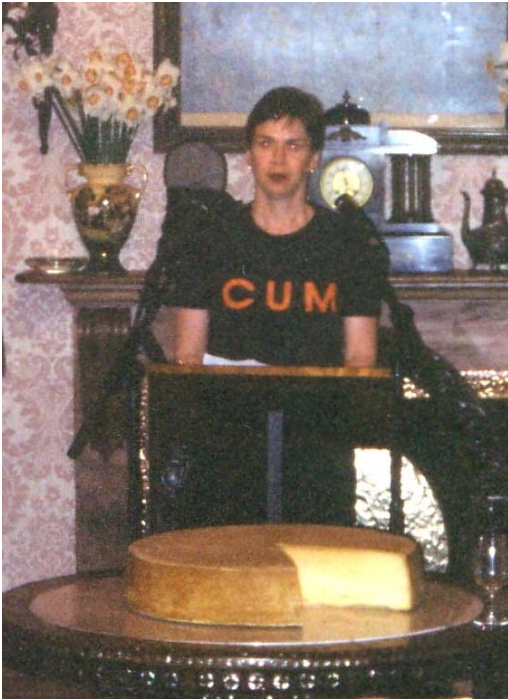


Welcome, Cutting of the Gruyere

We chose to ask all of the people that had attended the first symposium in Adelaide to join with the newest younger symposiasts to cut an Heidi Gruyere aged and cared for us by the maker Frank Marchand



IO Welcome, Cutting of the Gruyere





Edward Abbott and Aristology

Tony Marshall

Senior Librarian, Heritage Collections, State Library of
Tasmania

I am here this evening to talk to you about Edward Abbott, the “Australian Aristologist”, and the cookbook which he published in 1864. But I want to begin nearly thirty years earlier, with the man who coined the term (if not the philosophy) of “Aristology”.

Thomas Walker, who was born in 1784 and died in 1836, was a police magistrate and barrister of London. In 1835 he published (indeed, he entirely wrote) twenty-nine issues of a weekly journal called *The Original*. It was a forum in which he could write about the many and wide-ranging subjects which interested him: the art of listening, the twopenny post, labourers, dunning, health, pauperism; as he put it:

It is my purpose to treat, as forcibly, perspicuously, and concisely as each subject and my own ability will allow, of whatever is most interesting and important in Religion and Politics, in Morals and Manners, and in our Habits and Customs. Besides my graver discussions, I shall present you with original anecdotes, narratives, and miscellaneous matters, and with occasional extracts from other authors, just as I think I can most contribute to your instruction or amusement; and even in my lightest articles I shall, as often as I am able, make subservient to the illustration of some sound principle, or the enforcement of some useful precept - at the same time rejecting nothing as too trifling, provided it can excite in you an antibilious sensation, however slight.¹

What is most likely to excite in us an “antibilious sensation” is what Thomas Walker called “aristology”, or the art of dining (from the Greek “ariston” - to dine). It was a subject on which he had firm and carefully considered opinions. In his own words,

I endeavour to exhibit the true philosophy of dining, leaving the practice to be modified according to tastes and circumstances...As...the true philosophy of dining would have great influence upon our well-being, bodily and mental, and upon the good ordering of our social habits, I think it well worth serious consideration.²

His consideration extended well beyond food and its accompaniments, to embrace the size and nature of the company at dinner, the mode of service, the environment (decoration, lighting, the proportions of the dining room and its temperature) and the kitchen in which the dinner is prepared. In brief, he was an advocate of

1 Thomas Walker, *Aristology or The art of dining* (Cambridge, University Printing House, 1965), pp. v-vi

2 *Ibid.*, p.23.

simplicity and excellence in all things; of the use of ingredients in their proper seasons, selected to suit the prevailing climate; and of entertaining according to one's station in life.

One more passage perhaps epitomises his philosophy:

*I think it would be a vast improvement in society if the practice of familiar dining were introduced - parties not exceeding eight, without the trouble of dressing beyond being neat and clean, with simple repasts, costly or otherwise, according to the means or inclinations of the givers, and calculated to please the palate, and to promote sociability and health.*³

Thomas Walker died in 1836, but his journal, the *Original*, lived on. After its first printing, it was republished in another three editions between 1836 and 1839, and was later rediscovered and reissued in a further five editions - both English and American - between 1874 and 1887. The articles on "aristology" were first published separately in 1881 and have been reissued several times since then. My own copy was published as a Christmas gift book by the University Press at Cambridge in 1965.



I now want to move from Thomas Walker, writing in London in 1835, to Edward Abbott writing in Hobart nearly thirty years later. But to get him, and us, there I'm first going to give you a brief biographical sketch, beginning with Abbott's father.

Edward Abbott, senior, was a Canadian-born soldier who arrived at Port Jackson as a member of the New South Wales Corps in June, 1790. Following several voyages to and from England (and numerous postings around New South Wales), as well as an indirect involvement in the mutiny against Governor Bligh, Abbott senior was appointed Deputy Judge Advocate in Van Diemen's Land. He (and, presumably, his family) arrived in Hobart in February, 1815.

The *Australian dictionary of biography* tells us that "Despite his small knowledge of law and his large concern for the welfare of his family, [he] was very successful"⁴. Among his foibles was apparently a refusal to visit Launceston in the course of his duties (an early manifestation, perhaps, of Tasmania's notorious parochialism - south *versus* north, Hobart *versus* Launceston). But, with perhaps some sort of poetic justice, he was in 1825 appointed Civil Commandant of the northern settlement, and remained there until his death in 1832. Like most senior public servants, he was the recipient of land grants, including 210 acres known as the "Launceston Swamp". Legal difficulties surrounding this grant were to occupy much of his eldest son's time and energies.

³ *Ibid.*, p.43.

⁴ Townsley, "Edward Abbott", in *Australian dictionary of biography*, vol.1 (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1966), p.2.

The Edward Abbott in whom we're interested was born in Sydney in 1801, the first of three sons. Presumably he travelled back and forth between the colonies and England with his father, and we might therefore assume that he received his education in Sydney, in England and perhaps in Hobart. In 1818 he was appointed as clerk to his father, and the following year became a court registrar in Launceston; he later took up grazing, and in 1839 established the *Hobart Town Advertiser*, which he ran for the following three years and used to support the administration of Sir John Franklin.

In 1834 Edward Abbott began proceedings over his father's disputed land grant. It was to take nearly thirty years for the matter finally to be resolved. The first of his several pamphlets on the subject appeared in 1837; it had the resounding title

Official Documents and Papers, connected with the claim of the late Major Abbott, Civil Commandant at Launceston, to Two hundred and ten acres of land given him by Lieutenant Governor Sorell, in the year 1824, For long Services in the Civil Department in the Colony of Van Diemen's Land, which was subsequently confirmed by Sir Thomas Brisbane, Governor-in-Chief, and Earl Bathurst, Then Secretary of State for the Colonies, in the year 1826. Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land, January 21, 1837.

A second instalment - entitled *Additional Documents*, etc. - appeared in print seven months later. More salvos were fired in succeeding years, as the case proceeded - at a glacial pace, it seems.

With the establishment of responsible government in Tasmania in 1856, Edward Abbott was elected to the Legislative Assembly where, until 1864, he represented the people of Clarence (on the eastern shore of the Derwent River). He transferred to the upper house - the Legislative Council - as member for Cambridge until 1866, and continued his public service as Usher of Black Rod in the Legislative Council from 1867 until his death in 1869. He was active in local government as well, serving as the first Warden of the municipality of Clarence; and he served for decades as a justice of the peace and magistrate.

We're given a picture of Abbott (though I can't believe an entirely accurate one) by Maxwell Miller, who in 1860 composed and published what he called a "metrical catalogue" of the Tasmanian House of Assembly - a poem about politicians. Moving from verse to prose to describe Abbott's travails over the land grant, he tells us that

...he has gone on year after year, devoting his life, his mind, and his rapidly decreasing pecuniary resources to this apparently hopeless struggle.⁵

And, likening Abbott's labours to those of Sisyphus, he imagines him looking back

⁵ Maxwell Miller, *The Tasmanian House of Assembly: a metrical catalogue* (Hobart, Mercury, 1860), p.40.

...at all the incidents in his own case, the sort of purgatory which he has been made to undergo; the dreary history of his repeated struggles; his wasted prime, and his unavailing success...⁶



This brings me - or nearly so - to Edward Abbott and his cookbook. But first, I want to draw a very brief picture - perhaps a series of snapshots - of the colony and the town in which Abbott lived and worked.

In 1863, the total population of Tasmania was about 90,000 - that is, about half the population which now lives in the greater Hobart area. Hobart Town's population (including nearby townships such as Bellerive) was then a little more than twenty thousand. It was home to twelve legally qualified medical practitioners and more than fifty magistrates (of whom Abbott was sixth in seniority - he'd been appointed in 1828, when he was only twenty-seven years old). There were six cricket clubs, many public houses and numerous temperance societies. Perhaps more pertinent to Edward Abbott's work, there were several libraries - the Tasmanian Public Library, boasting nine thousand books; the Mechanics' Institute, with four thousand; three circulating libraries; and, of course, the Parliamentary Library, to which Abbott would have had access. And on the subject of Parliament, there were a total of forty-five Members in the two houses; eight of them (including one who represented Hobart) gave their "town address" as the Ship Hotel.

Edward Abbott lived on the eastern side of the Derwent River at Bellerive, a township of 250 people in the Rural Municipality of Clarence. Clarence was, according to *Walch's Tasmanian Almanac* for 1864, "noted for its fine fruit and onions". It was linked to Hobart Town by ferries, of which there were daily five or six crossings in each direction across the river.



And now, at last, we come to the reason for our interest in Edward Abbott - the publication in 1864 of *The English and Australian cookery book. Cookery for the many, as well as for the "upper ten thousand". By an Australian aristologist*. Although it was published pseudonymously, the book contains ample and explicit indications of Abbott's authorship.

I can't believe that Abbott was as bowed down with care and wasted opportunity as Maxwell Miller suggests; but I wonder if Miller's reference to his "rapidly decreasing pecuniary resources" suggests at least one of Abbott's motives for assembling and publishing the book? Did he, perhaps, do it for the money? He certainly tells us, in his concluding chapter, that

We desire that it [the book] may be remunerative, being of Ensign O'Doherty's opinion... that every unpaid author is, ex vi termini, an ass.⁷

⁶ Ibid., p.41.

I should also note a nice irony, about which I'd like to know more. The Cookery Book has two dedications. The second is to

*his fair countrywomen of the "beautiful land"; the "blue-eyed daughters with the flaxen hair", the ladies of the "sunny south"...*⁸

but the first is to William Charles Wentworth, against whom he had battled for so many years over the infamous land grant. Of him, he says

*I know little of Mr. Wentworth, except as a public man, and perhaps he may not thank me for thus sounding "the trumpet of his praise"; that I disregard, when I consider I am performing a public duty to my country.*⁹

Abbott's book is undoubtedly the first **Australian** cookery book; but it claimed also to be English. So where does it fit into the development of the **English** cookbook? He tells us in his "Introductory preface" that

*My book will combine the advantages of Mrs. Acton's work with the crème de la crème of the cheapest of Soyer's productions*¹⁰

Eliza Acton's *Modern cookery* had been published nearly twenty years earlier, in 1845; her *English bread book* appeared in 1859. Alexis Soyer's output began in 1846 with *The gastronomic regenerator* (the first printing of which - two thousand copies - sold out in two months, at two guineas a copy). The following year he turned to the other end of the gastronomic spectrum and published *Charitable cookery, or the poor man's regenerator*. In 1849 he aimed for the middle ground, producing *The modern ménagère, adapted to the wants and habits of the middle classes*; and followed this with *Soyer's shilling cookery* in 1851 and *A shilling cookery for the people* in 1855. The other major figure in the field was, of course, Mrs. Beeton, whose *Book of household management* had appeared in 1861.

If Abbott's scope was (as we will see) astonishingly broad, his vision was firm. He was an aristologist. "It must be seen", he declared,

*that my object is a laudable one - to promote sociability and good-will by enjoining hospitality; and, as an aid to the latter virtue, to show how the good things of this life may be rendered fit for the table.*¹¹

7 Edward Abbott, *The English and Australian cookery book. Cookery for the many, as well as for the "upper ten thousand"*. By an Australian aristologist (London, Sampson Low, Son, and Marston, 1864), p.287.

8 *Ibid.*, p.[iii].

9 *Ibid.*, p.[ii].

10 *Ibid.*, p.vi.

11 *Ibid.*, p.x.

He carried out this object by compiling an extraordinary volume of one hundred and fifteen chapters - an amazing assemblage of recipes, lengthy quotations, pithy maxims, history and science.

The book derives partly from his own experience - he writes knowledgeably on foodstuffs (especially fish, flour, beer and wines) and comments as an expert on some recipes. In his chapter on "Home-made wines and cordials", he declares that he is "...obliged to have recourse to a few of our own [recipes]".¹² He apologises for his lengthy discussion on making hams and bacon by declaring that "this latter is a subject in which we fancy we are more than an amateur".¹³

But a great deal is derivative - from others' recipes, and from an astonishingly wide range of sources. Abbott apologises for this in his preface:

*The original matter to be found in any work of this kind must, ex necessitate, be trifling. I only lay claim to, and put forth, "this little volume" ... as an industrious and, I trust it will be found, a judicious, compilation.*¹⁴

The index of *The English and Australian cookery book* lists more than three hundred sources (though Abbott claimed to have consulted a thousand authorities). They range from local and inter-colonial newspapers and local writers such as Louisa Anne Meredith to most of the plays of Shakespeare and several books of the Bible. In the Preface alone, which is of seven pages, he manage to quote, or refer to, the Bible, Burke and Wills, Sir John Franklin, Eliza Acton, Alexis Soyer, Milton, Disraeli, Baron Rothschild, Thomas Walker, Napoleon I and Sir Walter Scott.

The sources most frequently quoted throughout the book are Cooley's *Cyclopaedia of practical receipts; Hints for the table*; Dr Kitchener; Dr Paris; the *Quarterly review*; Shakespeare; Timbs's *Things not generally known*; and Andrew Ure's *Dictionary of arts, manufactures and mines*. He also quotes extensively from Brillat-Savarin but, oddly, does not include him in the index. Some of these hundreds of sources were available in the public libraries of Hobart, but many were not. Abbott must have had an extensive, and perhaps an eclectic, library of his own.

I have not yet resolved to my own satisfaction if Abbott read widely to inform his writing; or if he simply used what was immediately available. Did he search for what he needed, or grab at what he had? The former, I hope; I like to think of him as an irrepressibly enthusiastic polymath. A lateral thinker, too: why else would he include, as a footnote to his chapter on tablecloths and napkins, the following quote from Harriet Martineau?

12 Ibid., p.130.

13 Ibid., p.287.

14 Ibid., p.x.

*Those who have the sense and courage to wear the natural comforter, which gives warmth without pressure - the beard - improve their chances for a sound throat, a clear head and a long life.*¹⁵

In the chapter on poultry there, all of a sudden, is a note on the literary and political uses of the word “canard”.

And again, his chapter on drinks, he moves from Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy*; to a comment on the importance of temperance (“...in both eating and drinking, for whoever cannot moderate himself in both enjoyments descends to the level of the lower creation”¹⁶); to a misquotation of Samuel Johnson’s well-known remark about claret, port and brandy; to a recipe for “blow-my-skull” (a fearsome brew apparently favoured by Thomas Davey, an early Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen’s Land; concluding with a long and very boring list of “ancient wines” set in almost unreadably small type.

It is a work which is uneasy about its content and its audience. In part, he was writing (or compiling) a book of English cookery - and, despite his acknowledged lack of admiration for it, French cookery - for both English and Australian audiences. But he was also trying to introduce these audiences to a wider range of influences. In his chapter on “Made dishes”, we have phrases such as “This is the Brazilian mode...” and “This dish, as made at Constantinople, is as follows...” (and there is an entire, and lengthy, chapter on Hebrew refectation). And then, at times, he becomes an ardent advocate for Australian, and especially Tasmanian, produce and recipes. This might have been understandable and useful to his colonial audience, but surely bemusing to the English.



I want to say a little about the arrival, and reception, of the *English and Australian Cookery Book* in the colonies. Its coming to Australia, and especially to Tasmania, can be followed through the pages of *Walch’s literary intelligencer*, a monthly journal (largely an advertising medium) published by what was then Tasmania’s largest bookseller and also the colonial co-publisher of Abbott’s book. In September, 1864, there is a piece of puffery which reads suspiciously as if it was written by Abbott himself. Telling us that the book will be of four hundred pages (in fact, it has only three hundred), we’re then advised that

This small work has been carefully compiled, and will contain, multum in parvo, the modern cookery of the mother country and the colonies, from the sensible “Roast Beef of Old England” to the Australian Kangaroo, in its various modes of being dressed; also the Hebrew preparation of

15 Ibid., p.134.

16 Ibid., p.269.

different dishes. The book is interspersed with appropriate quotations and racy extracts (so as to lessen its monotony as a reference)...¹⁷

Those “racy extracts” intrigue me; because, in the printed book, they are referred to as “*easy* extracts”. And in a copy in the State Library of Tasmania’s collections, the word is corrected by hand, presumably by Abbott himself. Did his English publisher perhaps consider “easy” a more acceptable term than “racy”?

In the November issue of *Walch’s*, there is a lengthy review by “Reader” - apparently an English reviewer, because we’re told that

one of our principal book-sellers and publishers...has published a work on Australian cookery, in which, though there is not much that is new, yet very many old things have been carefully collected and industriously put together in a cheap and compact volume. It is clear that we in England can learn little or nothing from Australian cookery...¹⁸

The review concludes that

On the whole, the Australian cookery-book is a highly creditable compilation, and it ought to have a large sale in Melbourne, Adelaide, Tasmania and Sydney.¹⁹

One of the odd things about this review is that more than a quarter of it is devoted to the chapter on Hebrew refectation.

The next issue of *Walch’s*, for December 1864, has a brief and breathless note that the clipper screw steamer *Great Victoria* has at last arrived at Melbourne, bringing the first supplies of the book; and warns us that the greater part of the stock expected in Hobart is already subscribed for.

By July 1865, *Walch’s* can quote with pride the opinions of the local press: “...decidedly one of the best of its kind we have ever seen” declares the *Gippsland times*; “One of the most amusing, as well as instructive publications we ever had the pleasure of perusing”, says the *Cornwall chronicle*, of Launceston; and, from the *Australasian*, “We can recommend all good house-wives to invest five shillings in its purchase forthwith”.²⁰



There is no doubt that Abbott hoped to publish a second edition of the *Cookery Book*. In 1867 George Robertson, the Melbourne bookseller and publisher, issued a twenty-four-page pamphlet entitled *Hebrew*

17 *Walch’s literary intelligencer*, 1 September 1864, p.155.

18 *Ibid.*, 3 November 1864, p.195.

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*, 4 July 1865, p.113.

cookery, by “An Australian” (no longer an aristologist). It was described as being “From the English and Australian Cookery Book, New Edition, No. CIX”. Its price was threepence. It is largely a reprint of the chapter on “Hebrew refectation” in the first edition of the *Cookery Book*; but in some respects it is even more idiosyncratic. The recipes are straightforward; but he has now interpolated yet more “racy extracts”, including one on Chinese cookery!

This pamphlet also includes the information that “The next Hand-book published will be ‘Dinner according to Count D’Orsay’. No.XXXIV. Price Threepence”. This chapter in the first edition amounted to only one-and-a-half pages, almost entirely lifted from other authors. Abbott must have been doing a great deal more reading and writing to turn this into threepence-worth.

But before a new edition could be completed, Edward Abbott died - on 4 April, 1869. There is a memorial to him in the grounds of St Marks Chapel of Ease in Bellerive (at which the 1991 edition of Roger McShane and Sue Dyson’s *Food lover’s guide to Tasmania* was launched - a wonderful occasion of fine Tasmanian food and wine under the gum-trees on a perfect, early summer day). The inscription on the memorial reads:

IN MEMORY OF
EDWARD ABBOTT ESQ
who departed this life
April 4th 1869
Aged 69 years

He represented the District of
Clarence for many years in both
Houses of Parliament and was
Warden of this Municipality
since it’s Commencement

This monument is Erected by
His friends as a testimony to his
worth.

There is no mention here of his contribution to gastronomy - too frivolous a subject, perhaps, for a public memorial. The obituary published in the *Tasmanian times* was more forthcoming, telling us that he was “a liberal patron of field sports and of the turf, and was noted at all times for his open hospitality and the excellence of his cuisine”. It also noted the publication of the *Cookery Book*, “a very readable book indeed, and eminently characteristic of the author’s peculiar studies, favourite pursuits, and natural humour”.²¹

21 *Tasmanian times*, 5 April 1869, p.2.

And, no matter what the defects of Australia's first cookery book might be (and I note that he is to be "debunked" later in this Symposium), this seems to me to be a fine epitaph for both the book and its compiler.

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Welcome to Sunday Night

Robin Black

Welcome to our shared table.

Tonight epitomises all that the Symposium of Gastronomy stands for—food and wine in good company with good conversation.

As I thought about my dinner at this Symposium, my contribution, I realised I was doing ‘Sunday night’ and that it didn’t really matter what we ate or drank (to a degree at least) this Sunday night is just like our Sunday nights—a time to come together and share.

Let me tell you briefly about our Sunday nights.

Every week two households- families if you like- come together to share a meal. I am part of one family with my partner Kathryn and my thirteen-year-old daughter Hilary. The other family is the Haddad-Rippers; Anne, Ella and Alex (sometimes George and more recently Gareth, Ella’s boyfriend)

We alternate venues, one Sunday at their place the next at ours. The hosts supply everything- wine, food, and choice of chocolate biscuits. (we don’t really cook dessert but the discovery of a new chocolate biscuit is wonderful!)

Over the five years of Sunday nights, we have consumed a huge variety of foods. Even though we have all worked in or owned food establishments we don’t do restaurant food. We eat all sorts of things- often governed by the tastes of the children—often comfort food from our childhoods. But it must be easy to prepare and we must eat early—we all have to get up early on Monday morning.

What do we eat? Pasta carbonara, home made pizza, roast chicken, corned beef, laksa, milk fed lamb (and roast potatoes), duck, quail, vitello tonnato, wog food, really fucked sushi, cheds and wine and raclette.

Sometimes we eat at a restaurant or have a picnic or even at the Taste of Tasmania, where we placed a tablecloth over the still warm grill and George roasted three chickens in the bread oven and we shared our table with everyone!

We usually sit at a table all of us together. The rule is that we eat (lots) and talk (lots). Everyone is recognised for their right to speak. Our need to share is great. It is our time. There are often several conversations going at once. It is our time to catch up on the week’s activities.

At the table is a time to exchange confidences, in an environment where we feel others are genuinely interested in our life. We share the stresses of our week.

22 Robin Black – Welcome to Sunday Night

We have at times included others in Sunday nights- and some memorable nights have resulted. The American girl who George brought home who loved our toasted sandwiches and wanted to know if all Australians did Sunday night; one gentleman who remarked that the food was ‘sweet as a bum’ (a phrase that has passed into our folklore).

Tonight’s seemingly simple soup of onions, bread and cheese (and Scott’s fantastic stock) reinforces the belief that even though food is part of the enjoyment of life it is a conduit to the main agenda of sharing and conversing.

The concept of sharing at table has been a recurrent theme. From the shared table of Michael Symons to a shared table of Stephanie Alexander.

Please share with us tonight and over the next two days in a spirit of conviviality. There will be good simple food. Some fine wines and lots of opportunity to exercise our minds.

Welcome to Tasmania. Welcome to the Symposium. Welcome to Sunday night!



Supper of Soup

Robin Black ʅ Kathryn Wakefield at The Hope and Anchor

Food

Seared salmon in a chilli lime dressing on cucumber

Wakame frittata topped with crisp wakame

Smoked venison wrapped around grissini

Parmesan biscuits

Gougere, made with Heidi gruyere

Onion soup with croutes made with Kathryn and Robyn's sourdough and topped with Heidi gruyere

Confit cumquats

Fudge

Wine

1995 Pirie Sparkling

1998 Lubiana Riesling

1998 Bream Creek Pinot Noir

1997 Morningside Pinot Noir 'Boys Own Barrel'

Hazard ales

Taverners mead

Lark Distillery Bush Liqueur

Lark Distillery Apple Schnapps

Lark Distillery Apple Liqueur

Lark Distillery Single Malt Whiskey

King Island Cloud Juice









A nice baked dinner or two roast ducks from Chinatown?: Narratives of food and femininity for the new century

Jean Duruz

School of Communication and Information Studies, University of South Australia

Slow food for fast people: taste-rich for the time-poor ...

Tony Bilson, The Commissary Kitchen, Pyrmont, Sydney

The Madam Butterfly is a wood-oven pizza that has sweet chilli sauce spread on the pizza base, then layers of bok choy, sliced daikon radishes and robai. Then it's baked, and then fresh coriander is sprinkled on top.

Kitchen hand at Bhodi Dharma Restaurant, Haymarket, Sydney

With the opening of Tony Bilson's latest enterprise, The Commissary Kitchen (complete with website, dial-in services and delivery of prepared meals within Sydney, Canberra, Newcastle and Wollongong), food writers such as Cherry Ripe and John Newton address the phenomenon of the gentrification of fast food, nineties-style. In other words, as Bilson himself says, this is 'Slow food for fast people ... taste-rich for the time-poor'.¹ Responses to such ventures vary, however. While Ripe echoes Bilson's own enthusiasm in the title of her review ('Gourmet Dining without the Drudgery'), Newton sees some disturbing possibilities in 'a more recent trend towards high-quality meals that don't even need a frying pan, but simply require heating'.² Drawing on comment from food professionals, such as nutritionist Rosemary Stanton and food journalist Jill Dupleix, Newton focuses our attention not only on the quality and 'style' of food available from so-called gourmet shops and industrial kitchens but also on the meaning of home cooking itself. Cooking, we're reminded in this article, is a process - a source of pleasure, a means of exercising skill - not simply a

*Thanks are due to Carol Johnson for comments on an earlier draft of this article, and to 'Dot Ryan' and 'Colette Leong' for permission to incorporate their memories and comments in the text. In the interests of confidentiality, the real names of the women interviewed have not been used here.

¹ Tony Bilson quoted in Cherry Ripe, 'Gourmet Dining without the Drudgery', *The Australian*, 25 March, 1999, p 12.

² John Newton, 'Gourmet a Go-Go', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 March, 1999, Good Living/p 1.

collection of ingredients or 'tastes'. Quoting Colin Sheringham from the University of Western Sydney ('I can't see people who want Bilson quality of food happy with a fridge full of plastic bags that you tip into a pot'),³ Newton implies that while such food might emerge from its final stages of production as the longed-for coq au vin, cassoulet or Irish stew, it is culturally impoverished. Absent, presumably, are the now almost-mythic satisfactions to be gained from home cooking - from its labour; its memories and imagined possibilities; its sensory moments of looking, tasting, touching and smelling.

Nostalgic returns to traditional images of home-cooking and slow food (which, ironically, businesses like Bilson's reference in their typical offerings) are not unusual in our 'nineties' cultural and culinary discourse.⁴ At the same time, moral panics about the adequacy of the national diet and about deskilling in regard to domestic cooking are certainly not new.⁵ However, laments for the 'death of the kitchen'⁶ take a particular form in the 1990s. For example, in 1998, Lyndey Milan, president of Sydney's Wine Press Club, reflects on the recently-released BIS Shrapnel survey which found that, between 1989 and 1994, Australians' consumption of takeaway foods increased by 58 per cent, with one in four meals purchased as a takeaway one. 'We are growing a generation of kids who can't cook because their mums and dads can't ... we are cyber literate, but food illiterate', Milan says.⁷ In this argument, time as a precious commodity intersects with new technologies - both new information technologies and those associated with food preparation, distribution and consumption - to produce a generation equipped with complex virtual capital, but low investments in the stuff of everyday life.

Furthermore, as a result of this time-technology nexus, particular kinds of food are in the spotlight. There is a national trend towards what Michael Symons has dubbed as 'car cuisine' - convenience foods of supermarkets and the predictable and comforting offerings of multinational takeaway food chains, like McDonalds.⁸ This is food to go, with its middle-class version - although a commodity of 'style' and judicious

³*Ibid*, p 6.

⁴Deborah Lupton, *Food, the Body and the Self*, London: Sage, 1996, pp 49-52.

⁵See Barbara Santich, *Looking for Flavour*, Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 1996, pp 103-105 in regard to examples of nineteenth century public criticism of the quality of Australian domestic cooking.

⁶For example, Dierdre Macken, 'The Death of the Kitchen', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 September, 1996, Spectrum/p 10s; Michelle Gunn, 'The Death of the Family Kitchen', *The Australian*, 10 September, 1997, p 3.

⁷*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 June, 1998, p 24.

⁸Michael Symons, *The Shared Table*, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1993, pp 14-19.

selection - equally implicated in conceptions of time, 'choice', circuits of global capital and food production.⁹ Meanwhile, restaurants themselves, faced with rising food and labour costs, are 'outsourcing', relying on 'kitchen couriers' to provide pre-peeled vegetables, freshly-made salads and imported Thai curry pastes.¹⁰

What is happening to our food? It is tempting to take sides on issues of time-famine, consumption vested in takeaway/take-home products and increasingly globalised circuits of capital and food. For example, we might want to celebrate Bilson-style 'outsourcing' (presuming we can afford it) as relief from the day-to-day demands of domestic labour. Equally, we might want to embrace (again, with purse in hand) the position of gastro-tourist, when offered a dazzling array of ingredients, cuisines and cultures in local markets, delicatessens, cafes and restaurants. Alternatively, one could approach changes in domestic cultures and increasingly globalised cuisines from the opposite direction, linking these changes to current anxieties about time-space compression, and along with this, the seeming collapse of the 'local' and the disappearance of seasonality.

For example, Doreen Massey says:

This is an era - it is often said- when things are speeding up and spreading out. ... one of the results of this is an increasing uncertainty about what we mean by 'places' and how we relate to them. How, in the face of all this movement and intermixing, can we retain any sense of a local place and its particularity? ... [O]f course 'place' and 'community' have only rarely been coterminous. But the occasional longing for such coherence is none the less a sign of geographical fragmentation, the spatial disruption of our times.¹¹

Massey is at pains to point out, however, that the question of who is feeling dislocated by these changes is a critical one. 'To what extent', she asks, 'does the current popular characterisation of time-space compression represent very much a western, colonizer's, view?'¹² After all, Massey argues, the feeling of being invaded and dislocated is not an unfamiliar one for colonised peoples, or for marginalised groups, such as women. What is unusual in this current mood of time-space compression, however, is that the power of the first

⁹For other examples of discussion of domestic 'outsourcing', see Cherry Ripe, 'Dinner a Go Go', *The Australian*, 13 May, 1999, p 15; Cherry Ripe, 'Chill Out in the Kitchen', *The Australian*, 24 March, 1998, p 16; Sarah Bryden-Brown, 'Simone Logue/Businesswoman: Recipe for Success', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 March, 1998, Spectrum/p 3s.

¹⁰Barbara Santich 'Kitchen Couriers', *The Weekend Australian*, 1-2 November, 1997, Review/p 7.

¹¹Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, Cambridge: Polity, 1994, pp 146-147.

¹²*Ibid*, p 147.

world feels under threat.¹³ Meanwhile, mourning the loss of ripeness in food (and its links with seasonality), Cherry Ripe asks: 'But how many of us know what is ripe any more?'¹⁴

The purpose of this paper is neither to beat nostalgic retreats to the 'local' of seasonal or regional produce and to a 'past' of 'slower times' and home cooking,¹⁵ nor is it to celebrate a 'multiculturalism of availability', which Ghassan Hage says marks forms of middle-class shopping and dining in the 1990s.¹⁶ In a similar vein, I don't intend to demonise, either as essentialist or imperialist, cultural imaginaries that reference meanings of 'authenticity', on one hand, or imaginaries shaped by 'a smorgasbord of difference', on the other.¹⁷ Instead, the paper is concerned with the 'practice of identity', a term used by Jonathan Friedman to suggest ways identity meanings are performed in everyday life.¹⁸

Specifically, I want to trace microcosmic connections of food and femininity, place and time in fragments of women's narratives about food shopping, cooking, eating and 'eating out'.¹⁹ Through 'readings' of these fragments, I am hoping to describe a space in which global mediates the local and vice versa, and a space for women's stories to 'answer back' some of our 'public' anxieties about cuisine. I am also hoping that these narratives will illuminate meanings of 'home' and homeland, and will yield moments of performing unexpected shifts in social relations.

CREOLE CUISINE?

Dot Ryan has lived in the Sydney beachside suburb of Covelley most of her life. Now in their 70s, Dot and her husband are both retired. Having sold their last business - a plant nursery - about twenty years ago, the Ryans moved back to the coast, this time to a house only a couple of streets of the various homes in which

¹³*Ibid*, p.147, p 167.

¹⁴Cherry Ripe, *Ripe Enough?*, St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1999, p 1.

¹⁵Jean Duruz, 'Cuisine Nostalgie?: Tourism's Romance with "the Rural" ', *Communal/Plural*, 7, 1999 (forthcoming).

¹⁶Ghassan Hage, 'At Home in the Entrails of the West: Multiculturalism, Ethnic Food and Migrant Home-building' in Helen Grace, Ghassan Hage, Lesley Johnson, Julie Langworth, Michael Symonds, *Home/World: Space, Community and Marginality in Sydney's West*, Annandale: Pluto, 1997, p 134.

¹⁷Ian Cook, Philip Crang and Mark Thorpe, 'Eating into Britishness: Multicultural Imaginaries and the Identity Politics of Food' in Sasha Roseneil and Julie Seymour eds, *Practising Identities: Power and Resistance*, London: Macmillan, 1999 (forthcoming).

¹⁸Jonathan Friedman, quoted in *ibid* (forthcoming).

¹⁹Informally structured interviews were carried out during April 1998-January 1999 with each of a small group of women who either live in Covelley, NSW, or who are working there in small food-related businesses. The group is a diverse one, with women differing from each other in any number of ways eg in terms of age, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation and marital status, number of children, ages of children, nature of paid work, years lived in Covelley.

Dot had spent childhood and most of her married life.²⁰ So, Clovelly is certainly 'home' for Dot - a 'place' inscribed with the everyday rituals and memories, accumulated from 60 years in residence.²¹ Predominantly an Anglo-celtic suburb, with over half its population Australian born,²² Clovelly is also a 'place' that Dot constructs simultaneously as unchanging ('well, not so much [change] ... where we live') and threatened by development.²³ In real estate parlance, Clovelly is now starting to 'take off', its rising house prices accompanied by the incremental creep of gentrification.²⁴

Reflecting on changes in food, Dot responds by referencing two contrasting culinary imaginaries.²⁵ The availability of a plethora of 'ethnic' foods and cuisines is positioned against the nostalgic pleasures of 'authentic' Anglo-celtic/Australian colonial home and farm cooking;

Dot: Oh well, There's lots of changes in food ... with all the different people here from other countries ... I have tried about every other country's food ... but I still prefer home cooking [laughter]. A nice baked dinner. ...

Jean: [A]re you a good cook?

Dot: Oh, I wouldn't say good. ... You know. I just follow what my mother did ... grills ... casseroles ... [M]y husband, he likes a lot of fish so he goes to the fish markets and he does his own [cooking] ... [H]e went to Tech and did a Thai [cooking] course ... so he's learnt to make sauces ... so he does that with his fish. Then another night I'll do it in my old-fashioned egg batter which is the only way I'll eat it. ...

Jean: [S]o he just cooks it for himself ... ?

Dot: Yes.

Jean: ... [Y]ou don't like very spicy food?

Dot: No, no. So ... anyway, that works out all right.²⁶

'A nice baked dinner' ... 'casseroles' ... 'just following what my mother did' ... 'old-fashioned egg batter' - in

²⁰Dot Ryan, transcript, pp 1-2; 35-38.

²¹Dot Ryan, transcript, p 36.

²²Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Basic Community Profile*, Catalogue No. 2020.0 (2031-POA), Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1997, Table B01.

²³Dot Ryan, transcript, p 3. See also pp 65-67.

²⁴Jacqueline McArthur, 'Clovelly', *The Sun Herald*, 16 November, 1997, Tempo/p 13.

²⁵For discussion of contrasting multicultural imaginaries within British food cultures, see Ian Cook, Philip Crang and Mark Thorpe, 'Eating into Britishness' (forthcoming).

²⁶Dot Ryan, transcript, pp 5-6.

Dot's account, slow food, the 'past', generational memories and predominantly *British* traditions of cooking are inextricably linked. While Dot claims to have tried 'every other country's food', such foods are presented as commodities, available for purchase in 'other' spaces such as hotels, clubs and restaurants. In contrast to purchasing the commodified 'other', the activity of cooking becomes a homely one, and home cooking (the iconic cooking of mothers, and of Britain, the motherland) becomes the true 'home' - the site of colonial heritage and identity meanings.

Interestingly, Allison James records two seemingly contradictory trends in British food writing in the early 1990s that have resonances for Dot's story of 'a nice baked dinner'. James summarises these trends as the 'embrace of foreign food and the emergence of a food nostalgia' - ²⁷ on the one hand, a trend towards the use of diverse 'foreign' ingredients, such as red peppers, halloumi cheese, lemon grass and chorizo sausage,²⁸ on the other, a return, in upmarket London restaurants, to stews, pies, pasties and steamed puddings of English country cooking.²⁹ James stresses that these trends, in fact, unite in sustaining class divisions:

*Time is required to seek out, purchase and prepare the necessary specialised ingredients, and to patronise restaurants starred for particular cuisines can be expensive ... [S]uch foods were only to be enjoyed by the few rather than the many.*³⁰

(And here, I would also add that these trends themselves are less opposed than they seem - it is possible to be nostalgic about 'foreign' home/peasant cooking as well as one's own, as the continuing popularity of food and travel writing about Tuscany attests.)³¹ Meanwhile, in terms of the British mass market, James notes a third trend - food creolisation. At Cafe Lazeez in London, for example, 'they cut down on ghee and chilli in Indian dishes, and ... they Indianise thoroughly western dishes such as burgers, tuna and lamb chops'.³²

Returning to Dot's story, how does her nostalgic home cooking - more precisely, her meanings of 'home' itself - tolerate the invasion of 'foreign' food? With Dot's husband completing a Thai cooking course, 'other

²⁷Allison James, 'How British is British Food?' in Pat Caplan ed, *Food, Health and Identity*, London: Routledge, 1997, p 81.

²⁸James notes the use of these ingredients by Delia Smith, 'the nation's favourite cookery writer'. *Ibid*, p 78.

²⁹*Ibid*, p 80.

³⁰*Ibid*, pp 80-81.

³¹Recent British/American accounts of living in Tuscany (or nearby Umbria) include: Ferenc Mate, *The Hills of Tuscany: A New Life in an Old Land*, London: HarperCollins, 1998; Eric Newby, *A Small Place in Italy*, London: HarperCollins, 1994; Kinta Beevor, *A Tuscan Childhood*, London: Penguin, 1993; Lisa St Aubin de Teran, *A Valley in Italy*, London: Penguin, 1994; Frances Mayes, *Under the Tuscan Sun*, New York: Broadway Books, 1997; Frances Mayes, *Bella Tuscany: The Sweet Life in Italy*, Milsons Point: Random House, 1999.

³²C. Brown quoted in Allison James, 'How British is British Food?', p 82.

country's food' is no longer simply a commodity of the marketplace, but has entered the spaces of the domestic, demanding negotiation. Drawing on James' arguments, we could regard this as a moment when the familiar confronts the exotic, memory challenges imagination, and meanings of time and place are in fierce competition. A possible resolution for Dot and her husband lies in 'creolisation' - to tone down hot spices and to further 'Australianise' the stir-fries (presuming that so-called Thai cooking courses in Australia have already incorporated some adaptations to Australian ingredients and techniques,³³ and have blurred the boundaries of regional cooking to present 'Thai cooking' as a homogenised cuisine). Alternatively, 'creolisation' might involve gently adding a 'taste of Thailand' to Dot's grills and casseroles.³⁴

However, Dot's refusal to compromise tempts us into an analysis that figures her as the conservative feminine - the nurturing, backwards-looking, maternal figure, tied to the 'past' and to the comforting traditions of the colonised. In contrast, her husband becomes the man of the marketplace - the global citizen who is adventurous, forward-looking and ready for new tastes and experiences. So, in this 'reading', the global confronts the local, quite literally, in the everyday spaces of the domestic kitchen and in the mundane activities of cooking fish. In the process, conservative intimations of nation are challenged through images of progressive, cosmopolitan masculinity. Furthermore, from Australian perspectives, this is not the nostalgic cosmopolitan citizen of Europe or the west, but of 'Asia' and all that this means in our 'nineties' political imaginary.

However, I'm in search of a more subtle 'reading' than one that involves these mythic figures of progressive masculinity versus reactionary femininity, or figures of parochial versus cosmopolitan citizenship. Instead of an amiable battle of two opposing culinary traditions, Dot's story suggests to me a subversive shift in the labour relations of the household. While clinging to traditional modes of cooking and refusing spicy food and 'tofu and all this stuff',³⁵ Dot has described a space within the household's gender relations for pleasing herself, rather than always holding to femininity's requirement of service to others. In fact, the re-negotiations involve more than acceptance of differences in food and cooking styles, but also changes in the actual rhythms of the household:

³³Cherry Ripe, *Goodbye Culinary Cringe*, St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1993, p 25, pp 29-30. See also Allison James ('How British is British Food?', p 83) in regard to British modifications to 'foreign' food.

³⁴Ripe comments on Continental's 'Taste of Asia' products that included Thai-style packet soups with accompanying recipe cards. Cherry Ripe, *Goodbye Culinary Cringe*, p 10.

³⁵Dot Ryan, transcript, p 60.

Dot: [W]e've got to the stage now where ... I'll get my own breakfast ... and then he'll get his and he'll get his own lunch ... and I'll get mine ... I'm always before him of a morning 'cos when I come back with the dog, he goes for a walk ... Then [at] lunch time ... I just prefer my [cheese] sandwich ...[and] he [cooks] some tofu ...³⁶

There are two points that I wish to make here. Firstly, Dot's re-negotiations - of meal times, the composition of meals and who is to cook these - hardly look like radical moments of resistance. They're not. Nevertheless, I suggest they fit within de Certeau's formulation of 'tricky and stubborn procedures that elude discipline without being outside the field in which it is exercised'.³⁷ In other words, Dot does not abandon her responsibilities as wife, mother, grandmother, neighbour and so on, but actively seeks ways to meet her own, independent needs within the power constraints of these identity positionings.

The second point concerns 'creolisation' or 'hybridisation' of cuisine. Clearly, in Dot's household, particular traditions in cooking (though hybrid themselves - as all cuisines are, historically speaking)³⁸ appear to be held apart, separate and sustained in tension, unlike the de-chillied Indian dishes at Cafe Lazeez or, returning to the second of my opening quotations, the Madam Butterfly pizza emerging from Bhodi Dharma's wood oven. Nevertheless, while such cooking traditions - a 'nice baked dinner', 'tofu and all this stuff' - appear to retain their distinctiveness at the table, perhaps we could argue that here the labour process itself has become 'hybridised'? Are its divisions less sharp, with no longer a *necessary* allocation of all kitchen work to the female member of the household? Are there possibilities for future moves and re-adjustments?

The potential mobility of domestic relations, especially in regard to forms of male dependency, is reflected in Dot's statement, 'I'm really pleased he's learnt to cook ... 'cos he won't mind now when I go away and leave him'.³⁹ The laughter accompanying this announcement confirms that this is intended a joke. Nevertheless, like all jokes, images and symbols are there for the taking. Contemplating both the space and time to 'go away and leave him' allows Dot the expression of her own independent, non-obligational pleasures. This is a moment, perhaps, to explore further the meanings of 'progressive' femininity and autonomous citizenship (though, it must be admitted, in a somewhat perverse and contradictory fashion, since Dot's adhering to 'her'

³⁶Dot Ryan, transcript, pp 58-60.

³⁷Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p 96.

³⁸Ian Cook, Philip Crang and Mark Thorpe, 'Eating into Britishness' (forthcoming).

³⁹Dot Ryan, transcript, p 27.

cooking, while refusing 'his', partly affirms tradition).

TOURING CHINATOWN

Turning to the second set of fragments from interviews, I want to shift the gaze from Anglo-celtic explorations of 'home' and 'away' to focus on a 'different' account of everyday food and place-making practices in Clovelly. Colette Leong, now in her 50s, arrived in Sydney from Malaysia as a sixteen-year-old. Currently, she and her husband, Sam (who is also Malaysian-born) run a small clothing business in Bondi Junction in Sydney's eastern suburbs. Colette and Sam, together with their two children - now young adults - have continued to live in the same house in Clovelly for approximately twenty years.⁴⁰

When asked about the household's cooking, Colette foregrounds the dilemma of maintaining food rituals and social bonds in a working week that smacks of time-famine:

Colette: My mother ... used to like food and ... maybe that's where we learnt that we enjoy cooking a lot, but we don't have much time to cook, so the only time we cook a lot is when we have ... like ... [a long] weekend ... [A]ll the family comes back home ... I have some cousins, I have my sister and I have some old friends, so it makes up about 20 of us. So, if we do have a chance we do ... cook [like this] ... [m]aybe once a month. ...

Jean: [W]hat's your [usual] cooking style, what do you like cooking?

Colette: Ah, not really anything, because my children are born here ... so they are probably more Australian than anything, so we have Australian food as well as Asian food. ... [L]ike tonight I saw ... a special for scotch fillet ... so I got some, so we'll have grilled scotch fillet and then I'll have boiled rice and then I'll toss it with maybe some sort of salad that will go with the boiled rice ... so it's a mixture of everything ...⁴¹

And again, in the following interview extract, the motif of time, and its lack, appears:

Colette: [O]n Sundays, when we have some time or if my children are free, we take the trouble to go to Chinatown, and to the fish markets, and we just have the day walking around seeing what we can buy and then have a nice dinner at night, you know. ...

⁴⁰Colette Leong, transcript, pp 1-4.

⁴¹Colette Leong, transcript, pp 4-6.

Jean: You can take a bit more time and ...

Colette: Yes, this is more relaxing.⁴²

Here, meanings of 'home' and 'proper' home cooking (that is, cooking 'a lot') have to be negotiated on an occasional basis. Because of time constraints in a household that has all its members in paid work, meals on weeknights are, to some extent, a matter of expedience. Furthermore, Colette's example of weekday meals appears to be a clearcut one of cuisine 'hybridity' - or, in her words, a mixture of everything'. Drawing on popular categorisations and understandings, Colette dubs polymorphous food traditions as 'Asian' and 'Australian' to describe the mythic referencing of each on the plate. Unlike Dot and her husband's meals where the cooking styles appear to be separate ones (one plate for the homely, and one for the cosmopolitan), on Colette's plate distinctly different meanings of 'home' circulate, the 'home' of here (the familiar 'home' of the present, of hybrid 'Anglo-Australian' and 'Asian' identifications) and the home of memory and imagination (the equally 'hybrid' home of 'elsewhere' and the 'past'). Of course, generational perspectives here are critical regarding which meanings of 'home' predominate, and whose memories and imaginings, and foods, are at risk.

Colette is well aware of the risk ('my children ... are probably more Australian than anything'). However, through preparing 'special' meals on an occasional basis, food traditions are re-visited, and social/cultural networks renewed and strengthened ('all the family comes back home'). 'Family', of course, extends to friends and to other ritual occasions. For example, since Colette's children were quite young, she and Sam have joined six other Chinese families once a month to say the rosary, with families taking turn to host these 'gatherings' in their own homes.⁴³ Colette describes typical catering arrangements:

[I]f [people] are busy, they'll ... go to Chinatown and buy two roast ducks ... [B]ut those that have the time will try and cook a dish whether it be Australian or Chinese ... or Indian ... Then we become quite used to eating nice food ... [I]f you keep buying food, everyone say[s] you haven't taken the trouble to cook ... [Laughter]⁴⁴

The dilemmas of time ('speeding up') and space ('spreading out' to produce multiple and fragmented

⁴²Colette Leong, transcript, p 10.

⁴³Colette Leong, transcript, pp 52, 54-55.

⁴⁴Colette Leong, transcript, pp 56-57.

identifications)⁴⁵ seem difficult, if not impossible, to resolve. However, in Colette's narrative, we see an attempt to re-insert, even on a partial basis, an 'other' of remembered food rituals and practices. This is one woman's moments of intervention in a working life that is demanding, to say the least, both in the 'public' of the capitalist marketplace and the 'private' of the domestic. In food terms, this is a working life that requires swift shopping after-hours, followed by evening meal preparation that is marked by efficiency and expedience.⁴⁶ So, the interventions - the extended family meals, the rosary dinners - become performance of sorts, rehearsing, in a more leisurely and self-conscious fashion than daily meals allow, meanings of 'past', 'present' and 'future' ([I]t is good for us, as we grow older' says Colette of the rosary dinners, 'we find we need each other more than ... when we were younger'.)⁴⁷

Obviously, these occasions do not necessarily challenge divisions of labour that require women to take most of the responsibility for food shopping and cooking. However, from other perspectives, these collective endeavours could be viewed, once again, as de Certeau's 'tricky and stubborn practices'. Conviviality, confirmation of religious/familial/'ethnic' identities and friendship networks, the sharing of labour involved in meal preparation and the prospect of continuing support - these are some of the tangible rewards that these occasions offer. As well, such occasions become symbolic of 'home' as an imaginary of multiple locations, their meanings intersecting with those of the 'local' in particular ways.

Doreen Massey, we recall from earlier in the paper, responds to current anxieties about time-space compression. Instead of viewing changing conceptions of temporality and locality with trepidation, Massey suggests that we search for 'a progressive sense of place', and one that is neither 'static' nor 'defensive'⁴⁸:

But I also find mystifying the idea ... that time-space compression is somehow psychologically disturbing. Such flux and disruption is, as Harvey says, part of modernity. Why should the construction of places out of things from everywhere be so unsettling? Who is it who is yearning after the seamless whole and the settled place? A global sense of place - dynamic and internally contradictory and extra-verted - is surely potentially progressive.⁴⁹

⁴⁵Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, pp 146-147.

⁴⁶Colette Leong, transcript, pp 9-10, pp 16-17.

⁴⁷Colette Leong, transcript, p 54.

⁴⁸Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, p 156; p 153.

⁴⁹*Ibid*, p 143.

Taking Massey's position, Colette's story now incorporates a unique mix of 'global' and 'local', a mix of 'past' memories and 'future' imaginings.

So, meanings attached to particular foods and meals are complex and shifting, and often in healthy competition. However, this mix could not be described in conventional terms as either a global or a local cuisine, and, obviously, neither could it be thought of a national one, which Mintz claims is a contradiction in terms, anyway.⁵⁰ In a sense, this mix emerges as a cuisine of memory and place-making - a cuisine that is partly the treasured baggage of migration but, at the same time, a cuisine constantly changing and renewed.⁵¹ However, this cuisine of memory is far from being *cuisine nostalgie* - a culture of looking backwards to a mythic past or mythic 'local', bounded and unchanging. Instead, it is cuisine constantly brought forward and positioned at the intersection of particular histories and particular places. Framed within social relations - of class, gender, ethnicity and so on - this is a cuisine that draws on mobile fragments of meaning, produced by, and productive of, everyday life itself.

At this point, I want to take a parting glance at Colette's food shopping. Just as I've argued, following Massey, for a more integrative approach to meanings of 'local' and 'global', the concept of performance allows us to re-think the identities of 'tourist' and 'local', and the extent to which these, conceptually speaking, should be positioned as overlapping rather than as discrete and in opposition. Of gender performance, Judith Butler says:

Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space *through a stylized repetition of acts*.⁵²

In Colette's account, Chinatown becomes a stage on which to perform these different locations for, and repetitions of, feminine identity, with these performances not necessarily excluding those of other identity positions.

For example, the occasional purchase of 'two roast ducks from Chinatown' for the rosary dinners appears as a

⁵⁰Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture and the Past*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1996, p 104.

⁵¹Ghassan Hage, 'At Home in the Entrails of the West', pp 107-108.

⁵²Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Routledge: New York, 1990, p 140.

neat reference to traditional food sold in markets of the original home cities of Colette and her Chinese friends. Such food, in all its particularities of time and place, is described by Adelaide chef Cheong Liew. Remembering a childhood in central Kuala Lumpur from the early 1950s before moving to the family farm in 1967, Cheong Liew describes the typical sights and movements in his street of tea traders, restaurants and herbalists:

Different hawkers came and went all day, walking with baskets, pushing their barrows or riding tricycles, depending on their wares. At around eight the breakfast sellers would arrive. One of the first temptations was rice vermicelli cake with palm sugar. Then a Chinese lady would come with her nonya sweets, and around ten, the laksa man ... At three or four in the afternoon the rojak seller would enter the scene and at five, the soup man with red bean soup, peanut soup, black rice soup and black sesame soup, all eaten with coconut milk.⁵³

In the context of memories like these ones, the purchase of 'two roast ducks' appears as a place-making practice embedded in the 'local'. It becomes both a way of reaching back into memory, and performing the 'past' in the new 'place', as well as the means of connecting with other 'places' that Chinatown represents, re-negotiating their meanings and "'re-settling" identity'.⁵⁴

On the other hand, Chinatown is not only a site of 'local' meanings - and a variety of 'locals' at that - but is also a tourist destination. Regarding its development in Sydney, Michael Symons says:

The entire neighbourhood [around Dixon Street and the markets] had become so popular by 1978 that a plan was drawn up with the Sydney City Council to close the street to traffic and to erect decorative gates. The opening of the Sydney Entertainment Centre in 1983 brought additional business, and the nearby Darling Harbour bicentenary development included a Chinese garden (although more decorative than productive).⁵⁵

Hence Chinatown circulates as an image of diverse and competing meanings - not only in the variety of 'Chinese', other 'Asian' and other 'cuisines' that it performs, but also, for example, in the meanings of heritage it displays (the 'decorative gates', the 'bicentenary development') and the meanings of tourism, global capital

⁵³Cheong Liew, with Elizabeth Ho, *My Food*, St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1995, p 2.

⁵⁴Jean Duruz, 'The Streets of Clovelly: Food, Difference and Place-making', *Continuum* (forthcoming).

⁵⁵Michael Symons, *The Shared Table*, p 101.

and corporatisation that it contains within its structures. So, Chinatown and its surroundings, redeveloped, has become Sydney. Sydney, in its turn, is positioned both as icon of 'nation' and also, contradictorily, as one of the new world, global, postmodern, postindustrial cities.

This is the site for Colette's leisurely Sunday stroll with her family, or the source of fast takeaway food for rosary dinners when time is of the essence. In Colette's pleasure in just having 'the day walking around seeing what we can buy and then hav[ing] a nice dinner at night, you know', we should not assume that is simply a case of applying 'local' knowledge, grounded in one's own memories and experiences. It is possible to act as tourist too - to graze upon Chinatown and its landscapes of the 'global' in an eclectic fashion. Here Colette, refuses, perhaps, the exclusive identity of 'authentic' migrant 'other', and, in a sense, answers back those multicultural imaginaries of white Anglo-celtic middle-classes who want Chinatown to perform meanings of 'Asianness' *for them*.⁵⁶ Instead, Colette can act, simultaneously, as 'tourist' and 'local', as a consumer of spectacle, as a 'knowing' eater, as a supporter of tradition (roast ducks from the market) yet critic of increasing reliance on takeaway foods and the decline of home cooking (roast ducks from the market). After all, she reminds us: '[I]f you keep buying food, everyone say[s] you haven't taken the trouble to cook'.

What are the implications of these simultaneous performances as 'tourist' and 'local'? Here, I want to draw briefly on Cook, Crang and Thorpe's work to establish two final points. Firstly, these writers stress that 'the metaphor of consumer cannibalism [as in tourist encounters] can overstate the passivity of people in relation to the cultural differentiations they inhabit'.⁵⁷ Constructing Colette simply as the 'other' of an 'Anglo' gaze underestimates both her own capacity for consuming images of difference, as well as her ability to turn the gaze back, re-articulating this gaze as a critique of 'Anglo' culture. (For example, during the interview, Colette tells a story about a predominantly 'Anglo' group to which she belongs, and which she sees as conservative and having exclusionary tendencies.)⁵⁸

Secondly, and relatedly, Cook, Crang and Thorpe, drawing on Sollors' work, focus on industry definitions of 'ethnic' food, which they claim are problematic. Specifically, these writers argue, 'designations of ethnic food are caught up in much wider manoeuvres through which some people (especially some white people) remove

⁵⁶Ghassan Hage, 'At Home in the Entrails of the West', p 140.

⁵⁷Ian Cook, Philip Crang and Mark Thorpe, 'Eating into Britishness' (forthcoming).

⁵⁸Colette Leong, transcript, pp 60-67.

themselves from notions of ethnicity, and in the process construct ethnic others'.⁵⁹ Returning to Colette, there is a pertinent reminder that 'Australian' can be 'other' too - in her account of the rosary dinners, 'Australian' becomes simply another form of 'ethnic' food ('whether it be Australian or Chinese ... or Indian').

Here, we should note that this discussion of Colette as both tourist and local sidesteps the question of the impossibility of a national cuisine - the emptiness of 'Australian' as signifier. Instead, the crucial political point here is that the dominant gaze on 'ethnic' cultures needs to be deconstructed and disrupted. As well, the 'we' of Anglo-celtic cultures and food traditions need to recognise that 'different' gazes might question that dominant gaze, as an *ethnic* gaze, and question its power disbursements.

'EATING NICE FOOD ...'

Sidney Mintz, reflecting on the impossibility of reconciling 'national' and 'cuisine', stresses that 'national cuisine' is a 'holistic artifice', drawn from political imperatives to describe a unified entity for government. Instead, Mintz sees 'cuisine' as particular food practices associated with particular places.⁶⁰ He adds:

I find it difficult to understand how people can have a cuisine without ongoing, active producing of food and producing of opinion about food, around which and through people communicate daily to each other who they are.⁶¹

Following Mintz's formulation of re-making identity through food on an everyday basis, we return to the title of this paper. The question of 'A nice baked dinner ... or two roast ducks from Chinatown?', presented as an either-or of nostalgic British cooking versus the arrival of the migrant 'other' - an either-or of 'home' food versus the 'exotic' takeaway - is not the choice I want to make. In fact, I want to dismiss this question as a necessary 'choice', anyway. Either engaging in nostalgic defence of the 'local' (a kind of fortress cuisine perhaps) or in forms of indiscriminate grazing upon the global (consuming 'others' as commodities) - both seem, to me, politically dubious as strong and continuing bases for food cultures.

Instead, in terms of the 'pursuit of happiness', both personally and as a nation, I suggest that the argument has led us on a search for 'good food' - culturally nourishing cuisines produced from the 'practice of identity' in

⁵⁹Ian Cook, Philip Crang and Mark Thorpe, 'Eating into Britishness', 1999 (forthcoming).

⁶⁰Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*, p 104, pp 97-98.

⁶¹*Ibid*, p 98.

everyday life. 'Good food', however, does not imply simply a melange of tastes - a cavalier 'anything goes' attitude within a melting pot of cultures and cuisines. Rather, it is the meanings attached to food, and the constant rehearsal of these, that become significant here. Furthermore, although multiple meanings of time and place intersect with those of social positioning, these produce very *specific* global-local, past-present practices and performances of identity. This is what Cook, Crang and Thorpe refer to as 'the multicultural nature of all cultural life'.⁶²

Finally, the stories of Dot and Colette remind us of the 'secret geographies' of everyday shopping, cooking and eating⁶³ - those moments of intervention in dominant discourses and power relations of class, gender or ethnicity, for example. Certainly, these moments can be constructed simply as subversive ways to find pleasure within constraint - ways to make life habitable within difficult working conditions. And this is what they are. Alternatively, these moments can be accorded more disruptive force. As such, they become an active and critical gaze upon social relations in white middle-class Australia, and upon gender relations in the kitchen, as white Australia's 'home'.



⁶²Ian Cook, Philip Crang and Mark Thorpe, 'Eating into Britishness' (forthcoming).

⁶³Jane M. Jacobs, 'Resisting Reconciliation: The Secret Geographies of (Post)colonial Australia' in Steve Pile and Michael Keith eds, *Geographies of Resistance*, London: Routledge, 1997, pp 203-218.



Making a meal in the new Millennium

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One reoccurring theme at the tum of any year, decade, century or millennium is the desire to stand back and take stock, to locate oneself in the past, and gaze into the future. The theme of this symposium "The Pursuit of Happiness - from Colony to Republic" demonstrates that gastronomers are no different, they too desire the opportunity to stand back and reflect on the deeper meaning of life.

In an effort to move towards the conference goal of understanding Brillat-Savarin's third aphorism, "The fate of nations depends on the way they eat", an understanding of 'why we eat what we eat' in more general terms is warranted.

Beardsworth and Keil (1997) in their introductory text *Sociology on the Menu* start with the basic concept that humans in both biological and behavioural terms can be classed as omnivores drawing the required nutrients (carbohydrates, fats, proteins, minerals and vitamins) from both animal and plant sources. To date, this eating strategy has been so successful that humans have managed to colonise virtually every available habitat on the planet. This would not be possible for a species with a more specialised feeding requirement. Lyall Watson (1971) uses a colourful sporting metaphor to describe this survival strategy. For 2 billion years there has been a game conducted on Earth. The rules are simple:

"Teams are permitted to introduce any innovation that might give them a selective advantage over their rivals. They usually do this by getting one of their players to try out the new move or the new food first. If it works, the whole team will use it. But if it fails, only the individual player is penalised by being sent off the field. He is immediately replaced by a member of the opposing team. Cautious teams which refrain from making plays can profit from their opponent's mistakes in this way, but they can equally well lose by default and die of starvation. A season of competition may last a very long time, so in the end only the fittest team survive to eat at the top of the league table. There is no end to the game and no question of retirement. Champions enjoy the best foods and the title of top species, but they have to defend their table and their title all the time."

This game highlights the eating paradox we have to face to maintain a safe familiar diet, yet safely explore new food experiences. This phenomenon has been labelled by Claude Fischler (1980) as the omnivore's paradox. Beardsworth and Keil (1997) describe it as "the tension between neophilia, the drive to seek out novel food items, and neophobia, the fear that novel items may be harmful (Rozin 1976; Fischler 1980). Thus omnivores must successfully balance curiosity and caution". Many people, especially adults, are

conservative in their approach to food, their choices governed by the prevailing cultural patterns and an individual's personal food experiences. Choices are narrowed down and finally they "lock in" to a set of expectations about what to eat and what to refuse.

It is at this point that the concept of a theoretical framework for analysing the factors which influence food choice is usually introduced into the debate.

Writers such as Murcott (1988), Symons (1991), Wood (1995) and Beardsworth and Keil (1997) provide helpful summaries of the numerous authors and their theoretical perspectives. The debate is often reduced to the simplistic Structuralism versus Materialism argument. Structuralists seek to look below the surface linkages into 'deep structures' to explain ho-v societies, social institutions and social action work. Usually the analogy is drawn between the examination of cultural phenomena and language, where a pattern of signs, symbols or codes underlie the surface meaning. It is the patterning of these that concern the structuralists. Wood (1995) suggests that the problem with structuralists is that they:

"are too concerned with the 'here and now' and their analyses usually castigated for being incomplete and largely idealist, ignoring the biological imperatives underlying food habits (the need to eat to live) and the array of biological, geographical and technological factors that influence food supply, understanding of which is seen as necessary to any analysis of abstract 'symbolic' associations attached to food within a given social context".

Materialists who have been more widely accepted, on the other hand are more concerned with the historical evolution of food practices and preferences. This approach is in keeping with the biological imperative expressed in the omnivores paradox.

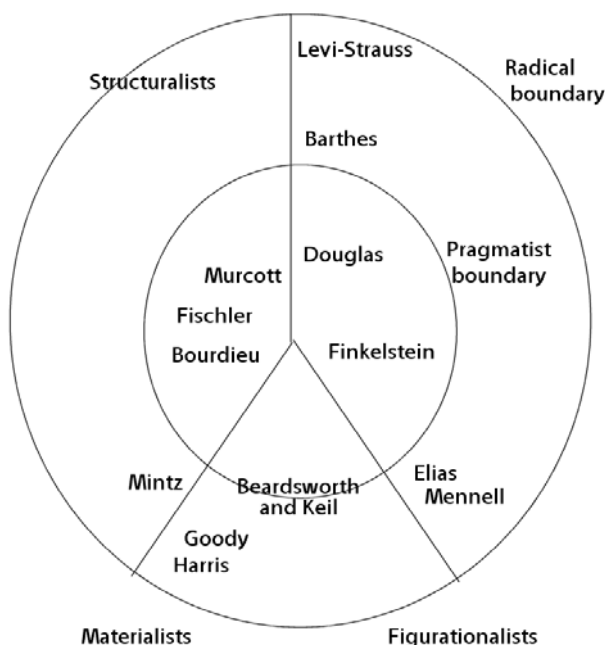


Figure 1. Relative positions of radical and pragmatist contributors to the sociological analysis of food and eating by theoretical orientation.

The debate however is more complex and interesting than this. The relative positions of the main authors are plotted by Wood (1995) and shown in Figure 1.

For the purpose of this paper, however, the approach recommended by Goode (1998) will be followed.

"The tendencies to polarise social theory are among the profound dangers of any analysis. Hypotheses need to be elaborated in ways that are sensitive to research and not dominated, though they may be suggested, by the a priori demands of general theories elaborated in other contexts of social

action. Any such approach as this runs the risk of being stigmatised as an unhappy academic compromise (Sahluns 1976) or as eclectic (Harris 1938; Sangren 1989). I find neither characterisation uncomfortable; the point is to make more sense of the universe in which we live. In any case I do not believe that in the end either utilitarian/materialists or culturists/symbolists can exclude factors that are exogenous to their initial precept." His suggestion to "set aside binary 'theoretical' statements" and examine food in a more particularistic form has merit here.

While the materialists credit the role of history, the evidence is that food habits remain relatively stagnant over time. This stagnation is evident from the development of identifiable cuisines. These cuisines are products of repetition of food use and cooking techniques that are tied to a sense of place. And despite the actual difficulty in defining a cuisine, Santich (1996) argues "like a soul, cuisine is not easily pinned down, defined and clarified". Rozin (1982) however, in her *The Structure of Cuisine*, does provide a useful analysis of the components of a cuisine:

"Culinary behaviour, or what we more commonly call cooking, is practiced not just occasionally or under special limited conditions, but with a frequency and a regularity that are true of few other activities. Yet, while all people do it, they all do it differently. Within the broad universal practice we call cooking, there is an almost limitless set of individual practices. People who define themselves as a group express or interpret the general human practice in their own individual terms, and it is this individual style or expression of universal culinary activity that we call *cuisine*. Every culture cooks, but each is intimately bound to its own unique and individual culinary practice. In order to assess the nature of the relationship between a culture and its cuisine, we must attempt to determine, if only at first in very broad terms, the specific acts and processes that comprise the activity of cooking, and to describe the salient choices of foods and manipulations involved in the formation of a cuisine. It is hoped that these seemingly simple descriptive elements will provide us with a preliminary framework of analysis for an extraordinarily rich and complex area of human behaviour".

What is important here is not the nuances of the debate of defining a cuisine but to recognise their existence. So how does a cuisine develop? The traditional approach is for food patterns to grow out of a peasant culture connected to the land. Where there is an ongoing struggle to overcome the seasonal cycle of feast and famine. The *terroir* shapes their food and the culinary practices. These practices can then be built on and modified as additional resources are brought to bear. However, as Revel observed, it must be the readily identifiable routine of the geographical region. This model of development of a food system is reliant on a "semi closed system" approach that has been the dominant model for most of history. With this reliance on people and their ideas being relatively stationary the sphere of external influence is thus relatively small. But even within this model food habits are modified and result in change not only with the cuisine but the development of others cuisines.

Within a culture cuisine is not homogeneous. Curnonsky, the French gastronome, recognised four distinctive types of cuisine to be found in France. There was the *haute cuisine* of the top chefs; the home-style *cuisine bourgeoisie*; the specialties of *regional cuisines*; and *cuisine paysanne*, peasant or impromptu cuisine (Santich 1996). Revel (1984) suggests that there are only two types of cuisine. Firstly an international cuisine that transcends national boundaries, driven by curiosity as its motivating force and appropriating dishes and techniques as necessary. Secondly, we have regional cuisine that is tied to a geographical place but is "obliged to remain routine and exclusive, finding its salvation purely and simply in the refusal to take into consideration any other register of flavours other than its own."

The major forces that shape the change in cuisines and food habits have been addressed by numerous authors from the various theoretical perspectives.

Stephen Mennell (1985) who draws his theoretical framework from the writings of Elias (1978) whose most significant contribution to food studies is the sociological comparative study of eating and taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the present. The central tenant of Elias's work is the concept that an extensive and protracted process of civilizing has been underway in Western societies for several centuries. One effect of this process has been the progressive movement in constraints on the individual. Initially external, the individual has moved towards the internalisation of these constraints. Mennell draws on this and labels the eating practice a 'civilizing of the appetite' and concludes that this process is responsible for 'diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties'.

Raymond Sokolov (1991) suggests that the explorer Christopher Columbus is the most important figure in the history of food. Responsible for opening up the New World beginning the trans-Atlantic exchange of foods and culinary practice. This bringing together of two hemispheres to the one table was a period of substantial change to eating practice. The extent of this cross fertilization is generally portrayed in the statement "Imagine Italy without the tomato". Dramatic as this particular change may have been, it is worth remembering exploration and trade has longer histories as a major influence of food habits.

John Fitzpatrick (1994) has picked up this thread of travel, trade and commerce at past symposia with the instance of developments in imperial Rome's food economy. Central to his argument is the complexity of the network of economic and cultural interchange tempered by the constraints of regional ecological determinants. Despite the complexity of these commercial influences they have endured as force in shaping foodways. Witness the following quote by Goode (1998) in his examination of French domination of English cuisine.

"Most of the accounts of French social dominance, whether in England or elsewhere, take their starting point as the Renaissance, or the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when French culture spread throughout Europe. But England had been influenced by France long before. When they invaded from the East, the Normans established a French-speaking aristocracy who supplied a model for the class behaviour. France

provided a major route to the Mediterranean, the Ancient World, the Middle East and Asia generally. But in fact, Mediterranean products and influences did reach England direct; her ships went to trade for sugar in Sicily and later brought port from Portugal. In Flandrin's opinion, medieval English cooking was more influenced by Arab cuisine than was the French."

While there have been continuing changes in food habits these have been relatively gradual, although the sixteenth century saw substantial change. The pace began to quicken this century accelerating rapidly post World War II.

The triumph of the other opposing attitude to food neophilia "love of the new" is very recent and dates predominantly since World War II. While an essential strategy in Watson's (1971) game of life, Camporesi (1989) viewed neophilia as a relatively weak force within food habits which have always been subject to long cycles of slow change. An example of this can be seen in the acceptance of foods from the New World after the discovery of America.

The spurt of change Camporesi (1989) identified in the Italian culinary scene of Emilia and Romagna can be extrapolated to other areas.

"The causes lie in a vast range of diverse historical processes: progressive depopulation of the countryside, chaotic and hypertrophic development of the cities, profound social and economic transformations, immigration and ethnic mingling, new types and rhythms of labour, the disappearance of ancient trades, influences of industrial advertising and the mass media -- together with progressive modifications and alterations of the agrarian landscape and crops, and changes in the relationships between land and cultivation, soil and diet."

The world had changed dramatically from a series of "semi open" almost self-contained systems to a larger (global) open system. The effect and individual causes are explored by a number of writers. Camporesi cites the publishing of cookbooks as a method of unifying, codifying and homogenising what is eaten, especially amongst the bourgeoisie. Half a world away Appadurac (1988) documents the codifying of Indian cuisine in cookbooks aimed at the middle classes and the impact these texts have had in breaking down aspects of the traditional and complex food system.

These examples of the publishing media influencing food habits helps illustrate that the modern village is a global village. We live in a world driven by global capital, international markets, information technology, consumer culture and mass travel. Food habits are now shaped by the process of globalisation. Here Hall (1999) defines the concept of "contemporary globalisation 'refers both to the compression of the world and to the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole' (Robertson 1992), or 'time - space compression" as Harvey (1989) described it." While the process may have accelerated it has a long history. But how does this process influence our eating culture?

Hall (1999) identifies five components: Globalisation and culture, Food and the Global-Local tension, Homogenisation or Differentiation, Traditions and Identities: Producing Difference and Changing Places / Changing Cuisines.

While these descriptors are beneficial, Warde's (1997) research (he inspected the food and recipe columns in women's magazines between 1968 and 1992 to determine change and direction in UK food habits since the 1960's) produced a more useful result: four antinomies of taste. "These oppositions - novelty and tradition, health and indulgence, economy and extravagance, care and convenience - are values which can legitimise choice between foodstuffs." These longstanding structural oppositions are useful not only Warde suggests, in relation to analysing food choice but equally in other spheres of consumption. "I maintain that these antinomies comprise the structural anxieties of our epoch: they are parameters of uncertainty, apt to induce feelings of guilt and unease."

It may be worth returning at this point to examine some ideas of the structuralists who, in their inquiry into the web of societal relationships and processes, tried to look below the surface linkages into the 'deep structures' which are thought to underpin them. The central figure of this approach in the realm of food is the French anthropologist Levi-Strauss. He set out to examine a wide range of anthropological material and ethnographic data in the hope that by understanding these surface structures a deeper underlying universal pattern could be found. Just as everyday speech is a culturally patterned communication system governed by an underlying system of rules, so too is food consumption. The best-known and most criticised example of Levi-Strauss's work is found in his culinary triangle. It seeks to explain in diagrammatic form the transition between nature and culture. But it is his earlier work on the comparison between English and French cooking that is important here. Viewing food as a system of communication similar to language, he saw that:

"Like language, it seems to me, the cuisine of a society may be analysed unto constituent elements, which in this case we might call "gustemes" and which may be organised according to certain structures of opposition and correlation. We might then distinguish English cooking from French cooking by means of three oppositions: *endogenous* / *exogenous* (that is, national versus exotic ingredients): *central* / *peripheral* (staple food versus accompaniments) *marked* / *not marked* (that is, savoury or bland). We should then be able to construct a chart with + and — signs corresponding to the pertinent or non-pertinent character of each opposition in the system under consideration."

	English cuisine	French cuisine
endogenous/exogenous	+	—
central/peripheral	+	—
marked/not marked	—	+

This introduces "the word 'gusteme' as an analogy in the field of taste to the phonemes of language", (Mennell 1985). Building further on this concept the social anthropologist Mary Douglas believes that food can be treated as a code, and the message that it encodes are messages about social events and about social relations like hierarchy inclusion and exclusion boundaries and transaction across boundaries (Douglas 1975 in Beardsworth and Keil 1997). Using a scheme devised by Halliday (1961) one develops a framework of categories for describing eating.

Uppermost is the daily menu, below this the course, below this the helping and at the base, the mouthful. Beginning with a personal recount of her own family's food practices and what constitutes a "proper meal" she examines the complex application of Halliday's framework. In an effort to simplify the analysis Douglas contrasts two major food categories. Meals versus Drinks. While both are social events (she excludes here private eating) they are contrasting. "Meals contrast with drinks in the relationship between solids and liquids. Meals are a mixture of solid foods accompanied by liquids. With drinks the reverse holds," (Douglas 1975). Meals are more complex with names (Breakfast, Lunch) linked to the time of day, more structured and require more equipment (at least one mouth-entering utensil per head), table, chair etc.

There are also different levels of inclusion and exclusion. "Drinks are for strangers, acquaintances, workmen and family. Meals are for family, close friends, honoured guests", (Douglas 1975). These boundaries are made more complex by the factoring in of other elements. Place, temperature of food (cold food is less intimate than a hot meal) and time. The structure of the week provides diversity in the intensity of meaning, anchored in the social life of that week. Sunday lunch is the meal climax to the week, contrasted to weekday meals which have a simple one course tripartite structure of one stressed element (eg meat) and two or more unstressed elements (eg vegetables). The Sunday lunch picks up this structure and duplicates it across its two courses. Meals ordered on this tripartite structure can be extrapolated out across the week and year. (It is even worth noting a hamburger follows this structure.)

"The smallest, meanest meal metaphorically figures the structure of the grandest, and each unit of the grand meal figures again in the whole meal - or the meanest meal," (Douglas 1975). That is, each meal carries something of the meaning of other meals, a structured social event that structures other events in their own image.

In an effort to discover 'what we will eat in the new millennium' Douglas's notion of each meal carrying something of the meaning of other meals will be combined with Warde's four antinomies of taste.

As a vehicle for this investigation gastronomers have been selected as a population sample. Other population samples could have been similarly chosen to illustrate the principle. Four sample sets of texts representing four different time periods in the new and old worlds have been chosen. The sets are 1) the ancient world of classical Greece and Rome. 2) The world of Brillat-Savarin 3) 'Colonial' Australia 4) and contemporary Australia. The texts have then been subject to a content analysis in an attempt to record how 'gastronomers'

responded to each antinomie. Criticism in relationship to methodology should be in context that this is only a pilot study aimed at exploring the possible relationships.

Presented below is a summary of the findings.

Novelty and Tradition

Novelty

Ancient World	The world was searched for new foods. Travel was important to experience the culture of the other. Recognition that food habits change. Commitment to teach others about foods so they too can enjoy new foods experiences.
Brillat-Savarin	Recognition that food habits are not static. Travelled and sort out new food experiences. Commitment to teach others about foods.
'Colonial' Australia	Some experimentation with the new local foods. Travel was a major factor as it was an era of exploration. Commitment to teach others about foods.
Modem Australia	Trying new foods. Novelty is best seen as an intellectual curiosity. Travel for new food experiences (now virtual gastronomic tourism is possible via television). Commitment to teach others about foods.

Tradition

Ancient World	Recognition that food habits are not static. Not all changes viewed favourably. Regional areas noted for their produce. A respect for tradition that has produced excellence.
Brillat-Savarin	A knowledge of history is important. Respect for regional produce. Respect for tradition but not at the expense of stagnation.
'Colonial' Australia	Longing for European (English) tradition. General rejection of 'bush foods'. Food experiences measured against English standard.
Modem Australia	Sense and knowledge of history or tradition. Sense of the dynamic nature of food habits. Importance of regional foods and the sense of place.

Health and Indulgence - Disciplining the body and pampering the soul.

Health

Ancient World	Link between food and health noted. Over indulgence subject to criticism.
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Brillat-Savarin	Brillat-Savarin is driven by the notion of health not in a restrictive draconian sense but one of eating grounded in a medical soundness. There is an evangelical approval to spreading his message.
'Colonial' Australia	Concern with fresh foods. A noting of a class divide with a criticism of lower classes not knowing how to eat properly. Evangelical about spreading the message of good foods.
Modem Australia	Health is important you should care about what you eat.

Indulgence

Ancient World	A preoccupation with a food culture was viewed by some with disdain.
Brillat-Savarin	Excess is a crime against thoughtful eating.
'Colonial' Australia	Viewed differently, by some as indulgent (often outsiders) but by others as a proper respect for food.
Modem Australia	Indulgence but with moderation. Thinking about food not necessarily eating it is seen as indulgent, encapsulated in the term 'gastro pom'.

Economy and Extravagance

Economy

Ancient World	The Romans became so concerned about the amounts spent by some on food/dinners that laws were introduced to cap expenditure.
Brillat-Savarin	One should live within one's means. A concept of value for money pervades.
'Colonial' Australia	Value for money. Recognition that an economic base is needed.
Modem Australia	Value for money.

Extravagance

Ancient World	World searched for delicacies. Established concept of prestige foods. Recognition that good ingredients cost more. You pay for quality.
Brillat-Savarin	You should devote a proper amount of money to your food the concept of quality and appropriate cost.
'Colonial' Australia	Food should not be 'tricked up' or overly expensive.
Modem Australia	Pay for quality. Devotion of a proper percentage of income on food.

Care and Convenience

Care

Ancient World	Skills of cooks recognised and respected. Food culture evident. Food writing exists. Attention to planning of meal experiences.
Brillat-Savarin	Respect for ingredients and cooking techniques. Knowledge and curiosity. Food writing.
'Colonial' Australia	Concern with quality. Recognition of cooking skills. Respect for seasonal/regional foods. Food writing.

Modem Australia	Respect for ingredients. Recognition of cooking skills. Food writing.
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Convenience

as a theme does not rate a mention in the texts examined.

While each set of texts dealt with a different society the underlying values across two millennium that shape the gastronomers' eating are remarkably similar.

In choosing between novelty and tradition gastronomers actively seek out new foods, the cuisines of the other, they understand food habits are not static but agree not all change is favourable, history and tradition are important for without tradition we would not have developed regional cuisines and the range of quality regional produce.

The guiding values on the health or indulgence axis are easily summarised by reference to Brillat-Savarin's second and tenth aphorisms.

2nd "Animals feed: man eats: only the man of intellect knows how to eat".

10th "Drunkards and victims of indigestion do not know how to eat or drink".

One other aspect worth commenting on is the maintenance of a view by sectors of the community that a strong interest in food is in itself an indulgence (despite the quantity actually eaten).

A strong interest in food may be viewed as both an indulgence and extravagance but gastronomers seem to agree that good food does not have to be expensive. With knowledge and care you can eat well within your means. Eating cheap is not as important as eating well using quality seasonal ingredients that are full of flavour. You may pay a little more but the result is worth it. This message is one that is also commonly preached to others especially connected to a health message. Food is important; you must care about the food you eat. You owe it to yourself to think about ingredients - their quality, seasonally, place of origin. Prepared with thoughtful care food offers one of the essential pleasures of life. Gastronomers do not seem to care about convenience; they care about the thoughtful pleasure of table.

The concept put forward by Douglas that each meal carries forward something of the meaning of other meals seems justified. The plotting of decisions by one population (gastronomers) on Warde's four antinomies of taste made over two millennia help demonstrate that a deeper more constant value system is in place. The perceived pace of change and disconnectedness evident in our post-modern society does not develop as fully as may have been expected. Warde (1997) notes that:

"Commodity culture itself creates an illusion of rapid change because of its preoccupation with new products, which by their nature tend to be, in the field of food, either specific ingredients or composed dishes. In this respect there is much flux, but that should be viewed in the context of more profound continuity in other areas of food behaviour. Items purchased and dishes preferred have

been subject to greater change than have the structure of meals, the rituals of the table, the social meaning of companionship, the allocation of domestic food tasks, or the social classification of what it is appropriate to eat. Some, especially the social practices in the field of food are more resistant to change than others."

Change itself has been a constant part of our foodways and gastronomers have played their part in facilitating change. Their contributions also help illustrate the paradoxes that influence foodways. The sense of tradition and maintenance of craft skills contributes to the preservation of regional cuisines but the neophilia aids travel towards globalisation and the development of a global cuisine. The push to both experience the 'new or the other' themselves and then to disseminate that experience contributes to the process identified by Mennell of "diminishing contrasts and increased variety." Food writing helps illustrate this point. At one level the writing opens up a wider range of food experiences for the individual consumer, while according to Camporesi (1989) and Appadurac (1988), unifying, codifying and homogenising what is eaten by the wider community. The semi-open system that once produced slow change in regional cuisines has expanded to encompass a brave new world.

A world that at the end of the millennium is post-modern and post-Fordist seemingly disconnected from the past is still concerned with the question 'what will we eat'? There is no use trying to step back and predict what will be served on the plate of the future. Especially in a world that worships the new. What is certain is despite the rapid appearance of change our eating will still be constrained by biological necessity and social construct. The omnivores paradox will remain, social constructs will remain shaped by the same core values expressed over the last two millennia. Each meal in the new millennium will be a product of all preceding meals carrying forward structure and meaning. Gastronomers will continue to indulge 'The Pursuit of Happiness' and find at least part of the answer at table.

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Conquered Cuisines

Paul van Reyk

Butter chicken, sickeningly sweeter than a Lucknow ras mallai; garlic naan leathery as a Rajasthani camel's hide; aloo mattar with frozen peas and dry potatoes in a gravy oily and brown as the waters of the Hoogli as it swings past Calcutta; and onion pakoras that could as easily pass for cow pats and are generally as combustible. Go to any of the six Indian take away/restaurants in King St, Newtown, and the menu in each is depressingly uniform. Indeed, go to any suburb of any city in Australia and you'll find the same regurgitation of someone's idea of Indian food dished up by platoons of cooks all claiming to be graduates of the Taj Hotel cooking school.

In Newtown, the exception to this sub continental revenge on the stomachs of those who still bend the knee to their colonial masters, is a small restaurant with something of the down at heelness of a dhaba in Delhi, regrettably named the Tandoori Hut. Order from the menu here and you'll end up with the pap that coagulates in the bain maries of the Indian joints up and down the street, albeit done with more care. But wave away the menu and ask for the night's specials and you are somewhere entirely different. You will find nihari, paya, haleem, Pakistani dishes that would convince even the Americans that lamb is a superior meat to beef; or a sabji of whatever is in season at the local Indian grocers, like okra and methi (fenugreek sprouts with more going for them than the ubiquitous alfalfa); and perhaps a fresh mint and green chilli chutney uncompromised by the usual lashings of yoghurt. If you are very lucky you'll finish the meal with pedha, milk reduced till it is pliable and rolled into sweet small balls, made fresh that day by Raphael, the Pakistani Christian owner and chef. You will have crossed the line from pastiche to, well, pedha, from curry-in-a-hurry to cuisine.

That's what draws the regular contingent of Pakistani, Indian and Sri Lankan taxi drivers, their friends and relatives to Raphael's every night. That and the \$10 standard fee he charges them for what he sees as home food that he hesitates to offer to his Anglo-Australian clientele.

I think it's interesting and damning that Raphael calls his restaurant the Tandoori Hut. Sure, tandoori is a part of Pakistani cuisine, at least at the Punjabi end. But I wondered why he hadn't seen value in differentiating what he offers from what's available everywhere else. When I asked him, he said, he felt he had to offer his Anglo-Australian customers what they expect from an Indian restaurant – kormas, vindaloos and tandoori everything - if he was to make a go of his business. I've had the same comments made to me by other chefs from the sub-continent, happy that I've gone for uttapam over samosas, or dum aloo over mattar paneer. It's what lies behind the hesitation with which Asian grocers checkout my collection of their greens that go beyond neat bundles of bok choy and choy sum, unsure that they ought to let me buy what they cannot imagine I will want to eat.

Where did Raphael learn that the way to an Anglo-Australian's wallet was through the slush of brown dhal of a consistency and flavour of monsoonal mud? Why can I only get crunchy, pungent, Thai fried fish with a dipping sauce of thick blachan, tamarind and force 10 chillis as a takeaway from Pontip's hole-in-the-wall grocery at the derelict end of Pitt St, Sydney? Why is burek, that marvellous Macedonian coil of spinach, cheese or meat filled flaky pastry produced virtually only to order from the hygienically challenging eponymous Newtown Pastry Hot Burek Shop?

In this paper, I suggest that an answer to these questions lies in a kind of White Australia Policy practiced in Australia cuisine, the regulation of the exotic ingredients of an Australian palate to the innocuous sultana that may sweeten our increasingly indigestible colonial damper in despite of the threat of the conquering of our senses by the robust, uncontrollable Magic Pudding of a multicultural future.

Brillat Savarin says 'the destiny of nations depends on how they eat'. We can read this simply as a humorous aphorism, but I want to take it further than this. I want to ask how do we eat, that is construct, the cuisines of our immigrant and indigenous peoples and what does that say for our hopes in a future Australian multicultural republic.

Whose multiculturalism?

I begin with polemic for which I make no apologies.

Multiculturalism as a construct is acknowledged if not centralised in the proposed preamble to the Australian Constitution, but what is meant by it is not explicit. How do we as a society construct multiculturalism? I don't think the answer is at all simple nor uniform, but I think it's true to say that central to all constructions is some notion of a convergence of different social identities. Where the constructions diverge is in the expectations we have of whether and how those identities are collapsed into meta-identities at points of convergence as a result of migration, colonisation, exile and exodus.

I would hazard that the majority Australian view of multiculturalism is something like this:

We have developed an Australian way of doing things. We have been able to retain the good bits that have been contributed to Australian society by the various cultural tributaries and reject the bad bits.

These are in fact the words of the Prime Minister, John Howard, as quoted in the Sydney Morning Herald 6th May 1999. This statement was seen at the time as a significant turnaround for Howard, but it is not. It only recasts in the guise of tolerance and inclusiveness, the view echoed in debates around immigration and Aboriginal land rights. These debates are redolent with ideas of the good and the bad migrant and Aboriginal. Good Serbs/Bosnians/Kurds are those who don't bring their national conflicts to our shores. Bad Serbs/Bosnians/Kurds burn NATO flags outside US embassies. Good Chinese become heart surgeons. Bad

Chinese belong to triads. Good Vietnamese don't come here on leaky fishing boats that sneak up on our coastline at night. Good Aboriginals refuse to take government handouts.

Who, in all of this, are the 'we' that 'develops the Australian way'? On what basis have they chosen the 'good bits' and the 'bad bits'? From where I stand, a Sri Lankan Burgher resident in Australia for more than three quarters of my life, the voice of Howard is not a multicultural voice but a culturally specific voice - the voice of my colonial ancestors and the colonial ancestors of the majority of white Australia. It is not the voice of my Malayala ancestors and our Australian born children, nor the voice of the generations of other non-white immigrants and their Australian born children.

It is this voice, however, that regulates how the 'various cultural tributaries' of our indigenous and immigrant past and present can contribute to the making of an Australian society. In doing so, it also determines the nature of that society.

Advance Australia Fare

The Macquarie Dictionary defines culture as 'the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings, which is transmitted from one generation to another'. What a society eats and the rules around the preparation and consumption of food are part of a society's ways of living and so fall within this definition of culture. How have we shaped food within the Australian culture?

Max Lake, writing in *Food on the plate. Wine in the Glass* makes this statement:

Sixty years ago...food was fresh but plain, wine avoided as too 'strong', or 'foreign'. On the rare night out, one encountered limited menus at a few pseudo-French restaurants, in Australia run mainly by Italians. Ethnic Chinese, Italian and Greek 'greasy spoons' were a big deal. The average Australian home had little cultural tradition to influence flavour preferences or cooking styles. With hindsight this may have been a virtue in that we had nothing much to unlearn.

I want to take issue on this view of our culinary advance in Australia. I don't think the Australian home has as yet developed the 'cultural tradition' Lake sees as a necessary precondition for the development of an Australian cuisine. I think the reason for this is in the position Lake appears to take in the second part of the quote above. He seems to see Australian cuisine as a tabula rasa until some unspecified but clearly recent time, positing that Australia was in the happy position of having nothing to unlearn in the development of a truly Australian cuisine. I don't agree. I think that it is precisely that we have so much to unlearn that holds us back.

The flavour preference and cooking styles of the Australian home remain by and large those of Empire. When it adopts non Anglo-Celtic cuisines, it does so within the framework of that colonial history,

employing on cuisines the full range of colonising practices that have been employed in appropriating or demonising the dress, art, music etc. of Empire.

Some cuisines are dumbed down in the process. When I first came to Australia 37 years ago, the only curry powder on the shelves was a yellow dust that was little more than powdered turmeric and bore the brand name of the man mostly singly responsible for the establishment of the British Empire in India, Robert Clive. The first curries I had not of my father's making were served up to me by a well-meaning friend, bright yellow and lumpy with sultanas and apples. The recipe she said was from her Scottish mother. The Taree West Cookbook of 1997 has a recipe for curried chicken built on a base of a packet of Continental Dutch Curry soup.

I recently had cause to travel in both South Eastern Queensland and Central Australia. I'm not sure it's an advance to find in Toowoomba and Alice Springs laksas consisting of a watery broth in which carrots, celery and capsicum swam unfettered by either coconut milk or lime. A friend of mine spent our entire five weeks in Vietnam puzzled at first, and then increasingly annoyed, that no-one would sell him the prawn spring rolls he ate each week in Darlinghurst, Sydney. In the North, he was gradually convinced of the possibility that Vietnam, unlike Australia, still had very strong regional cuisines, and that the flavours and cooking styles of the North could reflect stronger Southern Chinese influences. He was less convinced as we travelled South that perhaps what he was looking for was a version of Vietnamese food created by Vietnamese restaurants to satisfy Australian notions of their cuisine. If cuisines were migrants, these would be examples of assimilation, the diluting of the distinctive into the hegemonic.

Alan Saunders, writing in *The Australian Magazine*, July 3-4, 1999 describes the phenomenon thus:

... whole cuisines get turned over and stripped of their valuables, like unsuspecting foreign tourists who've wandered into the wrong part of town.....The result is that, say, tempura, that fascinating Japanese take on deep frying, is no longer a special treat to be enjoyed in the specific cultural context of a Japanese meal. Then again, perhaps it is; I encounter the word 'tempura' on menus far more frequently than I encounter genuine tempura on my plate.

Others are exoticised. For them is reserved the allure of danger, sexual risk, primeval power. Read any article promoting chillies in recent Australian magazines and you will inevitably be told that chillies fire the sexual appetite. Frankly, I can think of few things less sexy than kissing someone who's just munched on a force ten jalapeno. Terry Durack recently in the *Sydney Morning Herald* ascribed a 'dense jungle-undergrowth sort of flavour' to the pineapple curry served at Sailor's Thai. I don't know whether to be pleased or surprised that Durack is in the habit of tasting undergrowth. The last time I had a bite of jungle undergrowth, it wasn't by choice. I was face down on the ground after tripping over a massive root while stumbling down a track in the Dorrigo rainforest, and it tasted exactly like munching on dank, rotting wood. Here's Mietta O'Donnell talking about the Melbourne restaurant Bortolotto in the *Weekend Australian Review* – May 15-16.

‘Bortolotto’s had a distinct style that suited its position very well – it embodied a lot of what St Kilda was.’ Okay, O’Donnell may have meant something quite innocent, but to someone who has only the mythology of St Kilda within which to contextualise the statement, how could it be understood? Perhaps that it embodied some stereotyping of European Jewishness, loud, brash, emotionally charged. If cuisines were migrants these foods and flavours would stand in the position against which we could flagellate ourselves as we measured our conspicuous staidness, our ordinariness.

And then there are cuisines or aspects of cuisines which we reject outright. Mary Douglas in her groundbreaking study *Purity and Danger*, persuasively identifies as anti-pollutant, in the broadest sense, the role played in societies by dietary laws and food preparation practices. Societies, or classes, groups, and castes within them view contact with other societies as rife with the danger of moral pollution. Such pollution has the capacity to destroy societies. To ingest food which is identified with the polluting agent is to risk ingesting the pollution. At least some part of an abhorrence of halal meat is a projection into its preparation of a rejection of the perceived pollution of Islam. The road to full engagement with bush food is in part a lingering identification of them as primitive, uncultivated, or fit for survival when there is no other food at hand. To eat them is to allow the possibility of reversion to tribalism. These are the cuisine equivalent of the illegal migrants from the mythic North, landing in their leaky boats on our undefended shores, melting into the rainforests to begin their erosion of our economy and the bulwarks of our cultural mores.

On the other hand, we sometimes actively seek out foods from cultures to which we can ascribe an Arcadian wholesomeness. Eat the peasant food of Tuscany and we ingest honesty, simplicity, rustic health, and a ‘natural’ sexual response. That may be true, I suppose, as long as we have access to the high quality of medical care and the wide pharmacopeia that your average peasant doesn’t, and spend our life in bone-wearying manual labour. And alas I have to observe that no amount of olives and garlic will make some Italian friends of mine any less lousy as lovers.

Either way, the endpoint is the use of food and its preparation as a tool of racism. Lake’s ‘greasy spoons’ are not just nostalgia but a part of the overt operation of racism at a particular time in our history. A joke from my school days – how did all those Italians know how to get to Australia? Easy, the first one came over with a map and the others just followed his oil slick over the water. But let’s not congratulate ourselves on the abolition of this form of racism. It’s not an accident that the term ‘sticky rice’ is used as a pejorative term in Australia for people of Asian origin whose sexual and affectual preferences are for others of Asian origin. The ascribed primitiveness of the material, the harvesting and preparation of bush foods conflates into a continuing ascription of primitiveness to all Aboriginal people.

Armchair cuisine tourism

I want now to look at a recent example of the processes I am concerned about. The May 99 issue of *Vogue Living* carried a promotion for the day trips Carol Selva Rajah conducts in Cabramatta. Carol’s aim is

admirable, that of introducing people to Asian foods and method of food preparation through visiting the markets and restaurants in Cabramatta. But I want to show how the language in the promotion exoticises the experience in ways that can enhance prejudices about the subjects of the trip, the Asian population of Cabramatta, and their foods, and continues to keep Asian immigrants outside of a definition of Australian citizens.

Here's the introductory paragraph:

Walking through Cabramatta's shopping centre, deep in the western suburbs of Sydney, you'd swear you were in the backstreets of some Asian town. Little old ladies in conical straw hats cluster around wooden bench seats, fussing over their bunches of home-grown herbs and exotic vegetables (lemon grass, pumpkin flowers, sawtooth herb, snake beans and the like). They sell these to passers-by for next to nothing.

Here you have all the elements for exoticising and distancing the everyday lives of a growing population of Australians, South East Asian migrants and their by now second and third generation of children. The description of the location – 'deep in the western suburbs' – already conjures up possibility of danger. Sydney's west, home to the bulk of its population, is a no-go zone for much of the rest of Sydney, having been demonised consistently in the press as the centre of the illegal drug trade, rife with street gangs and junkies, where street shootings are an everyday event. So already we are being invited 'deep' into somewhere alien and threatening. We are being prepared to experience the people who live there as different from other Australians.

Then comes the comparison of the streets of a perfectly average Sydney suburb, with its pavements, its malls, its Reditellers, to 'the backstreets of some Asian town'. Again, the notion of 'backstreets' builds the sense of danger. Backstreets are where crimes occur, where the disreputable hang out. The people on backstreets may not be as innocent as they seem. For Anglo Australians still familiar with the images of Vietnam or with the more recent images of sex tourism and Asian drug cultures, the distancing of the residents of Cabramatta grows stronger.

So, who will we see when we get there – 'little old ladies in conical straw hats', another step into stereotyping. We are being invited to disregard to the normalcy of the bulk of those we will in fact see, the young, the families, all in Western dress, with lifestyles and aspirations shared by Anglo-Australians. The point is underscored later in relation to food when 'the local takeaway of choice' is identified as 'a bulging lotus leaf package filled with sticky rice and faintly sweet, braised pork mince'. Never mind that in my experience you are as likely to find chicken as a filling as pork, I do wonder, however, what has become of the Asian resident masses chowing down on their takeaways of choice like hamburgers, chips, battered deep-fried fish and white bread sandwiches. They are somehow removed from any connection to what the day-trip

will reveal. They become inauthentic migrants, inauthentic Australian citizens, and we are invited not to see them. Stereotypes are bolstered at the expense of coming to grips with cultures in change.

Then comes the focus on the ‘exotic vegetables (lemon grass, pumpkin flowers, pennywort, sawtooth herb, snake beans and the like)’ and later the fish shops that ‘display unfamiliar (to us) sea creatures such as sea pomfret and milkfish’. Again, lets leave aside the dubious notion that lemon grass is a vegetable. We do have to ask how long it takes for an ingredient of any kind stop being exotic and start being part of the way we eat. I’d think lemon grass was pretty well ubiquitous and not exotic these days. You can certainly get it at a Woolies Big Fresh, or plant it yourself after a visit to the herb section of the majority of suburban garden centres. As for pennywort, its exoticism will come as a surprise to Western herbalists and naturopaths. And then there’s poor old pomfret, suddenly now an unfamiliar sea creature rather than the pretty obvious fish it is, and one I may add that’s fairly extensively eaten along any coast of the Indian Ocean it inhabits.

The give-away here to what’s going on is the parenthesised ‘to us’. The reader is assumed to be very narrowly conceived Anglo-Australians who has never been inside a South East Asian restaurant and/or visited South East Asia, both I’d argue vanishing like the giant wombats of Gondwana. And of course, the reader can never be someone like me, nor an Australian of second, third or fourth Asian extraction who’ve grown up on snake beans, lemon grass, pomfret and the rest of the exotica on display on our day trip.

I could go on. It will come as a shock to the proud householders of the early 60’s in Australia that formica tables are part of this Asian experience, as it will shock many the Aussie truckstop proprietor and many an Inner City cafe. Oh, I see, the point here is to link us into our memories of cheap holidays in Asian fleshpots, as is the reference to those little old ladies flogging their home grown greens for ‘next-to-nothing’. Nothing like a good Asian bargain to brag about back home.

Because that’s the main attraction of this, after all, you get to go home again at the end and never have to come into contact with the reality of the lives of the South East Asian communities deep in the West of Sydney.

Fusion Faddism

Let’s turn now to fusion cuisine. There was a time, I suppose, when fusion was an honest attempt to investigate new ways to blend Asian ingredients with standard Oz fare. In these combinations, the purpose was never to assimilate the flavours, but to form flavour contrasts and matches while allowing the individual ingredients their individuality. But the dangers of unthinking fusion are everywhere these days. In Darwin, the Crustaceans at the Wharf restaurant on Stokes Hill Wharf flashes its membership of the fusion club like Al Grassby used to wear ties. What are we to make of Thai Green Bouillabaisse that on closer inspection turns out to be no more than a very ordinary green curry if wetter to the point that a soup spoon is set before you with which to eat the dish (a menu beside the cutlery tray helps the perhaps rightly confused waiter by identifying which pieces of cutlery are to be set with which meal). They also offer a Smoked Salmon Tortilla

in which the list of ingredients is given as smoked salmon, horseradish cream, capers and gherkins, which leaves one wondering where the tortilla comes in to it and more critically what kind of a mess are they serving up?

In Penrith recently I had the misfortune to sit and watch a friend eat a Tandoori pizza. Now, I was prepared to pretend that tandoori accompanied by crisp naan may just be flexible enough to move to tandoori on a thin crisp pizza crust sans tomato paste. What came was frightening – a wedge of thick pizza base on which a sludge of tomato past and melted cheese (I doubt it was mozzarella) had been welded to form a sort of pliable gut into which had been inserted shreds of chicken (they may or may not have been tandoori, you couldn't tell through the cheese) topped with parsley, olives and capers. In Short Black, Tuesday 17th August, 1999, a Japanese pizza was spied in Randwick. 'Not only was the topping swamped with enough wasabi to launch a Godzilla sequel', says our culinary familiar, 'but the pastry was thick and soft – by our calculations managing to insult two culinary cultures on one plate'.

And that's the point really. In a search to be innovative or faddist cafes and restaurants around the country are having a terrific time insulting the cuisines of the over 140 different nationalities now resident in Australia.

Selling the exotic to the natives

The final expression of this colonisation of cuisines is the adoption within the subject cuisine of the new constructions. It's a form of internalised oppression to have Northern Indians in India serve food in major hotels that are kissing cousins to the bain marie abominations of the Indian Diners in Australia. My long-time travelling companion, Margaret Bail, an Australian who spent two years living in Bombay, now carries fresh green chillies in a handbag on our trips to India to compensate for the lack of them in what's served up. Okra, karela, brinjal is everywhere in the markets and nowhere on the plate unless we escaped to the dhabas or when the wonderful Mrs Colonel Bakshi would buy it in for us at our request when staying in her guest house in Agra.

Margaret and I were also witness to the distress of a beachside village café owner in Kovalum, Southern India, faced with two French tourists dumbfounded that he did not know what a samosa was. On that occasion, Margaret ducked into his kitchen and showed him what was being asked for. On reflection, I wish she hadn't. Those tourists would have been better served being introduced to dosai. I hope there is not now a small beachside village café offering samosas.

Back home, I despair of ever finding in my neighbourhood South East Asian restaurants anything like the diversity of leaf greens and tubers that home gardeners bring to market in Cabramatta or Dixon Street.

David Thompson, from Darley St Thai, has observed a similar situation in the adoption of fusion cooking in Thai hotels. On a recent visit there, Thompson was faced with spaghetti stir-fried with basil, and mango

risotto with olive oil, garlic and coconut cream, curry paste, and lemon grass stock. The experience, he said, 'was like looking at a train crash' (Short Black, Good Living, Sydney Morning Herald, July 6, 1999). Thompson is very concerned at the vanishing of Thai cuisine as a result, and the loss of traditional teaching methods. In a conversation I had with him following the appearance of his comments he also bemoaned the limited menus offered by Thai restaurants in Sydney, and at the adapting of what is offered to some learned or assumed acceptably Australian version of the cuisine.

Having the tables turned

In the light of the above, I find the recent reaction to the introduction of beetroot to McDonald's hamburgers in Australia more than a little amusing. Here, the tables have apparently been turned on us by the neo-colonial United States.

Here's how one letter writer to the Sydney Morning Herald put it:

McDonald's has finally added beetroot to its burgers in Australia with the McOz, leading the marketing director, Joe Talcott, an American, to state that it would be a 'very strange and foreign thing' to find in a burger in the US.

Well, we Aussies have put up with very strange and foreign thins in our McDonald burgers for decades – pickles.

J Archer, St Ives, NSW August 31, 1999

And here's how another expatriate correspondent put it from the wilds of Ontario, Canada:

No, beetroot would never go down in America, because they don't know what beetroot is. The dreadful dill pickle reigns supreme there, along with raw onions, unbuttered, untoasted buns, no 'tomayto' as a rule.

It will be wonderful to get back to Australia and be able to have a real Aussie hamburger, a meat pie, or, especially, our wonderful potato scallops and fish (unobtainable in any country I have visited).

Beverley Paget, August 31, 1999

I love these letters for a number of reasons. Their staunch refusal to use the circumlocution 'Oz' and their nationalistic pride in using 'Aussie'. I love the ownership Beverly Paget claims in the name of all of us proud Aussies for the humble potato scallops and fish. The put down of the American pronunciation of tomato. How wonderfully xenophobic and implicitly racist the disparagement dill pickles. Let them in to the hamburger, Ms Paget fears, and the end of Australian society cannot be far behind.

Most of all I love the positioning of these letters within our continuing uncomfortable relationship with, not America Ms Paget, Mr Archer, but only that part of it called the United States. We resent the loss of our Australian identity under the flooding tide of US culture. It galls us even more because we, a fellow Western society, allies in war god damn it, are put in the place of an inferior culture in this process. We recognise the impact of the colonisation of culture when it is enacted on us and resent it, fulminate against it, but cannot see our colonisation of other cultures.

Bring on the multicultural republic.

So where should we be heading? Let's begin with an alternative definition for multiculturalism than that of John Howard and his ilk. Turning to the Macquarie Dictionary again, we find multiculturalism defined as 'the theory that it is beneficial to a society to maintain more than one culture within its structure'.

There is nothing here about good bits and bad bits, no tributaries down which little cultural fishies swim to be caught or to pass through the net of an Australian culture. No, this is an inclusive articulation that sees benefit in diversity. And that's what I want to see for the future development of an Australian cuisine, an embracing of diversity in all its messiness and its contradictions.

David Thompson believes we are capable of such an approach to non Anglo-Australian cuisines, one which maintains the integrity of the cuisine. In a conversation with me occasioned by his observations on the Thai hotel fusion fiasco, he identified four factors that can work in favour of this outcome:

- He believes we have only begun to develop a complex food culture in the last 20 years, so it is still open to alternative approaches to its development. (This is not quite the same position taken by Max Lake in the earlier quotation.)
 - Australians travel a great deal. We have tried foods in their home contexts and are eager to have more of the same quality back here. This is a comment made by the owner/chef of Angkor Wat in Darlinghurst. In an interview I conducted with him he said he was noticing an increasing willingness of Anglo-Australians to try ingredients outside of their immediate zone of comfort – though he was not sure that Sydney was ready for cannabis broth.
 - Our land mass has enough environmental variation to allow us to grow the raw materials for a wide range of cuisines, so we should not need to substitute or go without. I recently visited Humpty Doo where Asian produce has escaped the market garden and is now grown on 60 and 100 hectare farms and shipped to agents in the major cities. I have a poster produced by the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industries which identifies over 50 different varieties of Asian and equatorial fruits and vegetables being grown there. How long do these herbaceous immigrants have to be here and in what numbers before we think of them as Australian produce?
 - Finally, and most tellingly for the substance of this paper, he believes that until recently we have not tried openly to homogenise ethnic cultures. I'd argue with him on this one. I think there was a period in the early 1970s when we looked poised to embrace some larger societal project, one in line with
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the notion of multiculturalism being a valuing of difference. So what I see happening at the level of political policy in this country is a turning away from that experiment back to the homogenisation we have practised for most of the period of colonisation of Australia.

I am not arguing for some ahistoric and romanticised notion of the purity of cuisines. I am arguing for an approach to the meeting of cuisines, of individual ingredients, of styles of cooking, unmediated by the baggage of ways of seeing, tasting, smelling that are redolent of values that we ostensibly want to disavow.

If I can step away from the table for a minute, I can describe something of what I mean by way of describing a concert I recently attended. It was sponsored by the Australian Institute of Eastern Music. One half of the program was an extended duet between Ashok Roy, an Indian sarod player, and Sabahattin Akdagcik, playing the Turkish yaili tanbur, both stringed instruments – the sarod fat bellied, multi-stringed, and plucked, the yaili tanbur, like a very long-necked banjo played with a bow. What gladdened me in their musical encounter, apart from the exquisiteness of what they produced, was the process of its production. Here were two musical cultures meeting within the structure of an Indian raga, but with both willing to investigate as equals the possibilities of improvisational collaboration. As they played, the musical form moved easily between an Indian mode and a Turkish mode, exploring melody and rhythm in a successful search for a true fusion where something new was made without a loss to either of its antecedents.

As an example from cuisines, I point to an experience of mine in a different approach to the valuing of the foods of Aboriginal peoples. In August this year I holidayed in Central Australia and I'm heartened by the way bush food is talked about there. Its use is 'normalised', placed within the context of a continuing culture which is different to the prevailing Anglo-Australian culture but is equally valued. There is no attempt to exoticise or distance the tourist from the experience of the culture. In the menu of the Kuniya restaurant bush ingredients (pepper grass, bush plums, bush potato) mix with staples (rocket, scallops, pears) with no accompanying text mystifying or romanticising the combinations. In the cultural centre in Kakadu, plants are described using their Aboriginal names, the common English names being mentioned only in passing.

To finish, here's Gay Bilson in a letter to the Weekend Australian in May 1999.

A cuisine is the collective aroma of everyday domestic food. ...Until we show ourselves to be more interested in the fair and equitable distribution of the whole, huge idea of what all Australians eat, then our celebration of 'Australian Food' will remain a cult for the affluent.

Amen to that say I. On or about the 18th of August 1999, the Australian population reached 19 million. Of those, 2.5 million do not speak English at home. It will be a great day when that latter 10% find mealy grubs nudging tinned oysters and octopus on supermarket shelves, when crisp fried grasshoppers are served at the bar as a snack during happy hour.





Simple Satisfying Flavours = Complete

Feeding Fulfilment

Sherry Clewlow

Nestled in between Tibet and India lies the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, possibly the last vestige of Shangri La. In an age where the world is dominated and obsessed by economic rationalism, Bhutan's economic policy is based on happiness. The King of Bhutan has said "we are not interested in gross national product, we are interested in gross national happiness". This is an extraordinary statement. Imagine a leader more interested in the happiness of his people than money.

Global food systems are run by multinational food giants like Nestle, Unilever and Phillip Morris - companies who answer to shareholders (it is predicted that soon 6 corporations will control our planets food), so money becomes the underlying control factor that determines decisions made about what we eat. Mass high yield farming production, pesticides, chemicals and additives exist because they make production more cost effective. The instant gratification mentality or focus on year end profit as opposed to long term sustainability is disturbing.

Schools are gradually decreasing the time once devoted to teaching cooking and home economics. Children once taught valued food traditions (even in ethnic homes) are now admonished to concentrate on studies. We live at such a fast pace and slick advertising is there to cash in on a time poor society. They urge us to leave the cooking to others: "life is too busy, you don't have time to cook , let us take care of dinner".

Eating is arguably one of the most fundamental human activities and cooking is an essential life skill, that depending on how well you do it can determine our quality of life. This mass deskilling is creating a generation dependent on food prepared by others and will ultimately deny consumers choice. You get what you pay for. Our demand as consumers to have cheap food has, and will continue to drive the quality down and flavour will be compromised in the process. We've seen many examples of gourmet foods bastardized to such an extent that they have little or no resemblance to the original food that excited palates.

Sundried tomatoes, pesto and bread -have you bought and tried the supermarket versions of these products? There is no comparison and the sad thing is many consumers try these foods believing they don't like them and not understanding what the foodies are going on about.

So why is flavour so important? Our palate, when combined with sight and smell, can be a good indicator of quality, nutrition and safety. Years ago, if we picked up dirt and tasted it we would spit it out and determine

it unfit for consumption. We innately like sweet things and dislike bitter things and when you consider we live on a planet where many poisonous things contain bitter tasting alkaloids, that's a good thing.

Today, with the help of science we are being conditioned not to trust the very instincts that have aided our survival. We eat many things that, if we found those compounds in nature, we would like dirt also spit them out.

Additives, preservatives and flavour enhancers manipulated by science deceive our tastebuds. They cause confusion and desensitize our palate to the subtleties of true flavour. They alter the register of true satisfaction when consumed, which often leads to non-hungry eating, a major contributor to obesity. This is especially true of many low fat foods produced by companies filling the increasing demand for these foods. Obesity and eating disorders are a health and social concern that is steadily increasing in Australia.

Eating behaviour specialist Dr. Rick Kausman has set up a network of specialists in their field to assist his patients to develop a healthier relationship with food. The group headed by Dr. Rick Kausman, a general practitioner consists of a psychologist, psychiatrist, fitness consultant, nutritionist, dietician and chef to address all the contributing factors.

People engage in non-hungry eating for many reasons and my involvement as a chef is to help clients incorporate flavour into their food without high levels of fat -the belief being that palatability is intrinsically connected with satiety. Client profiles include people who have a history of either bulimia nervosa, yo-yo dieting, anorexia nervosa or eating anxiety. Clients are referred to myself to teach them how to cook low fat foods that have real flavour.

Establishing a healthy relationship with food requires learning to respond to basic hunger and satiety cues as well as releasing guilt that can come from the pleasure of eating. Many of these clients I see are women, primary caregivers who work outside the home and are responsible for preparing the evening meal, (they are not foodies that come to learn the hottest new dish to serve at their next dinner party.) They are bewildered by the plethora of pre-prepared foods and low fat alternatives that fill the supermarket shelves, which begs asking: are we spoilt for choice or spoilt by choice?

In providing the evening meal there is pressure to provide a meal that is; enjoyed by all nutritious low in fat high in flavour cost effective not have too many ingredients, or too many exotic ingredients prepared in thirty minutes. It is very important to understand that they are not cooks or food professionals. They are distracted by the demands of our increasingly fast paced lifestyles, often lacking skills and techniques and the whole mindset of conceptualising the meal from what to cook, to where to buy the ingredients, to preparing the meal.

Cooking is, for many, just another constraint on their time. It is not hard to see where the pressure to succumb to the temptation of seductive advertising comes from. I specialise in low fat cooking, not because I

believe we need to eat low fat foods all the time to remain healthy -on the contrary - I know a balanced diet incorporating all varieties of foods can do this . The demand for low fat cooking is a response to the fact that consumers are eating more high fat, high sugar, processed foods than ever before, and the more we outsource our food, the less control we have over our intake levels of foods. We need to be eating in small to moderate amounts. "Low fat" is the current popular solution to levelling the imbalance.

Low fat cooking is often maligned because cooks or chemists make low fat 'imitations' of high fat foods or make flavourless attempts at relatively healthy dishes. The only way to halve the fat content of a creme brulee and not sacrifice true flavour is to have a half sized portion. Good produce and dishes that can be replicated sensibly with less fat are the key to attaining that register of satisfaction.

When I speak to fellow food professionals, I often explain that as fellow food evangelists and members of the Salvation army, we often eat low fat foods - we just haven't categorized them as such. We eat these foods because they taste great. It is these foods I wish to introduce to my clients. We have become so far removed from traditional peasant diets which were much better for our health and the environment. They didn't need to quantify nutritional information about their food because they ate intuitively with a greater connection to the earth.

In many traditional diets, desserts or sweets were foods for celebrations, special occasions or festivals. Now we consider finishing main course a cause for celebration. The pleasure of anticipation, creating, handling and savouring food are quickly becoming distant concepts. Spiritual energy and life force concepts relating to food are even more incredible -food is more than fuel.

Koreans believe that good food is not only a matter of food tasting good and being hygienically clean, but must be "prepared in a sincere and well intentioned way by the cook." Observations of clients cooking and eating the food they've prepared include; an increased enjoyment of the process of cooking, increased satisfaction in the flavour of food, surprise over the impact simple foods prepared well have, and satiety despite consuming smaller quantities.

For me the process of cooking is like foreplay -the more I think about it, the more effort I put into it, the more I get out of the whole experience, the greater intensity of the culinary orgasm. Similarly, I liken fast food to the 'quickestie' - it's great occasionally but a steady diet of it will leave you unsatisfied, wanting and looking for more, looking for food in all the wrong places.

Cooking as a life skill in the home is under attack and when there are people more skilled out there than you who can prepare food that can taste great, save you time and even be cheaper than you can do it, why on earth would you bother cooking for yourself? Cooking when your heart is in it increases the satisfaction of eating.

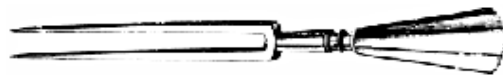
Eating clean, green foods, foods produced naturally and with integrity, such as those grown organically or biodynamically, costs more but their worth is reflected through better quality and environmental sustainability. Preparing these foods 'in a sincere and well intentioned way' not only nourishes the body, it satiates the palate and satisfies the soul. We can through simple satisfying flavours experience a complete feeding fulfilment and no take away food can do that.

Let us now for a moment drift back to Bhutan. Some may think their idealistic economic policy is a recipe for disaster. However, despite putting the happiness of the people above financial gain Bhutan has achieved economic independence, it has an exemplary ecological record, more importantly than economic well-being, Bhutan is a contented nation. They have achieved happiness by putting happiness as a priority, as a nation defined by Brillat Savarins' aphorism 'the destiny of a nation depends on what they eat' what are we putting as a priority?

J. Paul Getty said 'money has nothing to do with happiness if anything it has more to do with unhappiness.' When it comes to decisions made about our food system I cannot think of more apt words.

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Introduction to Monday's Lunch

Karen Pridham

Campagne was the bread basket of Ancient Rome. Campania was the bread basket of the early colonies of Sydney and Hobart. This whole valley was virtually a wheat field.

The bread you will eat today was made from an early variety of wheat grown in those times and from rye, grown at Bothwell. A very cold place.

It was stone ground in John Bignall's restored mill, by his son Will and made into bread in a very traditional way.

The bread is interesting... however it is what our predecessors were accustomed to.

The idea for the rest of today's meal came out of the realisation that at this time of the year, we are on the verge of a season. It hasn't quite popped yet.

There is very little that is fresh, right now.

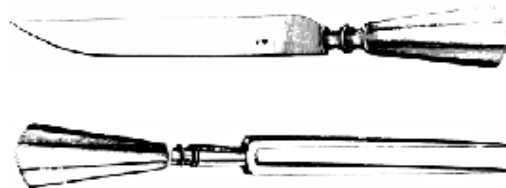
In true Edward Abbot tradition, we decided to preserve the Autumn bounty.

We gathered together, a collection of birds, animals and people and had a great day preparing this meal. Thanks go to those who arrived for the cold 8am start on a precious Sunday morning in the middle of winter.

We buried the food in gallons of pork, duck and goose fat, and waited for you.

We have tried as far as possible, to keep to old traditions in the preparations.

This meal was prepared with an enormous amount of goodwill and high spirits and I hope it is consumed in the same fashion.



Remembrance of things past and preserved

Karen Pridham 7 Mary Walker at Domaine A Stoney

Vineyard

Food

Goose neck sausage

Blood sausage from the goose

Goose confit

Goose ham

Goose giblet salad

Wild turkey rillettes

Cape Barren goose terrine

Spiced cherries

Hill Farm Dijon style mustard and Gamekeeper's Jelly

Rumtopf

Sauerkraut

Rye bread made from rye flour grown and ground by John Bignell

Wheat bread made with Rosella wheat ground by John Bignell

Pan forte

Various preserves provided by Symposium participants



Wine

1995 Lubiana Sparkling

1997 Stoney Sauvignon Blanc

1997 Domaine A Pinot Noir

1995 Stoney Cabernet Sauvignon













Converging on Harmony

Gay Bilson

When the subject of the 11th Symposium, “The pursuit of happiness” from colony to republic, was announced I happened to be rereading essays by Octavio Paz in a volume entitled Convergences.¹

To mention that I had gone back to these essays is not to quibble over a first or second reading but to highlight the convergence of the Symposium’s central theme with references by Paz to the Utopian Socialist Charles Fourier.

The more I read about Fourier and his detailed invention of a utopian society the more he sounded like someone who might legitimately sit at the Symposium high table with Brillat-Savarin. Brillat-Savarin has provided us with the definition of gastronomy which underlines all of our gatherings: ‘Gastronomy is the intelligent knowledge of whatever concerns man’s nourishment. Moreover his third aphorism had been singled out by the Hobart committee for special attention: ‘The destiny of nations depends on how they eat.

The more I read of Fourier’s actual texts (a taste only given his prodigious output but enough to sense the flavour of his ideas) the more I wanted to introduce him to fellow symposiasts. Given the importance he attaches to the senses, the definition of gastronomy provided by Barbara Santich in her Looking for Flavour argues strongly for his inclusion: Santich writes that ‘Gastronomy lies at the confluence of the senses and the intellect. The more I read Fourier texts the more I looked for commentary and explanation. Things converged.

The more I thought about utopias in general the more relevant the idea of them seemed to our theme. Utopian dreams are surely essential to the pursuit of happiness. The push for republicanism in Australia (there is to be referendum early next year), and the idea that we might collectively want to put the monarchical apron strings out with the garbage, had surely prompted the Symposium’s theme, and the social problems caused by a society in upheaval because of inevitable globalism and the new technologies will, I think, produce a plethora of new utopian ideas and essays, different to the 18th and 19th centuries because utopias are by nature commentaries on present societies, just as the period surrounding the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution produced Saint-Simon, Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, Etienne Cabet etc, and the essentially non-utopian Karl Marx.

Utopia for the French especially will always have as its basis a rural ideal: pre-industrialized agricultural production standing for a kind of freedom. Fourier’s particular social system had agriculture as the centre of its labour (except that labour is not the right word as Fourier depicted work as passionately enjoyable, the

¹ Octavio Paz, Convergences, Bloomsbury, London, 1987. Paz died in 1998 at the age of 84. He might inadequately be described as a Mexican critic, poet and diplomat.

tasks chosen by his workers because they were attracted to them) and he saw the central importance of the table, that is, of eating convivially, in his ideal society. Even if his rules for the table are decidedly eccentric, surely his insistence on its centrality means that he would be welcome to the Symposium.

Lastly, the more I read his texts, the more I found him to have, in common with Michael Symons, certain traits which characterize the presentation of both their ideas. Symons, for those of you who have not been at the Symposium table since its beginnings in the early 1980s, is the begetter of our gatherings. He is also the author of seminal gastronomic texts beginning with One Continuous Picnic, through The Shared Table, to most recently The Pudding That Took a Thousand Cooks. I should say that he has profoundly influenced the way I think about gastronomic issues.

Fourier and Symons share a predilection for prophetic statement and for numbers. They both have absolute confidence in the originality, truth and **precision** of their ideas² and both share the tone of a prescriptive pulpit, which is not to denigrate either, instead, underlining the passion with which both hold faith with their ideas.

I don't want to explain Fourier so much as connect him to all of the above. I want to communicate, if possible, the excitement of these convergences: ideas, reading, language, amateur research. At most, I want to send symposiasts back to the texts, as much to those who have written about his ideas as to Fourier himself.



Francois-Marie-Charles Fourier was born at Besan on in 1772. Seventeen years earlier, Brillat-Savarin was born at Belley. Fourier and Brillat-Savarin certainly met and there is a suggestion by Paz that they were cousins, by Roland Barthes that Fourier was a brother-in-law of Brillat-Savarin's and by the biographer of Brillat-Savarin that Fourier was introduced by his brother-in-law Rubat. Whatever their relationship, it can be fruitfully argued, as Barbara Santich had at the Fifth Symposium held at Rostrevor Monastery in Adelaide in 1990, that Fourier's ideas about the convivial table, the centrality of good food and conversation with good companions, influenced Brillat-Savarin's writing on the pleasures of the table.

Fourier, 'an isolated and unrecognized provincial autodidact'³, was, at various times, a petty functionary in Lyon, a clothes inspector, a commercial broker, a clerk and traveling salesman for the Lyonnaise textile merchants. His work was dull, his life solitary, and according to his friend, the philosopher Ballanche, he was simply a modest person with a fine knowledge of geography. He was disadvantaged by the effects of the

² Fourier: 'There are four famous apples in history. Two were famous for the disasters they caused and two for the services rendered to mankind, Newton's and my own', and Symons (The Pudding): 'I suggest that this is the first book devoted to the essential duties and historical place of cooks', and 'I offer an introductory essay...of awesome consequences.

³ Jonathan Beecher and Richard Bienvenu, *The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier: Selected texts on Work, Love, and Passionate Attraction*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1971. Most of the biographical details I cite about Fourier come from their introduction. It is probably out of print.

French Revolution in Lyon and was dismayed by the mass poverty he saw there. Lyon may have been something of a centre for utopian social thought but it was there that Fourier began to see the economic institutions of civilized society as calamitous and ‘invented by God to punish the human race. Civilization in Fourier’s language stood for the worst possible state of human society and he saw himself as its enemy. The poverty which Fourier abhorred arose, he believed, from the systems of ‘commerce, distribution and consumption, and production’ (Beecher and Bienvenu) prevalent in his day. He blamed, in particular, the merchant class, the middle men who robbed the producers (nothing has changed). Unlike Karl Marx, he did not theorize a change in the condition of labour without changing the divisions of labour and leisure. Fourier posited work which is pleasurable so that the division between work and leisure would not exist. Work in his society would be ‘attractive’ and pleasurable.

Fourier, as had Saint-Simon in a different place, traced the alienation of labour to that particular form he had seen at close hand in Lyon. He, and this is pivotal to Fourier’s utopian society, prescribed a social system based on agriculture which would, he wrote, liberate men and women (Fourier was, in some part, an early emancipationist: ‘woman in a state of liberty will surpass man in all the mental and bodily functions which are not related to physical strength’⁴) from the notion of a work ethic because work would be attractive. The insistence on the primary importance of agriculture to his society fits well with the French rural ideal but is also pivotal to his inclusion of the convivial table, for what is agriculture for except to feed society?

Michael Symons goes one step further than Fourier when he suggests that it is cooks themselves who bring about agriculture because in demanding its production for food for the table at which they will portion and share it they are in fact the ‘makers’ of us as social beings. Adam Smith’s 18th century declaration that ‘it is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest’ only serves to underline Symons’ arguments for the apotheosis of cooks. Fourier takes the cooking for granted in comparison to Symons and to Brillat-Savarin but all three preach the civilized centrality of the table where food is shared and conviviality treasured.

Fourier’s Harmony is the sum of its Phalanxes, the social and economic units consisting of no more than 1800 members whose principal building he called the ‘phalanstery. It is the common utopian (and socialist) conundrum that happiness (for Fourier consisting ‘in having many passions and many means to satisfy them’) and harmony (which to Fourier meant ‘the gratification of individual desire serving to promote the common good’) are seen as the outcomes of a strictly prescribed society and in Fourier we see it taken to the extreme, one of the reasons it is difficult not to read him without wincing at the madness.

In Harmony, happiness would be achieved by the society’s adhering to what Fourier named The Law of Passionate Attraction, ‘the drive given us by nature prior to any reflection’, the drive, I suppose, of Rousseau’s noble savage, of the man ‘born free but everywhere in fetters.

⁴ Beecher and Bienvenu, pp 176-8, Fourier’s Oeuvres Complètes

Fourier believed that Religion (as opposed to Administration which is concerned with production and distribution, i.e. work) legislates pleasures, specifically those to do with sex and eating (the bed and the table of Octavio Paz' essay), but that it does so in order to repress them. If we repress desires then they become unhealthy obsessions because of lack of freedom of expression. In Harmony, where everything is permitted, destructive passions 'change sign' (Paz) and become creative. Paz anticipates the objection that everything was permitted in the amoral universe of the Marquis de Sade, Fourier's contemporary, by explaining that in Harmony everyone is a subject (free and active) whereas in de Sade's world there needs to be subject and object: Paz writes that 'Sadism always acts upon an erotic *object*, while in masochism the subject tends to become an object.

Paz continues: 'The jurisprudence of Religion is twofold: love and taste, communion and conviviality, Erotics and Gastrosophy. Eroticism is the most intense passion and gastronomy the most extensive. Neither children nor the elderly are able to practice the first; the second, on the other hand, encompasses both childhood and old age. Although these two passions consist of unions and combinations, in the one case of bodies and in the other of substances, in Erotics the number of combinations is limited and pleasure tends to culminate in a peak moment (orgasm), whereas in Gastrosophy the combinations are infinite, and pleasure, rather than being concentrated, tends to diffuse and communicate itself (tastes, flavors). For this reason, no doubt, Fourier makes love an art, the supreme art, and gastronomy a science. The arts are the realm of Erotics, the sciences the domain of Gastrosophy. Erotics, which is surrender of self, corresponds to virtue, whereas **Gastrosophy, which is sharing, corresponds to wisdom** (my emphasis: this statement has much in common with Symons' thesis in The Pudding Which Took a Thousand Cooks).

Paz continues: 'Gustatory pleasure (for Fourier) ceases to be the satisfaction of a need and becomes an experience in which desire simultaneously reveals to us what we are and invites us to go beyond ourselves in order to be other.

In these ideas we have a glimpse of Brillat-Savarin's 'Tell me what you eat and I shall tell you what you are' and a reference to the profound notion of sharing being a prerequisite to the gaining of knowledge via conviviality, a theory which is at the heart of Symons' The Pudding That Took a Thousand Cooks, and to which he takes to a pleasing extreme by suggesting that it is cooks who beget language because they bring us to the table, the central place of communication.

If we understand the definition of Gastrosophy to be 'the study and science of gastronomy' and understand that in the post-Enlightenment context science held in its post-alchemical kettle promises of absolute, rational knowledge, then we might see Charles Fourier, Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin and Michael Symons in conversation at the one like-minded table in the pursuit of happiness, although it would not be Harmony; quite a *tableau vivant*!



In the chronology of this little investigation into Charles Fourier, Roland Barthes entered just about here, post-Paz and Fourier himself. A learned young friend, Adam Gezcy, responded to my excitement at Harmony's table :of course you have read Barthes' essay?

Of all his often difficult and elliptical writing this particular essay⁵ (and the two others it is linked to, on Loyola and Sade) is the one which will persuade Barthes' casual readers of the pleasure to be gained from his best writing. This essay on Fourier is, in much the same way that a piece of music might be, ravishing; brilliant in its use of language and in the architecture of its enquiry, seductive in its communication of the very seduction that Fourier's language, itself often an invention because no words existed to name Fourier's inventions and visionary ideas, exercised over Barthes who delights in the bizarre examples that Fourier gives to persuade his readers of his lofty utopian reforms, who adores the apparent absurdities in Fourier's passionate, detailed, defensive arguments.

Barthes bathes gorgeously in Fourier's eccentric and self-admitted trivialities. After all this is one lover of new words inquiring about another, whose neologisms were legitimate because, as Barthes so rightly points out, Fourier saw himself as an inventor. And Barthes plays games with Advanced Gastronomy, aping Fourier's argument for The Triumph of Tough Old Hens with his own mini-treatise on the problem of eating couscous made with rancid butter. Barthes delights in embroidering further the minutiae, the obsessive exact classifications, calculations, in the trivia which is served up by Fourier in defense of Harmony and its phalansteries, phalanxes, passions, series, transitions...

The architecture of Fourier's Harmony was precisely mapped out, even to diagrams of the relationship of each to the next and to the whole. This was to foreshadow the Utopian Ideal, an architectural movement based on the idea of the relationship of buildings to other buildings in order to allow man to live fully and fruitfully, which in turn lead to the movement for Garden Cities at the end of the 19th century.

Barthes draws up a diagram of a phalanstery: gardens sit either side of the building where meals take place, all areas are connected in order to facilitate communication and public life within the phalanstery, the only private space is for love-making. Its layout is much like a monastery or palace except that 'architecture and urbanism reciprocally withdraw in favor of an over-all science of human space, the primary characteristic of which is no longer protection, but movement' (Barthes).

Under his heading Advanced Gastronomy, Fourier writes of the 'intensification of gastronomic pleasure in Harmony' of the fine eating to be had. 'Two pleasures, *exquisite food* and *varied selection of dining companions* are continually associated in the combined order. And further on: 'How do the civilized dare to aspire to gastronomic distinction when they are absolutely ignorant of the art of organizing the piquant and varied gatherings which constitute one-half of gastronomic pleasure.'

⁵ Roland Barthes, *Sade/ Fourier/ Loyola*, tr by Richard Miller, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1997 (originally pub'd by Hill and Wang, New York, 1976)

Barthes notices Fourier's fixation on the fruit *compôte*, which is sweet and compound (and, incidentally, Fourier's abhorrence of bread, which would not be on Harmony's tables because it is the symbol of labour and bitterness and intrinsic to the idea of the French Revolution which Fourier found nothing good in). Octavio Paz is interested in that *compôte* too: in At Table and in Bed he posits that the American prejudice for simple and separate ingredients as a meal is in negative and Puritanical contrast to the Mexican meal which is made up of composite dishes where the ingredients and/or flavours become unidentifiable, inseparable (the *compôte*), that the first is not a meal for pleasure but to satisfy hunger before and after work, that the second is to do with pleasure, as was Fourier's *compôte*.

Barthes is, above all, writing about Fourier's language, about Fourier the logothete (the founder of a language), and about the way Fourier 'escorts' his own book (a lovely observation, and I would add one which would equally apply to Michael Symons and his Pudding), and about Fourier's motive, pleasure: 'Fourierist sensuality is, above all, oral. Of course the two major sources of pleasure are equally Love and Food, always in tandem; however, although Fourier pushes the claims of erotic freedom, he does not describe it sensually; whereas food is lovingly fantasized in detail (*compôte s, mirlitons, melons, pears, lemonades*); and Fourier's speech itself is sensual, it progresses in effusiveness, enthusiasm, throngs of words, verbal gourmandise (neologism is an erotic act, which is why he never fails to arouse the censure of pedants).

Barthes writes about Fourier as a 'calculator' of pleasure. Fourier cannot resist exact numerical calculation for Harmony's parts, including the number of foods offered at each table and the calculation of percentages (one example: 'out of 50 individuals, there is always at least ONE who has this bizarre taste (for old hens). In a Phalanx including 1200 members there will thus be 24 such individuals above the age of 15, women included⁶).

Fourier was mad about numbers and sums, organization. It was as if his vast imagination as an inventor of a particular utopian idea could only be pinned down by exactitude. Edmund Wilson has written of him that he combined 'in a peculiar fashion the deepest humanitarian sympathies with a passion for systematic exactitude. Michael Symons loves to group and classify, to give system to his thesis. The alchemists of a much earlier age were crazy about numbers and invented an 'exotic, mysticized vocabulary'⁷; science, the child of the alchemists (Newton, one of Fourier's few heroes, had been immersed in alchemy), attempts to be exact. Recipes in books are systematic and mathematically calculated, even though, originally, recipes must have been inexact and transmitted orally.



⁶ Beecher and Bienvenu, p268

⁷ John Updike in a review of a biography of Isaac Newton in *The New Yorker*, 30 March 1998

Isaiah Berlin dismissed Fourier's Harmony as 'justly forgotten'⁸. But listen to Barthes: 'It is nugatory to stress the reasonable nature of these (Fourier's) ravings, because certain of them are being implemented (acceleration of History, the modification of climate through agriculture and urbanization, the piercing of isthmuses⁹, the transformation of soils, the conversion of desert sites into cultivated sites, the conquest of heavenly bodies, the increase in longevity, the physical improvement of the race). Barthes suggests that we are not upset by Fourier's ideas so much as by his language; that it is Fourier the inventor of words who outrages us. And I suggest that much the same might be said of Michael Symons. He is deeply confident of his profoundly different ideas, especially the centrality of the role of cooks in our culture(s). If we don't accept or fully understand this idea it is because we don't have the necessary vocabulary to deal with its originality. Symons, as much as Fourier, is an inventor.



Oscar Wilde said that 'A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. Octavio Paz, in Seeing and Using: Art and Craftsmanship, suggests that the rediscovery of idealists, visionaries and utopians, such as Thoreau, Blake and Fourier, is a sign of health in our society. Paz wrote these essays in the 70's and 80's. In the late 90's I would suggest that if it is a sign of health it is in the form of acknowledging that we need to humanize our increasingly de-personalized lives. The Shared Table, be it that of Michael Symons' thesis or that of Fourier's largely imagined (there had been attempts to establish a Harmony or two in the 19th century) utopian society, seems to those of us for whom the contemplation of all that nourishes is the central issue at stake in the pursuit of happiness, pivotal.

Diane Elson, in Socializing Markets, Not Market Socialism, an essay in the Socialist Register 2000,¹⁰ suggests that 'a necessary utopia should at least signal some ways in which connection can be built between movements of resistance to capitalism, movements to create alternatives, and fissures and cracks in capitalist power structures....we need a transition to a slower, kinder, gentler, more inclusive economy- one that really embodies...the ideals of socialism.

Although we gastronomers tend to confine our view to the original market, to the one where produce is exchanged on a small scale, I believe that we need to take the ogre into account just as Elson does. I have no doubt that Symons' shared table is a paradigm for a better society.



⁸ Isaiah Berlin, The Crooked Timber of Humanity, Vintage, London, 1992

⁹ Fourier predicted the Suez canal

¹⁰ Panitch and Leys, editors, Necessary and Unnecessary Utopias, Merlin Press, Suffolk, 1999



Salon Report - Vicarious food experiences vs. the reality of cooking

Barbara Santich

The discussion themes helpfully offered on the same page as the salon topic indicated directions to explore around fundamental opposites of passive/active, consuming/non-producing (for example, the contrasts between higher cookbook sales and less home cooking, between chef-super star and the ordinary cook, between the cuisine of the artisan and its translations). It was only at the end that Gay Bilson pointed out that 'vicarious' actually meant experiencing by watching or reading about someone else experiencing rather than the narrower interpretation our conversation seemed to adopt, of words and pictures substituting for or translating the reality of cooking (and eating).

A scene in Primo Levi's book, *If this is a man*, set in a concentration camp during WW II, where the men recite recipes and instructions for preparing certain dishes, or listen to them, showed how images could be far more satisfying than 'real' food, albeit watery slops. All of us agreed that we can actually 'taste' as we read recipes and descriptions of meals and dishes, illustrating the power of the vicarious experience and its ability to substitute for the real. (For many of us, of course, this imaginary experience is an incentive to practise real cooking and prepare the dish described; is it possible that people who are not so inspired simply do not 'taste' the virtual flavours?)

The discussion moved to descriptions of dishes, written on restaurant menus or recited by waiters, and the value of long and minutely explicit descriptions: do they help us imagine the dish, are all those words helpful to our decision-making processes? Some thought yes (more from the point of view of avoiding possible adverse reactions), but the more general opinion was negative; and the detailed (and often flamboyant) recitations of specials was definitely a turn-off.

And then to cookbooks, their words and pictures. Though many cookbooks are unrealistic - they rarely portray the reality of cooking, the drudgery and labour involved - it is possible, we thought, to translate the cuisine of an artisan so that it can be copied. (For me, however, the vicarious experience of cooking one of Cheong's recipes from *My Food* is no match for the reality of eating his food.) Interestingly, many of the group developed their cooking skills with the help of black-and-white, picture-less books, but according to the teachers present students today need and seek visual stimulation, the image of the dish before the written recipe. Perhaps this is a generational phenomenon, those growing up in an image-saturated environment more adept at experiencing through pictures rather than words. TV food programs were seen as an extension of the glossy, coffee table book.

It was pointed out that radio offers another means of experiencing vicariously, listening to stories about food, cooking and eating, with or without recipes. Again, the image-less presentation was uninteresting and incomprehensible to young students. The main difficulty in teaching these students, however, is that they are obliged to prepare dishes most of them have never tasted and therefore they have no mental model of how it should look or taste; at least the picture shows them how it should look.

Our images of foods, our memories of foods, are invariably associated with other memories, emotions and contexts and conversations, and when we have such multi-dimensional images it is easier to experience, vicariously, the meals and dishes enjoyed and described by others. Conversely, through our own images, we can offer to others the vicarious food experience. It is difficult, then, to understand the rationale of Australian tourism authorities who encouraged workers in the 1980s to 'sell' the experience of dining at Berowra Waters to visiting journalists but did not give them the opportunity to eat there themselves.



Dinner from the Levant

Anne Ripper at The Long Gallery



Food

Baba ganoozh

Batinjan migli with taratour

Batinjan migli with red pepper and garlic

Rolled eggplant sliced filled with goats cheese and walnut

Maguda bil badenjel (omelette with eggplant paste)

Nourou sampug

Whole Nubian kid stuffed with burghul

Thorpe Farm goat cheese with Maggie Beer's quince paste

Wine

1998 Pipers Brook Riesling

1998 Dalrymple Pinot Noir

1998 Panorama Pinot Noir

1997 Moorilla Merlot

Music

John Vincent and Friends











Pursuing happiness together

Michael Symons

Key points

Thomas Jefferson enshrined in the Declaration of Independence of 1776 the 'self-evident' truths that 'all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness'. Being granted by the Creator and so prior to custom, such rights are called 'natural rights'.

We often think of happiness as belonging to individuals.

However, happiness is pursued collectively and is an attribute of groups. While gourmands have frequently been accused of greed, gastronomic authors praise conviviality, are mindful of the communal enterprise of gardeners, butchers, cooks and numerous others, and honour the efforts of earlier generations. Similarly, entire groups of people (such as Jefferson's black slaves) might be granted their collective liberty.

Given that happiness and liberty can belong to groups, we need to consider whether some version of 'natural rights' might also belong to groups.

I suggest that 'communities' ought to be granted natural rights, and define 'communities' as those groups whose primary purpose is food sharing. In particular, people associating in a free market for food have natural rights.

This is not the 'free market' of right-wing thinkers, who tend to conceive the economy in terms of money. They also effectively give natural rights to capitalist firms, Their manipulation through marketing, employment of professional advice, lobbying of governments and so on, distorts the free market.

Capitalism is an 'artificial' force, which must be made to serve, and not be permitted to destroy, good food, free markets and happiness.



1 The video should open up in the program you normally use to watch videos. If you don't have a suitable program, various version of Quicktime are included on the CD. Versions of Quicktime for other languages or operating systems are available (free) from www.apple.com

Introduction

On 4 July 1776, representatives of the then thirteen United States of America declared their independence from the King of Great Britain, complaining of a ‘History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States’. In the King’s place, they announced their own form of government that would uphold ‘certain unalienable Rights’ of its citizens. Among these rights were ‘Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness’. Drafted by Thomas Jefferson, the Declaration of Independence might truly be said to evoke the American Way.

The Declaration of Independence has been viewed as supporting minimal government. Certainly, governments derive ‘their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed’, and the people have the right to replace a destructive form with one which ‘shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness’. But while complaining of the King’s tyranny, the Declaration goes on to propose new governments with ‘full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do’. Accordingly, instead of ‘minimal’ government, the preferred form is more helpfully understood as supportive of or subservient to the most basic or ‘natural’ purposes of society.

Additionally, the text has been held to support ‘free enterprise’. It ascribes certain God-given or ‘natural’ rights to people, who are ‘created equal’. Such individuals are free to, for example, pursue happiness. However, several steps are needed in the argument before such rights transfer to economic organisations. Business firms are manifestly not ‘created equal’ with individual people. On the face of it, the opposite would seem to apply: for individuals to be free, organisations have to be watched - and, if necessary, replaced - as the Declaration explicitly argues in terms of government.

In this paper, I discuss when natural rights might be granted to economic groups. My argument come from a direction some people might find novel, gastronomic - that is, according to meal-centred principles. This approach treats economics as primarily about food rather than price.² I pay special attention to the natural right to the ‘Pursuit of Happiness’, which, gastronomically, derives from meals.

This perspective is particularly justifiable given that Jefferson was an epicurean both in the sense of seeking the good life and following the ancient Greek philosopher, Epicurus. ‘A gourmet and a connoisseur, he could be correctly termed an epicure’, notes his biographer Dumas Malone. In a student notebook, Jefferson copied Horace’s dictum: *Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero* - Live for the day and put little trust in tomorrow. At the age of 76, Jefferson confided to his old secretary William Short that he was an Epicurean. He hastened to add that the doctrines of Epicurus had been much misrepresented, and so set them out for Short, indicating that happiness is the aim of life (Malone, 1981: 198).

² This develops ideas in my previous Symposium paper (Symons, 1999), contrasting economic thinking based in food with current economic thinking based in money.

Happy lands

‘Have a nice day!’ Happiness is often thought to belong to individuals. To the extent that happiness is associated with individual stomachs, this might be true. But we can hardly satisfy our bellies alone. Gastronomic authors frequently issue strictures against solitary dining; they prize conviviality (Symons, 1993: 221-226). Our meals are not only enjoyed but also prepared with others, so that the same authors show a devotion to good cooks, and recommend close relationships with gardeners, butchers and pastry-makers. Furthermore, in respecting the long-honed craft of dining, they recognise that human happiness depends upon the efforts of generations upon generations of predecessors.

So, it would seem, happiness should be understood as belonging to groups as much or more than to individuals. The notion of happiness should evoke the satisfied stomachs of entire lands of people peacefully going about their ordinary business. As the ancient Israelites knew, happiness is ‘a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive oil and honey’ (2 Kings 18:32; see also Exodus 3:8).

Just as individual persons can have a right to go in ‘Pursuit of Happiness’, so presumably should groups. Equally, liberty can be regarded as not only an individual right but also collective. Jefferson treated his black slaves relatively well, but they would still have to wait to gain their collective liberty. Meanwhile, Jefferson and compatriots resisted the British yoke, together.

We have to be careful, however, when granting groups with rights — for they are certainly not always identical to individual rights. For example, some ‘rights’ of the state are greater than those of the individual - the right to incarcerate, for example. In reverse, governments never pursue happiness with quite the same élan as persons.

In particular, we have to consider whether groups might have ‘natural’ rights, in the Enlightenment sense of rights that belong to any human-being prior even to any attempts to formulate them. At least in one instance, the rights of governments would appear to be artificial in being granted not by the Creator but by the people.

In sorting out any Declaration of Independence warrant for ‘free enterprise’, I proceed by considering whether or not some kind of natural right of liberty can be granted ‘the market’, ‘business firms’, or some other entity fundamental to ‘enterprise’. Is the freedom of ‘free enterprise’ somehow natural or does it remain, like that of governments, artificial and therefore highly contingent?

Communities

I want to suppose that natural rights belong to communities, in contrast to organisations, which are artificial, subsidiary entities. Such a distinction between ‘communities’ and ‘organisations’ - of which a government is an example - is more easily said than made, but I want to try, reassured that we seek a political principle, and not a full description of social life.

According to sociologist Max Weber, 'organisations' are groupings in which 'regulations are enforced by specific individuals: a chief and, possibly, an administrative staff' (1968: 48). I stick to some general idea of formal 'regulations'. A more current way of stating this might be that organisations have goals and discipline; they even have 'mission statements', in which policies are softened with window-dressing.

The meaning of an 'organisation' will be made clearer by defining the alternative, 'community'. In attempts to distinguish this more natural seeming group, the main prerequisite is sometimes given as 'face-to-face' contact. But a contented land, in which some people might never meet, is still a 'community' in this discussion, so that 'face-to-face' intimacy is at best a building-block of often wider systems (Young, 1986).

The 'face-to-face' and other conventional definitions of 'community' get into trouble because they remain at the cultural or affective level, that is, they presume that people belong to the same ethnic group of shared customs, or are caring essentially of those they know. The definitions are also often criticised as nostalgic or utopian.

There is a gastronomic answer to this. I define communities as basic food sharing groups. As I show in my history of cooks and cooking, *The Pudding that Took a Thousand Cooks* (Symons, 1998a), food distribution is central to society and culture. It is relatively God-given. A food sharing group - which might also be termed a household, or *oikos* - will have all kinds of mostly unwritten rules, and affective ties, but not as the basic bond.

Dividing up food runs hand-in-hand with the division of labour, and, over the long run, the household or community expands, as the food and the jobs are shared more and more widely. From small, traditional units, food sharing might now be said to be global, with anything from anywhere theoretically available. The world is one table, or, more conventionally, one market.

Economic historian Karl Polanyi helps fill this out by discriminating between three categories of exchange (e.g. 1944). The traditional version relies on reciprocity or 'gift' exchange. It occurs within domestic households and villages, which makes them small communities, according to my terminology. The next mode is redistribution, in which food is gathered up by a central authority for subsequent disbursement, as in early temple-states, imperial courts and the modern welfare state (Symons, 1998b). In redistribution, the *oikos* seems to take on more of the shape of an organisation, dominated by the rules and rituals of patronage and charity. Indeed, courts evolve into the very organisation to which Jefferson sought independence. He put his faith instead in a democratic republic, in which food was distributed not by a new nobility but by Polanyi's third mode, the market.

Certainly, the market mode can share with reciprocity a one-to-one quality. But can we really classify the market as a community?

Natural markets

Adam Smith's *Inquiry into the Wealth of Nations*, which was published contemporaneously with the American Declaration of Independence, celebrates a 'certain propensity in human nature ... to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another'. Through this, a person is 'led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention'. Smith provides an example: 'It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest' (1890: 10-11). For Smith, such operations of the market belong to the 'natural course of events'.

I, too, love the market. For me, it feels utterly natural - as natural as cucumbers, fowls and apples. The market for me belongs to market gardeners, pastry-cooks, independent café owners and satisfied customers. The resultant society is like Smith's (although, I hope, less dismally self-interested) and very close to Jefferson's ideal of a democratic republic of small householders.

Under my definition, the market remains close to a community when it stays a flexible mechanism for food and food labour distribution, in the pursuit of happiness, but it can lose this naturalness.

The trouble is that, since the time of Jefferson and Smith, the natural market has come to be dominated by capitalist firms, to the extent of creating an entirely different species of market, as Polanyi describes in the *Great Transformation* (1944).

In his monumental study of the emergence of capitalism above 'material civilisation', historian Fernand Braudel alerts us to the crucial distinction between the market economy and capitalism. 'It is important not to attribute to capitalism the virtues and "rationalities" of the market economy itself - as even Marx and Lenin both do', he writes (1982: 577).

Political philosopher Robert Dahl points out that this revolutionary new market requires a radical new form of property, whose claims he challenges in *A Preface to Economic Democracy*. For him, a Jeffersonian agrarian democratic republicanism was underpinned by rights (at least for white males) to a 'minimum collection of resources, particularly the resources necessary to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, the democratic process, and primary rights' (1985: 82-83). But towards the end of the nineteenth century, these rights were translated into a defence of the unqualified property claims of 'an unregulated external force, corporate capitalism', which would generate acute inequalities in the distribution of property and other social and economic resources.

The inheritors of Adam Smith, the neo-classical economists, still view the market as 'natural'; this is to where everything else is to be referred. However, they fail satisfactorily to distinguish a higher-level, artificial market from the natural market of food and food labour distribution. The market of vast production units and free-flowing capital might serve useful purposes, indirectly assisting culinary happiness, but much more problematically.

According to my analysis, market capitalism is inimical to community in at least two main ways. Firstly, the market comes to be dominated by organisations. Effective in achieving certain ends, they essentially chase profit rather than happiness, and only indirectly serve and often pervert the natural market of food-sharing individuals.

Rather than distribute food among fellow social-beings, the modern economists' market tends to redistribute money from poor to rich, to generate class differences, to rewrite culture in crass ways, to direct professional knowledge and to take command of the political process. The firms can often appear somewhat totalitarian in their command both internally over staffs and externally over consumers. We need liberating from, to take just one example, ambient advertising of oppressive Coke signs and big yellow 'M's.

A second and associated problem is that the market is viewed in terms of money, made more important than meals. When the economy is viewed in terms of money, it becomes highly abstract, washing away the crucial distinctions between individuals and firms. From a gastronomic viewpoint, it is virtually impossible to confuse organisations of any kind with individuals with stomachs. Yet capitalist apologists consistently do this.

Robert Nozick

Neo-classical economists appeal to the idea of free individuals, but give remarkably similar status to tightly organised, money-making units. Economic organisations can appear to be 'created equal' with persons.

As an example of such mis-representation, New Right political philosopher Robert Nozick is fascinated by free market exchanges, and couches his arguments in such terms as the following: 'If I buy a good or service from you, I benefit from your activity ...'. It is as if he and multinationals enter markets on a 'I' and 'you' basis.

Nozick argues for the 'minimal state', limited to protecting individuals against force, theft, fraud and broken contracts. He wants the minimal state because, and I retain his careful wording, it treats us as inviolate individuals, who may not be used in certain ways by others as means or tools or instruments or resources; it treats us as persons having individual rights with the dignity this constitutes ... it allows us, individually or with whom we choose, to choose our life and to realize our ends and our conception of ourselves, insofar as we can, aided by the voluntary cooperation of other individuals possessing the same dignity (1974: 333-334).

However, Nozick is a blinkered defender of liberty. In opposing government intrusions, he leaves numerous other organisations - in particular, business corporations - free to interfere. And firms frequently mis-treat people as 'means or tools or instruments or resources', and so on. That is, in spite of himself, he offers a strong argument for 'minimal capitalism'.

Nozick might respond that the business firm is a case of ‘voluntary cooperation’. However, the in-group might be voluntary, but create havoc among the wider community; many employees would not immediately describe their relationship to the firm as ‘voluntary cooperation’; and firms tend to follow the autocratic rather than democratic form.

Nozick’s nonsense can be corrected once we distinguish communities with natural rights (because they are directed at meals) from organisations, which are merely supportive.

Conclusion

In summary, the present myth-makers replace the relatively full, and mightily material, concept of ‘happiness’, which has to be viewed cooperatively, with something much more elitist and nebulous, ‘profit’. This makes room for systematic corporate impositions, redefining the ‘pursuit of happiness’ away from concrete to illusory goals, such that lands are increasingly hard-worked, over-burdened and anxious.

Perhaps unconventionally, I oppose capitalism in the name of free markets. Natural markets are precisely what capitalism upsets.

Coda

On 6 November 1999, Australians vote on a new Preamble to the Constitution, outlining national objectives in the way that Thomas Jefferson enshrined ‘Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness’.

Significantly, while the Preamble contains references to ‘liberty’ and such variations as ‘freedom’, ‘individual dignity’ and ‘independence’, it neglects ‘happiness’. What pursuits are envisaged instead? In the Preamble, Australians are explicitly free to pursue ‘opportunity’ and ‘achievement’.

This scarcely-veiled commitment to free enterprise was even more stark in Prime Minister John Howard’s original draft, which uses the word ‘free’ (to the total exclusion of the more political sounding ‘liberty’). The draft Preamble spells out that the system of government is never to be ‘invoked against achievement’. As to specific purposes, people are free to be nationalistic, to realise themselves and to ‘pursue hopes and ideals’. That is, this is a striving culture with no immediate thoughts of pleasure or well-being.

Jefferson is to be congratulated for including ‘happiness’. Happiness might not be easily measured, but it brings in connotations of physical and mental well-being. As the above discussion demonstrates, the concept of happiness grounds and gives point to human activity. It gives a much more obviously gastronomic edge to the political agenda.

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Edward Abbott's Scrapbook

Barbara Santich

The English and Australian Cookery Book, by 'An Australian Aristologist' – is commonly claimed as Australia's first cookery book – even though it was published in London, anonymously. Perhaps best described as a compilation of recipes and culinary advice, interspersed with dining anecdotes and other ephemera, it belongs to a literary genre which flourished in the nineteenth century; indeed, two of its principal sources, *Hints for the Table*, and *Things Not Generally Known*, both by John Timbs, were typical of the genre.

Edward Abbott's book is a veritable treasury of gastronomic lore and culinary miscellanea. But in what way, to what extent, was it original? And is it worthy of the title 'the first Australian cookery book'? To answer these questions we need to take a closer look at Abbott, his sources – acknowledged and unacknowledged – and the making of his book.

Born in New South Wales in 1801, Edward Abbott spent most of his boyhood at Parramatta, where his father was magistrate. He may have attended school there – government schools had existed in Sydney since 1792 – or he may have enjoyed private tuition in the Macarthur household, the two families being close friends. The Abbott family returned to England in 1811, when Edward Abbott was about ten, but in 1815 were back in Australia, Edward Abbott senior having been appointed deputy-judge-advocate, to preside over the first Lieutenant-Governor's court in Van Diemen's Land. By this time, it seems, young Edward's formal education was over; he often accompanied his father on work and social visits, and in 1818 was appointed his father's clerk. Perhaps Edward felt some sense of inferiority as a result of an 'unfinished' education, for although he obviously read widely he does not seem to have become a member of any scholarly societies, such as the Tasmanian Society of Natural History, established in 1841 under the patronage of Governor Franklin. His younger brother John, on the other hand, who was 11 when the family left England for the second time, remained there for his education, completing some of it in Paris, and did not return to Australia until 1823.

In his later life Edward Abbott seems to have been something of a bower bird, collecting odds and ends of possibly useful information, and the arrangement of his book reflects this idiosyncrasy. He may well have had a plan in mind at the start: *Soups-Broths-Roasting-Boiling-Baking-Frying* demonstrates a standard practical approach to a book about cookery. In the second half of his book, however, where the chapters are typically briefer and less recipe-oriented than early ones, Abbott employed a haphazard, cut-and-paste, scrapbook style, placing 'Game' after 'Dessert', inserting 'Jones Patent Flour' between 'Toasted Cheese' and 'Milk', and 'Stoves' between 'Coffee' and 'Why Animals to be eaten must be killed'. If indeed there were an initial plan, such sequencing indicates its abandonment, and Abbott allowed his book to wander along an

erratic course until time eventually brought it to an end. Several acknowledgments of 1863 sources in the final chapters demonstrate that the text was constantly being extended, and the fact that Abbott had 120 pages of additional manuscript material for a second edition (advertised in Walch's *Literary Intelligencer* of March 1869, one month before his death) confirms that he was continually collecting and compiling new material.

There is no consistency of style, or method, in *The English and Australian Cookery Book*; in some chapters up-to-date or relevant local comment is added, in others, not. In chapter LXIV (Wines), for example, it is clear that additional paragraphs referring to the Great Exhibition of 1862, held in London, were included at a later date. Yet why did not Abbott mention the availability of ice in Hobart in his Chapter LIII (Ice), when the celebrated caterer John Webb used a pack horse to transport ice daily to the town in summer, having imported a Master's patent freezing machine in 1849? Why did not Abbott give recipes for local fish, other than the trumpeter, in chapter XXVIII (Fish), when his later chapter (Chapter XCVII) lists over two dozen species? Another anomaly is the inclusion of recipes for brioches, breakfast breads, buns and other yeast-raised cakes when, in a later chapter (chapter XXXVIII) he refers to the difficulties of keeping yeast in good condition in the Australian climate. While these inconsistencies appear to be more accidental than intentional, they detract from the book's credibility.

Possibly Abbott's collection of gastronomic ephemera began in the period when he was proprietor of the *Hobart Town Advertiser*, which he founded in 1839 and sold in 1842, but his interest in food and cookery, eating and drinking, may well have sprung from an earlier age. His enthusiasm was obviously well-known. His obituary in the *Tasmanian Times* (5 April, 1869) reported that he 'was noted at all times for his open hospitality and the excellence of his cuisine'. In July 1866 the *Tasmanian Punch*, in a somewhat satirical account of a Royal Society meeting at which Mr. M. Portall, FRS, read a paper on *The Red Herring* (*Clupea Militaire*), reported that 'He was frequently interrupted by the Hon. Edward Abbott, Esq., FRS, MLC, WCP - especially on the subject of cooking, in reference to which the learned fellows were understood to part at variance.' His home-pickled onions were exhibited at the Intercolonial Exhibition in 1866, and a 'warden-pie', made by the Warden of Clarence, Edward Abbott himself - was celebrated in verse in 1863 in the pages of the *Hobart Town Advertiser*. Abbott reprints part of the poem, under the heading of 'A Tasmanian Picnic', in a later chapter (pp. 225-226. (No author is cited, but it seems unlikely that Abbott himself was the author, and by this time he was no longer proprietor of the newspaper.) A warden pie is usually made with warden pears, but the recipe in chapter 92 is for a mincemeat pie (*Mincemeat à la Soyer*).

And on a lordly dish, upraised,
The lure of every eye,
In tempting glory was displayed,
A noble warden-pie.
That very pie the warden made—

As he had sworn to do—
[Or if he didn't, it was wrong,
And I'm mistaken, too.
The recipe is in his Book,
At Section Ninety-two.]

It is clear that Abbott saw his book as 'the first Australian cookery book', even if he did not initially set out to with this goal in mind. Further, not long after its publication, he amended the title to *The Australian Cookery Book*. It was promoted as an Australian cookery book, and most English reviewers saw it as such. In *The Reader* (5 August 1864) it was described as 'a work on Australian cookery'; *The Athenaeum* reported that 'The savour and spirit of the Australian gravies and soups refer to a more primitive and uncultured state of appetite ... The gravies, condiments, "dredgings and bastings" of the Australian are more emphatic and spirited than those of the French lady, and more intelligible to English palates'. *The Spectator* of 26 November 1864, while generally dismissive of a book that combined recipes with anecdotes, concluded that 'The chapters on dressing kangaroo and on Australian fishes are curious, and in Australia, we doubt not, will be very useful.' The initial print run of 3000 copies was virtually sold out within five years, but how many of these copies ended up in Australian households is unknown.

The extent to which *The English and Australian Cookery Book* can be regarded as an Australian cookbook depends on identifying exactly what can be attributed to Abbott, which parts are based on his own experiences or represent his own opinions and therefore reflect an Australian context. This is not easy. Abbott was more conscientious than many of his contemporaries in recording his sources, yet he was not completely honest, sometimes adapting, rephrasing and rearranging his selections and disguising their sources.

There are sections where we can be sure of reading the authentic Abbott – as in the Dedication and Introductory Preface. Here Abbott writes in an authoritative style, as befits a man secure in his convictions. His enthusiasm shines through when he writes about his native land; he is proudly first generation Australian, and rejoices in the possibilities open to a new country, a new civilisation. It is also Abbott's voice we hear when we read:

The great heat in the Australias is prejudicial to brewing and malting, but Tasmania, being situate in a milde climate, has an advantage; besides, she is a large hop-growing country, which gives her a superiority over her sisters. As beer is more or less connected with eating, we are bound to give some short recipes for family bewing, although it will be seen, by dinners elsewhere described, that to a refined epicure malt at meals is decidedly a vulgar beverage. No one but a parvenu imbibes beer with choice viands; with those of a commplace character we may presume such drink is permissible. (p. 163)

But his voice can also be mistaken, and it is not Abbott we hear when we read ‘A baked sucking pig will be found equal to a roasted one, if occasionally basted, which is the great secret of the domestic oven’ but rather Cooley, of Cooley’s *Cyclopaedia of Practical Receipts*, a work borrowed from far more frequently than acknowledged (various editions were published, under slightly varying titles, from the early 1840s; Abbott probably knew the edition of 1856). *Hints for the Table* (1859) is similarly abused. This latter appears to have been one of Abbott’s primary sources, but only a small proportion of his borrowings are acknowledged, and the original text is often abbreviated or rearranged. For example, *Hints for the Table* provides most of the information on oysters for Abbott’s introduction to Chapter XXI, and on canvas-back ducks and ortolans in Chapter XXVI (Appendix I). Similarly, Abbott’s paragraph on Crimping Salmon, attributed to Sir Humphrey Davy, appears to be nothing more than a rearrangement of the section on crimping salmon in *Hints for the Table* (Appendix II).

To add to the confusion, Abbott sometimes credits instead the source acknowledged by John Timbs, compiler of *Hints for the Table*, and it is impossible to know whether he actually saw the original or simply copied direct from this work – or indeed, whether both authors were relying on second-hand information. Both *Hints for the Table* (p. 167) and *The English and Australian Cookery Book* (p.167) attribute to the *Quarterly Review* an anecdote about ‘Madame Pasta’ and porter. The wording and punctuation is identical in both, but also identical to the note in the *Quarterly Review* (number CX, 1836). In this instance it is not possible to know whether Abbott was quoting from the original or from the secondary source. On the other hand, when he quotes Ude on breakfast (p. 141), he is copying word-for-word from *Hints for the Table* (pp. 149-150), Ude’s version including additional information on the usual time for breakfast (between ten and eleven o’clock) and the dress of the ladies (a simple negligé).

Abbott’s reliance on *Hints for the Table* raises suspicions as to his familiarity with the *Quarterly Review*, one of the main (acknowledged) sources for *Hints for the Table*, and also cited frequently by Abbott, specifically a number of articles published between 1834 and 1837. It is quite likely that Abbott was a regular reader of the *Quarterly Review*; indeed, his style of writing shows signs of being influenced by the *Quarterly Review*. Even if he were not a subscriber, other Tasmanian friends may have been; he may also have had access to the collections of the Hobart Town Book Society, established in 1826 (and which had about 2,000 volumes by 1836) and of the Union Club, founded in 1834, as well as to small private libraries in the town. Hobart’s first public library, which opened in 1849, subscribed to the *Quarterly Review*. Nevertheless, given the extent of his unacknowledged borrowings from *Hints for the Table*, it cannot be assumed that Abbott had access to the same source material.

Further, it is extremely unlikely that he had first-hand experience of all the authors and works he cites in his ‘Index to Authors and Books, etc., Quoted’, even though Hobart Town was very well supplied with books. The catalogue of Hobart’s first public library lists some of the books cited by Abbott: Cobbett’s *Cottage Economy*, Soyer’s *Modern Housewife*, John Timbs’ *Popular Errors* (Things Not Generally Known). Under

the heading 'Cookery Books for Families', Walch's Literary Intelligencer of July 1862 lists the following titles as available for purchase:

Acton's Modern Cookery

Murray's Modern Domestic Cookery

The Wife's Own Book of Cookery, by J. Bishop

Soyer's Modern Housewife

The Cook's Oracle, by Dr. W. Kitchiner

The English Cookery Book ... collected by a Committee of Ladies

The English Housekeeper's Book

The English Bread Book, by Eliza Acton

The Italian Confectioner, by W.A. Jarrin

Everybody's Pudding Book

The Kitchiner, or Oracle of Cookery for the Million

Soyer's Cookery for the People

Mrs. Rundell's Domestic Cookery

Francaatelli's Cookery Book for the Working Classes

The Cook's Own Book

What shall we have for dinner, by Bills of Fare

It is far from certain that in mid-nineteenth century Hobart Abbott would have been able to find copies of the French books listed in his Index, such as the *Almanach des Gourmands* and the book by Beau Villiers (sic), the citation from which is a faithful reproduction (allowing for one orthographic change) of the translation in *Hints for the Table*. His references to Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du Goût* are similarly second-hand, probably taken from an article in the *Quarterly Review* (number CX, 1836), 'Gastronomy and Gastromers', by Abraham Hayward. Abbott's presentation of Brillat-Savarin's aphorisms is essentially a word-for-word copy of the translation incorporated in a lengthy review of *Physiologie du Goût* in this journal. (The article became the basis of *The Art of Dining* (1852); the first complete English translation of *Physiologie du Goût*, by Fayette Robinson, did not appear until 1854, with a London translation by L.F. Simpson being published in 1859.)

Abbott quotes from an amazing number of newspapers, both Australian and overseas, and it might be assumed that, as a newspaper proprietor and, subsequently, politician, he kept himself informed. However, it was common practice at that time for newspapers to quote from other newspapers - with acknowledgment - in much the same way that material is syndicated today. Abbott's own newspaper, the *Hobart Town Advertiser*, reprinted material from diverse sources, such as the *Sydney Gazette*, the *Court Journal*, the *Globe*. The Melbourne-published *Australasian*, in 1864, reproduced articles from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Newcastle Chronicle*, the *Cornwall Chronicle*, the *Advertiser*, the *Brisbane Courier*, the

Deniliquin Chronicle, the Saturday Review and many other local and overseas newspapers and periodicals. The sources Abbott cites are widely dispersed, but, in all probability, the material was obtained second hand.

Two cookery books are acknowledged in the author's Introductory Preface, namely 'Mrs. Acton's work' (Modern Cookery for Private Families, 1845) and 'the creme de la creme of the cheapest of Soyer's productions'. Whether Abbott was referring to The Modern Housewife (1849) or A Shilling Cookery for the People (1855) is unclear; the former seems more likely, especially since Abbott's chapter XII (Condiments) is virtually identical - albeit rescrumbled - to Soyer's treatment of the same subject in The Modern Housewife. Surprisingly, however, close comparison shows few exact correspondences between Abbott's recipes and those in the above books.

On the other hand, Abbott may also have relied on unacknowledged sources, including Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management (1861). It is quite possible that Abbott had access to this work - he was still writing his book, and citing contemporary references, in 1863. A cluster of pudding recipes at the end of Abbott's Puddings and Pies chapter - possibly a last-minute addition - shows close similarities with those in Mrs. Beeton's book, as these examples illustrate.

Aunt Nelly's Pudding.— chop half a pound of suet fine, mix with it half a pound of flour, half a pound of treacle, a few shreds of candied lemon-peel, three table-spoonfuls of cream, and two eggs well-beaten; beat the ingredients well, put it into a buttered basin, tie it down with a cloth, and boil for a couple of hours.

Almond Puffs.— Blanch and pound two ounces of sweet and four of bitter almonds, melt two ounces of butter, dredge in two table-spoonfuls of flour, and add two ounces of sugar and the pounded almonds. Beat the mixture well, and bake in a moderate oven. Turn them out on a dish, the bottom of the puff uppermost, and serve. (Abbott, p. 57)

.....??

A curious inclusion is the chapter on 'Hebrew Refection' (Chapter CIX), a collection of 63 recipes which Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has identified as derived from The Jewish Manual, published in London in 1846 and thought to be the work of Lady Montefiore (see PPC 28). Abbott quoted from the preface of this book at the start of Chapter XCIX, on Victorian fish, but made no reference to it in Chapter CIX. Jewish cuisine seems to have been quite unfamiliar to Abbott, who mistranscribed some of the recipe titles, although he recommended it, for variety. 'We do not see why others should not use them [the Jewish recipes] occasionally, as a change, more especially as they are easy to make, and of a good practical quality; nay, we will go further, and assert that the Jewish cuisine is unexceptionable in flavour, and more wholesome than the generality of Christian dishes, from the acid invariably used in their composition.' Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett assumes that The Jewish Manual came to Australia with a member of the Montefiore family, which was 'engaged in trade and travelled back and forth between Australia and England'; some of them settled in

Sydney around the 1830's. Hobart also had a Jewish population of Hobart. In 1828 a Rabbi Levy was sent out from England to advise and assist Hobart Jews; land was granted for a Jewish burial ground in the same year. The Hobart Synagogue, the oldest in Australia, was consecrated in 1845, although services had been held since 1830. In the confines of Hobart, it is quite possible that Abbott would have had acquaintances within the Jewish community, and they, knowing his interest in cookery, could have passed on to him a copy of *The Jewish Manual*, from which he borrowed most of the recipes.

In summary, the principal books Abbott apparently borrowed from, with or without acknowledgment are:

Eliza Acton: Modern Cooking for Private Families (first publ. 1854)

William Kitchiner: The Cook's Oracle (first publ. 1822)

Arnold Cooley: Cooley's Cyclopaedia of Practical Receipts (1856. ed'n)

John Timbs, comp. Hints for the Table (1859)

John Timbs, comp. Things Not Generally Known (1838)

Alexis Soyer: The Modern Housewife (first publ. 1849)

Andrew Ure: Dictionary of Chemistry (1821)

William Brande: Dictionary of Science and Art (1842)

Isabella Beeton: Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management (first publ. 1861)

A series of detailed and thorough comparisons would be necessary to ascertain exactly which parts of the text were original, and which were derived from already published sources, but it is amply clear that Abbott borrowed freely and widely. So did virtually every other cookbook author at that time. Since borrowing was standard practice, it can be argued that there is no justification for applying the ethical standards of the late twentieth-century and dismissing Abbott as a plagiarist.

On the other hand, the extent of Abbott's borrowing is relevant to the claim for *The English and Australian Cookery Book* to be the first Australian cookery book. In what way can it be considered an Australian cookery book? Certainly, it was written by an Australian, but it was not written specifically for Australians, nor did it necessarily reflect the practices of Australians.

Yet there is enough local content in *The English and Australian Cookery Book* to make it recognisably Australian, despite the mish-mash of borrowings. There are lists of Australian fish and seafood, with information on their eating qualities and cooking suggestions, together with notes on, and recipes for, Australian game: kangaroo, emu, wombat, mutton birds, wild pigeon, wattle birds and black swan. Abbott recorded his observations on coffee in Melbourne, butter (and the lack of ice) in Sydney, Tasmanian potatoes and the introduction of salmon into Tasmania. He discoursed at length on Australian wines and the rosy future for wine in Australia. And he included a small number of recipes from local identities. Mrs. Crouch contributed her prize-winning recipes for Kangaroo Steamer and Kangaroo Ham; 'N.M.A.', a colonial lady who remains anonymous, gave her recipe for 'Poulet a Moi'. The enigmatic Mrs.— offered her recipe for

pastry, the ‘intrinsic goodness’ of which, according to Abbott, ‘was wonderfully enhanced if the eater was acquainted with the maker’ (possibly Mrs. – was Abbott’s wife).

Edward Abbott may have been one of the first to appreciate the gastronomic potential of Australia, and to encourage an appreciation of the pleasures of the table, but in *The English and Australian Cookery Book* his own voice is too diluted. If an Australian hundred dollar note were ever to feature a gastronomic icon, he would hardly be first choice from a field of nominations including the indefatigable and extremely practical Mrs. Rawson, author of *The Antipodean Cookery Book and Kitchen Companion* (1895) and other works, Dr Philip Muskett, as well as the early wine pioneers.





Meals in Minutes: Food in contemporary Australian adolescent fiction

Anne Hazell

Background

The hypothesis on which this presentation was originally based was that food is of little importance in the books written for (and usually about) Australian teenagers in the late 1990s. Hence the title of the paper: Meals in minutes. This hypothesis was based on recollections of the plots, style and characterisation, i.e. the literary criteria against which books are assessed, in the books I read from 1990 to 1998.

Based on observation of my friends' teenagers, I also believed that this hypothesis was true in the real world, i.e. that food is of little importance, as long as it appears at regular intervals, with minimum effort on the part of the teenager. This is in strong contrast with much adult fiction such as another genre with which I am quite familiar—private eye fiction written by women. The characters created by Sarah Paretsky (V I Warshawski), Sue Grafton (Kinsey Millhone), Kerry Greenwood (Phryne Fisher) and Janet Evanovich (Stephanie Plum) frequently take time out from their detecting to eat. The meals are often described in detail and are as much part of the ambience of the novels as are the descriptions of the cities where they are set.

A third reason for my hypothesis was based on my previous studies in the area of adolescent fiction. In my Master's thesis, completed in 1988 and later published under the title *Reflections of reality?*, I examined the role of female characters in Australian adolescent fiction from 1946 to 1986. I discovered that the literary world closely resembled the real world of the time and, particularly, that there was a strong correlation between changing values in society and in the novels.

Reality check

Armed with these three beliefs, i.e. my recollections of the books I had read in the 1990s, observations of my friends' teenagers, and the findings of my Masters' thesis, I embarked upon a reality check, before beginning to read the current crop of Australian adolescent fiction.

I devised a brief survey (copy attached) which I distributed to a small group of my work colleagues and friends whose children are teenagers. The questions I asked related to:

- The number of meals teenagers eat with their families
- Where these meals are usually eaten, eg at the table, in front of the TV
- Whether families eat out with their teenagers and where
- How often teenagers eat separately from their families
- Where such meals are eaten.

The findings of the survey indicated that very few teenagers eat breakfast with their families (and many do not eat breakfast at all); most eat lunch with their friends (at school); younger teenagers tend to eat dinner at home; a high proportion eat in front of the TV (unfortunately I did not ask whether this was in the company of other family members); eating away from home usually means take-away or a fast food restaurant, whether with family or friends.

Australian adolescent fiction

During the period I was preparing for this presentation, I was also reading current Australian adolescent fiction for two other purposes: as a judge in the Peace Children's Literature Award, and as the adjudicator in a competition in which high school students form teams to participate in a quiz about a group of novels. My findings are therefore based on approximately 25 books, the majority of which have been published from 1997 to 1999.

For the past few months, my invitation to speak at this Gastronomy Symposium has been the topic of great hilarity among my colleagues, most of whom now know me as a project officer in information technology. Nonetheless, many of them shared with me their memories of their own childhood reading, with Enid Blyton being the most frequently mentioned author. They particularly remembered the enormous picnics in Blyton's stories and the women also remembered the midnight feasts in the dorms in the school stories. The time at which many of Blyton's stories were written, i.e. England shortly after World War II, should have given me an inkling of what I might find in current Australian adolescent fiction. However, it did not and I was most surprised at the findings.

I tested my own memories of childhood reading with a revisit to two of the books of Mary Grant Bruce who wrote earlier in this century. Her stories, which are set on a cattle station in Victoria, describe the activities of Norah Linton, her brother Jim and his friend Wally. I remembered picnics, lovingly prepared by the Chinese cook, to be enjoyed as part of long, lazy days in the sun. In fact, in *Norah of Billabong* (1913) and *Billabong to London* (1915), the only meal described is dinner at a hotel in Melbourne, probably The Victoria, when the boys and Norah's father come to the city to collect her from boarding school. Dinner begins after seven and the pantomime begins at eight, so the meal is far from leisurely. The dining room is splendid with everyone, including the Linton group, in evening dress. Norah has soup (nameless) ordered by her father,

everyone has beef and then jelly. Jim 'ordered something that read like a poem and it turned out a sort of half-bred hash'. Lunch when they are out mustering is billy tea and sandwiches.

Billabong to London, where the group in travelling to Europe for the boys to enlist in the army, is set mainly on board ship. Meal times punctuate the days but no details are given, except when the ship calls into Durban where they go to an open air market and eat curry along with 'natives'.

So much for the reliability of childhood memories.

What then do the books listed in the bibliography where food is of importance have in common?

Food

In three categories of the current crop of Australian adolescent fiction, food and eating play a significant role. They are in stories where the setting is financially depressed rural areas; in single parent and/or dysfunctional families; and in stories about street kids.

Rural poverty

Three titles fall into this category: *Soldier on the hill* by Jackie French, *Deadly unna?* by Philip Gwynne and *Diary Z* by Stephanie McCarthy.

Soldier on the hill is set in a small country town in NSW during World War II. Joey and his mother have been evacuated from Sydney because of the threat of Japanese invasion. His father is missing in action. Food is very important with the community constantly being reminded not to be extravagant. French creates a fascinating scenario of life, and particularly food, in rural Australia during the war, eg

- A substitute for tea (and coffee and cocoa) can be made by grinding wheat and barley and adding boiling water and a drop of vanilla. Kurrajong seeds are used for the same purpose.
- An afternoon tea of pikelets, scones, orange cake, macaroons, crustless tomato sandwiches, cream sponge, kisses, raspberry slice provokes the comment that the hostess must have used up her sugar ration for weeks
- The Red Cross provides an eggless recipe for Sunbeams
- There is a shortage of potatoes for civilians so children are to be given swedes, cabbage and oranges to prevent loss of Vitamin C
- The baker doesn't make macaroons any more because it is too hard to get coconut which he saves for lamingtons.

Deadly unna?, the 1999 Australian Children's Book of the Year, is set in a small South Australian country town on Yorke Peninsula. The protagonist, Gary Black, is one of a family with eight children who live in The Port. A Nunga, i.e. Aboriginal, settlement is located nearby at The Point. The food is perhaps slightly

old fashioned country style and quite important in the Black family life. The children and Mum—Dad is an unsuccessful fisherman who spends every night drinking at the pub—eat together almost every night, usually chops and often bread and butter pudding, and the children reluctantly take turns at washing up. None of the cutlery or crockery matches but the house is clean and tidy. In Gary's mother's absence, dinner is prepared by the girls and consists of mashed spuds, sausages and peas, suggesting that the next generation will eat similar food to the present generation. When Gary attends his Aboriginal friend's funeral at The Point, the afternoon tea is scones and jam, with tea.

A highlight of the eating is the celebration when the Under 14 football team wins the grand final. It includes a barbie with sausages and fatty chops, onions and white bread, cold chook, tuna mornay, sausage rolls, potato salad and mini pizza.

A similar spread at a country wedding is described by 'Red' Liston in *Diary Z* by Stephanie McCarthy. Cream puffs, lamingtons, chicken and raspberry cordial feature at the 'kids' table'. The self-sufficiency model of French's story set during the war is again apparent in McCarthy's novel of the late 20th century. The rural depression forces Red and his friends to hunt rabbits and kangaroos for food, grow their own vegetables and circumvent the law by selling illegally caught crayfish to the local pubs.

In all three novels, the protagonists live in families which would usually be described as poor. Fast food is almost unknown, possibly because of the relatively remote locations, but also because of financial constraints. Eating together is a regular part of family life, providing an opportunity for social interaction.

Single parent families

Three novels fall into the second category, single parent families: *Garry Keeble's kitchen* by Errol Broome, *on ya*, *Sonya* by Margaret Clark and *Summer visitors* by Louise Elliott.

Garry's mother is trying to impress a possible new husband by cooking food which appeals to him rather than to Garry, so Garry leaves home. He meets a girl whose parents expect her to do the cooking, because she is unemployed. The two teenagers do a deal that he can live in the back shed if he makes the meals. Over the next few days, Garry cooks souvlakia, tuna coleslaw, pilaff, potato salad, Bolognese sauce, and tofu bake. The book includes full recipes and instructions for simple food with teenage appeal, woven into the reasonably slight story. Very pointed comparisons are made with the neighbour's teenage daughter who ran away with a married man and could not cook, so they had to eat take-away.

Sonya's mother, Janet, is divorced and scatty. As a result, 16 year old Sonya is forced to cope with her mother's unwillingness to find a job and their consequent lifestyle which fluctuates between poverty and wealth, depending on the finances of Janet's current boyfriend. Early in the story, the contents of the fridge are described as one jar of olives, one tub of yoghurt growing mould, something dead and black which could have been a capsicum, a tomato or peach right at the back. The pantry holds a box of stale cereal, a tin of

baked beans well past the use-by date, and a jar of coffee. When Janet has money she buys things that go rotten quickly, eg expensive terrines and pates and cheeses, exotic fruits, pastrami and smoked trout, fancy breads full of strange sprouts and seeds, and jars of weird pickled things; no staples like flour, sugar, onions or rice. They often resort to food they are given by the Salvos—bread, buns, oranges, apples, packets of biscuits, pasta, tubs of margarine, pasta sauce and long-life milk cartons.

After cleaning the fridge and cooking pasta which they eat in front of the tv, Sonya vows to herself that when she eventually has her own family they will 'always eat at the dining room table. Not the kitchen table. She would have a large home with a dining room'.

Food is used as a symbol by Louise Elliott in *Summer ghosts* which tells the story of 15 year old Hannah and her father, Lev, who live in a boarding house in Brisbane. Hannah is often left alone in the austere boarding house where she is forced to eat by herself or in the hostile company of the landlady's son. Hannah and Lev, along with the owner of the house, and her son, become involved in a struggle between good and evil, which has its origins in Lev's past life in war torn Poland. When the evil spirit is in the ascendancy, the food reflects the surrounding gloom, eg soup made with meat, barley, vegetables and beans which would have been good in winter but was inappropriate for very hot and humid weather in February, and limp and sweating salad. Later in the story when good triumphs, the food consists of home-baked bread, jam, honey and cream and picnics of cheese and pickle sandwiches and hard boiled eggs.

James Roy's *Full moon racing* provides a link between the second category and the third, street kids, in that his protagonist briefly becomes a street kid after running away from her alcoholic mother. Regular stops for take-away food break the journey, as 16 year old Gunner drives from Sydney to Queensland, with her older cousin. There is lots of coke, chips and jelly babies/snakes, Macdonalds' hotcakes and muffins. By contrast, at Grandma's house near the Queensland border, they have tea and fruit buns, roast dinner and icecream. In a reflection of their middle-class upbringing, no one ever thinks of buying food themselves, so when they get lost and have to spend the night in a youth camp there is nothing to eat until breakfast.

Street kids

Because of the particular focus of this presentation, it may seem that the current crop of Australian adolescent fiction does little more than spin a good yarn. This is far from the truth: social realism is alive and well with such topics as racial discrimination, drugs, sexual abuse, violence, paedophilia and mental illness being commonplace. In many of these stories, the eating habits of the characters are glossed over as they struggle to survive. However a graphic picture of what it means to be really hungry is found at the beginning of Ron Bunney's *Sink or swim*.

Bunney's hero, Bazza, is an older teenager who has been a street kid in Perth before taking to the bush near Geraldton. He steals tins of food from an isolated fisherman's shack and is caught by a young man, Earl, who offers him food and a bed. Earl takes him on as a deck hand on his cray fishing boat which is hard work, but

gives him a sense of self-worth which he would never otherwise have developed. Throughout the story food remains very important to Bazza: it provides the first link between him and Earl in the form of bread, cheese, cold meat and coke; on the following day Earl makes a stew which he invites Bazza to eat; after accepting the job offer, Earl and Bazza begin their working days with breakfast together at 3:30 am before going out on the boat.

Another former street kid, Bruce in *Falling forward* by David Metzthen, is a slow young man who works on a building site in Melbourne. He has been abused as a child by his stepfather and has run away to live on the streets. When he loses his job because of the irresponsible behaviour of a new friend, Bruce's problems are compounded because he is big so he needs to eat a lot.

Conclusion

What I discovered in my examination of the current crop of Australian adolescent fiction was that, in the stories with middle class protagonists, food was unimportant. My reality check supported this, in that the group I surveyed consisted of middle class, well-educated adults, whose children could certainly expect that food would be provided to them at regular intervals, and usually with very little effort on their part. While the main focus of Croasdale's *Red golf balls* was the 1993 bushfires which devastated Sydney's north shore suburbs, the gustatory experience of 17 year old Jack and his 16 year old sister Ellie puts my hypothesis into perspective. Left alone while their parents go on a cruise, with the fires raging towards them, Jack and Ellie occasionally stopped partying to eat their way through the food their mother had prepared for them: frozen spaghetti bolognese, chicken curry, chilli con carne, lasagne.

In the stories where the protagonists lived in dysfunctional families and/or in poverty, food played a much more important role in the plots and settings. To Garry Keeble, Sonya and Bazza, where the next meal was coming from, and who would prepare it mattered greatly. On reflection I should have paid more heed to my peers' memories of Enid Blyton—her stories were set in post war Britain where rationing had blighted the eating experiences of children for many years. When good food again became available, the tendency to overeat must have been irresistible.

The statement 'No Australian child will live in poverty' now has a rather hollow ring to it. At the end of the 20th century Australian children are living in poverty. For these children and teenagers food is important, and therefore the writers whose genre is social realism are writing about it as a legitimate part of the settings for their novels.

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Appendix follows...

APPENDIX – SURVEY

FOOD IN AUSTRALIAN ADOLESCENT FICTION

I have been invited to present a paper at the XI Symposium Of Australian Gastronomy to be held in Hobart in September. The topic of my paper is food in Australian adolescent fiction, concentrating on current publications. The working title is 'Meals in a minute'.

I am now undertaking a reality check with friends and colleagues to see if the literary view reflects the real world. I would be grateful if you would take a few minutes to complete the following questions, since I understand that you are (or have recently been) the parent of one or more teenagers. All information which I receive will be treated as confidential. I will give you a copy of my paper in due course if you are interested.

If you have more than one teenager, could you please either make an average or fill in a separate form for each one.

Could you please return the form/s to me by Friday 16 July. Thank you for your time.

Anne Hazell

I. Eating with the family

1. How many meals a week on average does your teenager/s eat with the family (0-7).

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

2. Are the above meals usually eaten

at a table ?

in front of the TV ?

in the teenager's room ?

elsewhere (please specify) ?

1. If you do eat out, how would you describe the venue (tick as many as apply)

- Friend's house ?
- Fast food outlet ?
- Local pub ?
- Local Chinese/Italian/Thai etc ?
- Upmarket restaurant ?
- Other (please list)

I. Eating separately from the family

2. How many meals a week does your teenager eat with friends (0-7)

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

3. How would you describe the venue if your teenager eats out with friends (tick as many as apply)

- Friend's house ?
- Fast food outlet ?
- Local pub ?
- Local Chinese/Italian/Thai ?
- Upmarket restaurant ?
- Other (please list)

4. Do you have any other comments about your teenager's eating habits? eg is there a difference between girls and boys, are there any noticeable changes as teenagers become older, do teenagers become more or less adventurous as they become older.





The Swans are Black: Australian wildlife, sacred, vermin or gastronomic delights?

John Kelly

Australia is the most ancient and weathered of continents; so ancient and so isolated it's developed its own utterly unique flora and fauna. So unique that one of the first Europeans to set eyes on it, a chap called William Dampier who landed on the West Coast before Jim Cook was even a twinkle in his mother's eyes, wrote in his log book as he sailed away:

This land is cursed.

The animals hop not run,

the birds run not fly,

and the swans are black not white.

This land is cursed and I'll have nothing more to do with it.

And so he sailed away.

And the place was left to itself for another 100 years or so until whole fleets of people with the same attitudes arrived.

These people could see no value in the native plants and animals and vigorously worked to get rid of them, replacing the native grasses with good European grass and grazing them with good European animals.

With great energy and enthusiasm they tried to make the country look like a good European farm. In the process, the native animals, the animals adapted to this special land became pests, vermin or at best dog tucker.

Later as life became more comfortable, an equally well meaning group but one which I believe saw the animals just as much as an anomaly as the farmers did, decided wildlife should be locked away in National Parks and 'protected', left to their own devices and not disturbed in any way by humans.

These are the physiological barriers built around our view of Australian wildlife by a couple of hundred years of blinkered, tunnel visioned, European settlement. These psychological barriers tell us

Wildlife are Vermin

or

Wildlife are Sacred

Thankfully for the sake of the environmental well being of this land, attitudes have started to change in recent decades. Many of our notable ecologists have realised that Australia is vastly different to the Old World.

Different in almost every respect with our climate driven by the effects of El Nino and subject to huge variability. Although Old World climates are variable between seasons they are highly predictable between years. Our soils are amongst the most ancient and fragile on earth. Finally there is recognition that European based agricultural systems are causing immense harm to this land.

These realisations about the fundamentals of the Australian environment has led to a school of thought attempting to develop production systems which fit in with our ecology, indeed which even find a place for the animals which are adapted to the land. There is at last a call to adapt food production to the environment, not the other way around.

So in recent decades we have seen a wide range of 'new', 'exotic' meats gracing our tables such as crocodile, emu, mutton bird (Yolla), cape barren geese, magpie geese, Tasmanian wallaby and even possum! All gastronomic delights which succoured Aboriginal civilisation and which our high tech society has been slow to adopt.

The largest and most developed of these industries is that based on dear old skippy. The kangaroo industry currently harvests approx 3 million animals each year producing over 30 million kg of meat and generating \$200 million dollars per year in income. This makes it probably the largest land based consumptive wildlife industry in the world.

It has been operating at these sort of levels for over 30 years and yet there are still more of the 5 commercially harvested species (we only harvest 5 of the 48 species) now than there ever has been. In addition with populations in excess of 30 million the commercially harvested kangaroo species are amongst the most common large wild land mammals on earth. This is the case in spite of the very large commercial harvest for two reasons.

Firstly kangaroo are adapted to being harvested. After all humans have been harvesting them for over 40,000 years.

Secondly the controls over the harvest are very tight to ensure it is sustainable. For example simply to gain a licence to harvest kangaroos you must first sit a TAFE Course dealing with the regulatory controls, the hygiene requirements to ensure a wholesome product, the animal welfare requirements to ensure a humane kill and the documentation requirements to ensure adequate monitoring of the take. You then must pass an assessment of your knowledge and abilities in all these aspects and your competency with your firearm. Furthermore, your vehicle and equipment must be approved by the Meat Hygiene Authorities. You then need a licence from two government departments and you must purchase tags to affix to every kangaroo you

take from the Conservation Authorities and record and report on what sex, age, weight and species of animal you take and from where!!!!

Similar levels of controls exist throughout the production chain and are particularly tight when it comes to ensuring a hygienic product. For example the Industry recently pushed AQIS to make mandatory a new microbiological testing program for kangaroo meat which in several key respects is much more stringent than those imposed on beef and lamb.

So there are certainly very sound environmental reasons why we should eat Skippy. And Government controls ensure the harvest poses no threat to the population. And Hygiene controls are in many ways stricter than for any other meats. But will the general public eat the stuff?

Firstly it's worth mentioning that Australia has been exporting large quantities of kangaroo meat for human consumption for over 30 years. Last year, for example, exports exceeded 5 million kg. The largest buyers are consistently France and Germany.

Similarly in States like South Australia and Tasmania, kangaroo and wallaby respectively, have been available for a long time and are widely accepted. For example the portioned cuts of Tasmanian wallaby meat which my company supplies appear on the menus of typically 40 to 50 restaurants around Tasmania in any one month.

In Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales however it took a long hard battle to overcome the mindsets discussed earlier and the sale of kangaroo meat for human consumption was only approved in 1993. Since then national sales of kangaroo meat have grown 50 fold to the point where Australians now consume 1.5 million kg of kangaroo per year.

Recent studies conducted on behalf of the Federal Government have revealed that 51% of Australians have tried kangaroo meat and 87% of them enjoyed it enough to gladly eat it again. These are really quite remarkable results when you consider the short period kangaroo has been available to the bulk of the population and their traditional reluctance to try 'adventurous meats'.

Public acceptance of kangaroo products has improved even more since these results were obtained. For example during the 18 months leading up to the end of 1998 the activities of the KIAA resulted in at least one positive piece of capital city mainstream press, TV or radio coverage of the kangaroo industry on average once every week. That's a remarkable level of positive press. Other activities of the KIAA have included production of a Standard Cut Specification guide to ensure anyone anywhere can order a cut of kangaroo from any supplier and get a product to the same specifications.

I admit we still have some way to go but kangaroo is well on its way to becoming a well accepted meat in this country. Over the next few months you will see quite a bit of press currently being prepared questioning

our reluctance to celebrate our wonderful indigenous ingredients such as kangaroo. Several journalists are preparing stories saying to the nation that in the lead up to the Olympics we should get over the Skippy syndrome and recognise that kangaroo, wallaby, emu and a whole host of other fine native plants and animals are what we should produce our food from in this country.

The bush food fad has come and gone and I don't believe ever had the potential to become an 'Australian cuisine'. However I believe that if indeed we do have such a thing as an Australian cuisine it is in fact one which is based on a celebration of the ingredient rather than specific techniques. French, Mediterranean or Thai cuisines for example tend to be focused on celebrating a narrow range of specific culinary techniques. The Australian Cuisine I believe is one which uses any technique to celebrate the ingredients. Indigenous meats such as kangaroo and wallaby spectacularly add to the rich range of wonderful fresh ingredients which this nation, above all others on earth, is blessed with.





Wine making in the Middle Ages

A. Lynn Martin

This paper does not result from any expertise on wine making but from my research into drinking behaviour and attitudes toward drinking in late medieval and early modern Europe, from about 1300 to about 1700, focussing on England, France and Italy. Despite the differences between the wine-drinking south and the ale- or beer-drinking north, these countries shared a drinking pattern which resulted from the functions of alcoholic beverages. The functions reveal that the role of alcohol then was far more important than it is today.

Alcohol was a necessary component of most people's diet. People drank a significant proportion of their daily intake of calories. They drank water of course, but in the period before safe drinking water and safe alternatives such as tea and coffee many people began their day with a draught of ale or wine at breakfast and continued drinking throughout the day. Alcohol was also the ubiquitous social lubricant; every occasion called for a drink. Drinking accompanied the important rites of passage of birth, marriage and death, the festivals of the agricultural calendar and of the Christian liturgical year, and royal, civic, religious and fraternal rituals. Alcoholic beverages, primarily wine, also had potent symbolic value. The wine of the eucharist became the blood of Christ, making wine the symbol of life, renewal, and eternal salvation. Contrary to Karl Marx, religion was not the opiate of the people, alcohol was. Alcoholic beverages often provided the only refuge and the only comfort from the harsh realities of daily life and the even harsher catastrophes and disasters that were too often a feature of existence in the past. Finally, alcohol was an important part of the medical pharmacopoeia. Alcohol, especially wine, was used as a solvent for many medicines, and the medical consensus was that alcohol was necessary to maintain good health. Although some individuals practiced complete abstinence, alcoholic beverages were so fundamental to the fabric of society that advocates of temperance at most promoted moderation in drinking. Moderation of a sort: An Order of Temperance established at Hesse in 1600 restricted its members to seven glasses of wine with each meal and that at only two meals a day--a daily consumption of fourteen glasses of wine.¹

As a result of the many functions of alcoholic beverages, people consumed enormous amounts of alcohol as a matter of course in medieval Europe. The consumption of wine was not limited to wine-producing areas, and it was not limited to the wealthy and powerful few. People drank wine in Italy, France, and England; peasants and artisans, women and children all drank wine. To give three examples from three different countries and three different social groups, in Languedoc in the fifteenth century peasants, male and female, consumed one and a half to two litres of wine a day.² The household accounts for a Pisan notary in 1428

¹Gregory A. Austin, *Alcohol in Western Society from Antiquity to 1800: A Chronological History* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1985), p. 203.

²Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Peasants of Languedoc* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1976), pp. 63-64.

indicate that the family of four, including the husband, his mother, wife, and a young male servant, consumed 1820 litres of wine a year, or 455 litres each, the equivalent of over six and a half bottles of wine a day for the family.³ The ration for monks at Battle Abbey in England was one gallon (4.5 litres) of white wine a day, more if the monk was sick. This was heroic drinking on a large scale, but not more than that of the clerics of St Paul's, whose ration was thirty gallons [136 litres] of ale a week.⁴ These gargantuan amounts become yet more extraordinary after a consideration of the yields. As a result of primitive agricultural methods the productivity of vineyards was low. For example, in the fifteenth century a vineyard near Bologna produced only 190 litres of mediocre wine per hectare.⁵ The high levels of consumption and the low levels of productivity indicate that people were devoting a considerable proportion of their agricultural resources to wine making.

The agricultural activities, including wine making, of medieval Europeans are the subject of an extraordinary pictorial record known as the labours of the months. Medieval artists depicted the twelve labours of the calendar months in stained glass windows and in devotional manuscripts called books of hours, they carved them in wood, sculpted them on cathedral walls, painted them in frescos and on panels and on porcelain, and wove them in tapestries.

In depicting the twelve labours of the months medieval artists often followed a traditional pattern, and this pattern included leisure activities as well as labour. For example, artists depicted January as feasting, sometimes as the two-headed god Janus, eating with one mouth and drinking with the other. The typical scene for cold February was sitting in front of a fire. The milder weather of March permitted work outdoors, typically pruning. April was the month of flowers and was portrayed as a person holding a bouquet. The depiction of May was either as a noble hunting with a falcon, sometimes on a horse, or by May Day celebrations that featured the collection of branches of the may (or hawthorn) tree to use as decorations. Labour returned in June, which was cutting grass with a scythe, a man's job, while women used rakes to turn and to gather the grass. July was the harvest month and was depicted as reaping stalks of grain with a sickle. Artists portrayed August as the threshing month, removing the grain from the stalks. September was usually the vintage month, while October was ploughing and sowing, both of which were jobs for men. November was depicted as swineherds knocking acorns off oak trees to feed pigs, which were then slaughtered in December.

This was the traditional pattern, although many variations existed, especially as a result of the climatic variations between Mediterranean Europe and the north. The first of the labours associated with wine making is pruning, which normally featured in March calendars, but artists could also depict it as an activity

³Antonio Ivan Pini, *Vite e vino nel medioevo* (Bologna: Editrice CLUEB, 1989), p. 135, n. 316.

⁴Eleanor Searle and Barbara Ross, eds., *Accounts of the Cellarers of Battle Abbey, 1275-1513* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1967), pp. 19-20; Desmond Seward, *Monks and Wine* (London: Mitchell Beazley Publishers Limited, 1979), p. 132.

⁵Carlo M. Cipolla, *Before the Industrial Revolution: European Society and Economy, 1000-1700* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976), p.122.

in January or February. The vintage normally occurred in September, but it could occur in August in southern Europe or as late as November in the north. As illustrated by some depictions of the labours of the months, such as a fifteenth-century stained glass roundel from Brandiston Hall, Norfolk,⁶ England produced its own wine, although in small quantities and of questionable quality. When an abbot proudly served King John his locally produced wine at an English monastery in 1204, the king immediately called for his steward, "Send ships forthwith to fetch some good French wine for the abbot!"⁷ Not just in England but throughout Europe during the Middle Ages the grapevine had a wider distribution and had spread further north than it does today.⁸ The widespread distribution of the grapevine into areas that were not suitable for the production of wine created enormous problems for wine makers, but the spread of the grapevine was considered necessary as a result of the need for wine to celebrate the Catholic mass.

Medieval wine makers made their wine from a wide variety of grapes, many of which are unfamiliar today, or perhaps the grape is the same but the name has changed. The fourteenth-century agricultural treatise by Pier de' Crescenzi mentioned forty different varieties, some of which were grown only in one area. Examples included the *duracla* at Ferrara, the *garganica* at Padua, the *nebiola* at Asti, the *pignola* at Milan, and the *sclava* at Brescia and Mantua.⁹ Of these, only the *nebbiola* grows in Australia. In 1395 the Duke of Burgundy, which was then already one of the great wine-producing areas of France, issued an edict that prohibited the growing of gamay grapes in his territory because of his belief that they produced inferior wines.¹⁰ The first ever mention of pinot grapes occurred in the previous year, 1394, as a result of a murder. During the vintage a fifteen-year old lad mixed pinot grapes with other grapes despite instructions not to do so and was consequently beaten so severely that he died.¹¹

After the weather-enforced inactivity of winter, the arrival of the month of March heralded a frenetic nine months of work for the grape grower/wine maker. As noted above, according to depictions of the labours of the months in medieval calendars, pruning was the typical labour of March. So the grape growers spent days in their vineyards trimming vines with a billhook. They also used their billhooks during vintage to cut the grapes. As a result, the sixteenth-century poet Clément Marot wrote a song in praise of the billhook. The song urged people to stop singing songs about love; "let us sing of the billhook" instead.¹² The advice contained in medieval agricultural treatises was for the grape growers to leave at least three *occhi*, or eyes, when trimming the vines.¹³ Pruning or trimming was just part of the work required of grape growers at this time of the year, for they also faced the gruelling task of using pickaxes and shovels to dig around the vines

⁶Lawrence Lee, *et al.*, *Stained Glass* (Sydney: Colporteur Press, 1982), p. 52.

⁷Quoted from Hugh Barty-King, *A Tradition of English Wine: The Story of Two Thousand Years of English Wine Made from English Grapes* (Oxford: Oxford Illustrated Press, 1977), p. 40.

⁸Roger Dion, *Histoire de la vigne et du vin en France des origines aux XIXe siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, 1977), pp. 8-9; Pini, *Vite e vino nel medioevo*, p. 33.

⁹Pini, *Vite e vino nel medioevo*, p. 47.

¹⁰Roger Dion, *Histoire de la vigne et du vin en France*, p. 293.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 297.

¹²Clément Marot, *Oeuvres lyriques*, C. A. Mayer, ed. (London: The Athlone Press, 1964), p. 200.

¹³Pini, *Vite e vino nel medioevo*, p. 48.

for the purpose of aerating the soil and the roots.¹⁴ The final task for the busy grape growers in March was to fertilise the vines with manure that had been collecting during the winter months or with mud gathered from ponds and rivers. They carried the fertiliser up the slopes of the vineyards in large baskets strapped to their backs, as illustrated in the depiction of March from the *Grimani Breviary*.¹⁵ The fertiliser was only for the young vines because of the belief that fertiliser on well established vines would make wines with an unpleasant taste.¹⁶

The depiction of March from the *Grimani Breviary* is a good illustration of the mixed agricultural economy of most places in medieval Europe with fields of grain, vineyards, and pasture in close proximity. Only a few places had economies based solely on the production of wine. In the thirteenth century an Italian Franciscan friar named Salimbene visited Auxerre in France. He wrote of his amazement in seeing the specialised viticultural economy there: "not only are the hillsides covered with vineyards, but the level plain also, as I have seen with mine own eyes. For the men of that land sow not, nor do they reap, neither have they storehouse nor barn; but they send wine to Paris by the river which flows hard by; and there they sell it at a noble price."¹⁷ These men could make a living from only two hectares of vineyards.¹⁸

Grape growing was very labour intensive. The depictions of the labours of the months, however, do not reveal the labour intensive nature of wine making, because after showing the intensive work in the vineyards during the month of March, the vineyards do not reappear until the vintage scenes of autumn. Grape growers continued to prune the vines and to dig around them, and they also had to hoe to keep down the weeds, but only a few depictions of the labours of the months illustrate these activities. As the vines grew, workers used pieces of straw to tie them to the supporting poles, although some vineyards did not use poles. These vines would still require trimming and tying to form a bush.¹⁹

As the vintage approached wine makers became more and more nervous. A successful vintage depended on the absence of pests and the presence of good weather. To protect their vineyards from harm they turned their prayers to saints with names associated with wine and the vine, to St. Vitus (Latin *vitis* = vine), St. Davinius (Latin *da vinum* = give wine), and especially to St. Vincent (French *vin* = wine).²⁰ They also asked priests to conduct rites of exorcism in the vineyards so that all the insects and maggots would go elsewhere.²¹ Another source of anxiety was the widespread custom in many places of the *ban de vendage*. One or even two months before the expected date of the grape harvest, the local lord or local officials proclaimed that no

¹⁴Fourquin, "Le temps de la croissance," in Georges Duby, ed., *La formation des campagnes françaises des origines au XIVe siècle = Histoire de la France rurale*, Vol. I (Paris: Seuil, 1975), p. 457.

¹⁵*The Grimani Breviary*, Giorgio E. Ferrari, et al., eds. (London, 1972), plate 5.

¹⁶Fourquin, "Le temps de la croissance," p. 458.

¹⁷Salimbene, *From St. Francis to Dante: Translations from the Chronicle of the Franciscan Salimbene (1221-88)*, G. G. Coulton, trans. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), p. 137.

¹⁸Thomas Brennan, *Burgundy to Champagne: The Wine Trade in Early Modern France* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 9.

¹⁹Fourquin, "Le temps de la croissance," p. 459.

²⁰Rudolf Weinholt, *Vivat Bacchus: A History of the Vine and its Wine* (Watford: Argus Books, 1978), p. 101.

²¹Seward, *Monks and Wine*, p. 31.

one, not even the grape growers, was permitted to enter the vineyards; guards were posted to keep people out.²² The purpose of this custom was to prevent people from harvesting the grapes too early, before the grapes were mature and before they could produce good wine. The theory behind the *ban de vendage* was sound; experience had demonstrated that the threats posed by inclement weather and ravenous insects, despite the prayers and the exorcisms, made many grape growers harvest the grapes too soon.²³ On the other hand, while the lord or local officials waited to proclaim the vintage, the grapes of some wine makers could rot.

When the vintage finally began, a huge number of people descended on the vineyards to ensure a quick and successful harvest.²⁴ The depictions of vintage in medieval calendars do not illustrate this aspect of the vintage, because at most they show a handful of people working in the vineyards. They do show people picking grapes and putting them into baskets or pails. They then carried the grapes to panniers, carts, and wagons that would transport the grapes to the large pressing vats and the grape presses. In some places the grape presses and the vats for crushing the grapes were established in the fields, so that pickers carried the grapes directly to the vats.²⁵ Men then crushed the grapes, only men; the depictions of vintage in medieval calendars never show women crushing grapes because of the widespread belief that when women crushed grapes the resulting wine would be bad. This was a menstrual taboo.²⁶

The process of vinification was relatively simple in comparison with modern methods. The first, second, and third pressings yielded three different grades of must, although in some places the wine makers only pressed the grapes twice. All of these pressings would produce *vin clair* after fermentation of two to three weeks. To obtain *clair* or red wine the marc from red grape pressings would be added to the must during the fermentation.²⁷ An inferior form of wine with a low percentage of alcohol, known in France as *piquette* and in Italy by various names such as *acquarello* and *annacquato*, was made by fermenting the water poured over the marc.²⁸ For some wine makers the process did not stop there, however, at least according to a manuscript on viticulture by Paganino Bonafede, dated about 1360. The manuscript contained forty-two recipes on preserving, clarifying, and counterfeiting wines. The recipes described how to transform cheap wines into expensive wines, especially how to take the ordinary local product and turn it into exotic foreign wines such as muscatel and malvasia. As one historian exclaimed, "As we see, also in viticulture, 'nihil sub sole novi!'"²⁹

²²Martine Maguin, *La vigne et le vin en Lorraine: L'exemple de la Lorraine médiane à la fin du Moyen Age* (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1982), p. 47.

²³Le Roy Ladurie, *The Peasants of Languedoc*, p. 65.

²⁴Marie-Thérèse Lorcin, *Les Campagnes de la région lyonnaise aux XIVe et XVe siècles* (Lyon: Imprimerie Bosc Frères, 1974), pp. 64-66.

²⁵Fourquin, "Le temps de la croissance," p. 460.

²⁶For example, see G. A. Megas, *Greek Calendar Customs* (Athens, 1958), p. 158.

²⁷Fourquin, "Le temps de la croissance," p. 462; Lorcin, *Les Campagnes de la région lyonnaise*, p. 67.

²⁸Dion, *Histoire de la vigne et du vin en France*, p. 474.

²⁹Pini, *Vite e vino nel medioevo*, p. 48.

The vintage was a gay and lusty time. Accompanying the work in the vineyards were songs, cheerful banter, and risqué jokes. A widespread custom in France was for the young men to smear the faces of young maids with red grapes.³⁰ When the work was done, many communities had vintage festivals which featured dancing, feasting, torchlight processions, occasional rioting, and tasting the new wine, of course.³¹ Vintage was one of the favourite themes of the poets, who often applied erotic connotations to the vintage and to the consumption of wine. For example, in Luigi Tansillo's poem *Dal vendemmiatore* the male grape pickers became the elm trees; the female pickers became the grapevines. In reference to the practice of trellising vines on trees, the men proclaimed that if the trees did not hold the vines in their arms the grapes would not be worth picking. The poem ended with the plea, 'you be the vines, let us be the elms.'³²

As noted by one historian, the quality of the wines during this period is "parfaitement inconnue."³³ Historians can only guess at the strength of the wines, and they accordingly disagree. Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie claims that the wine of Languedoc was 5% alcohol,³⁴ Marcel Lachiver thinks that the French wines of the fourteenth century were often less than 7%-8%,³⁵ and G. Pinto proposes that the wines of Tuscany were 10-11%.³⁶ A safe conclusion here is that medieval wines were weaker than modern wines but probably not by much. The vast majority of wine consumed was new wine, wine that was at the most one year old, and people tried to ration their consumption so that the wine from one vintage would last until the next one.³⁷ The consumption of "vintage" wine would have to wait until the widespread use of glass bottles and corks in the eighteenth century. In the meantime, during years when the previous vintage had produced only a small amount of wine, not enough to last until the next vintage, people drank their wine quite new indeed, one week after pressing it.³⁸

The comments made by contemporaries praising certain wines for their quality while damning others for being undrinkable and the debates on the merits and demerits of different wines would fill a large volume. So perhaps the safe conclusion here would be that some wines were good while others were bad, but modern

³⁰Arnold van Gennep, "Farces et amusements des vendanges en France," *Arts et traditions populaires*, I (1953), pp. 1-14.

³¹See for example Antonio Niero, *Tradizioni popolari veneziane e venete: I mesi dell'anno: Le feste religiose* (Venice: Studium Cattolico Veneziano, 1990), p. 92.

³²Carlo Muscetta and Daniele Ponchiroli, eds., *Poesia del quattrocento e del cinquecento* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1959), pp. 1464-1469.

³³Lorcin, *Les Campagnes de la région lyonnaise*, p. 67.

³⁴"Les masses profondes: La paysannerie," in Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie et Michel Morineau, eds., *Paysannerie et croissance (de 1450 à 1660) = Histoire économique et social de la France*, Vol. I, part 2 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1977), p. 783.

³⁵Marcel Lachiver, *Vins, vignes et vignerons en région parisienne du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Pontoise: Société Historique et Archéologique de Pontoise, du Val d'Oise et du Vexin, 1982), p. 108

³⁶Cited in Maria Serena Mazzi, "Note per una storia dell'alimentazione nell'Italia medievale," in *Studi di storia medievale e moderna per Ernesto Sestan* (Florence: Olschki, 1980), p. 96, n. 138.

³⁷Y. Renouard, "Le vin vieux au Moyen Age," *Annales du Midi*, LXXVI (1964), pp. 447-455.

³⁸Jean-Barnard Marquette, "La vinification dans les domaines de l'archevêque de Bordeaux à la fin du moyen âge," in A. Huetz de Lempis, et al., eds., *Géographie historique des vignobles: Colloque de Bordeaux, 27-29 octobre 1977* (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la Recherche scientifique, 1978), p. 137.

palates would find even the best to be somewhat mediocre. The French had a saying that a good wine should have three Bs and seven Fs:

Et bon et bel et blanc Good, fair, and white
 Fort et fier, fin et franc, Strong, proud, fine, and true,
 Froid et frais et frétilant.³⁹ Cold, fresh, and full of life.

That was the ideal, but the reality could be different. A twelfth-century London cleric complained about the wine at the court of the king: "The wine is turned sour or mouldy; thick, greasy, stale, flat and smacking of pitch. I have sometimes seen even great lords served with wine so muddy that a man must needs close his eyes and clench his teeth, wry-mouthed and shuddering, and filtering the stuff [through his teeth] rather than drinking."⁴⁰ And yet people were prosecuted for selling bad wine; their wine must have defied description. In 1364 the officials of the city of London prosecuted John Penrose for selling "unwholesome wine." He was found guilty and, in an admirable case of making the punishment fit the crime, "condemned to drink a draught of his own wine."⁴¹

Illustrations

1. Pruning a grape vine with a billhook, symbol of March, from *Compost et Kalendrier des Bergiers* (Paris, 1493).
2. Vintage scene, a woman picking grapes and a man crushing them, September, from *Kalender* (Augsburg, 1480).
3. Vintage scene, workers picking grapes and carrying them to the vat, where a man crushes them, and another man checks the process of fermentation, September, from *Compost et Kalendrier des Bergiers* (Paris, 1493).
4. At top crushing grapes and filling the barrels with must; at bottom coopers at work, calendar for October, from *Horae ad usum sarum* (Paris, 1502)



³⁹Quoted from *Chronicle of the Franciscan Salimbene (1221-88)*, p. 138.

⁴⁰Quoted from L. W. Marrison, *Wines and Spirits* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 28.

⁴¹Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall* (London: John Edward Francis, 1899-1912), vol. G, p. 178.

Plate Études

Graeme Phillips at the Theatre Royal

Food

A midden of bush-charred shellfish and yolla

The aristologist's slippery bob

Mutton and turnip pie with an undressed salad, orange twist, and grated carrot salad

Hot-smoked Atlantic salmon with beetroot, horseradish and egg and onion salad

Char-grilled wild duck breasts on Huon Valley mushrooms and a celery crunch

Thorpe Farm aged sheep cheese, Thorpe Farm fresh goat cheese, King Island Endeavour Blue, King Island Brie, Mella Limburger, Lactos Red Square and the Symposium's Heidi Gruyere

Lamingtons á la mode

Wine

1998 Lake Barrington Alexandra Sparkling

1998 Dalrymple Sauvignon Blanc

1998 Iron Pot Bay Gewürztraminer

1998 Meadowbank 'Henry James' Pinot Noir

1994 Rotherhythe Pinot Noir

1993 Domaine A Cabernet Sauvignon

1998 Wellington Iced Riesling













Breakfast for the new millenium

Jenny Williams at The Elizabeth Pier

Food

Compote of rhubarb

Spiced poached fruit

Eumarra meusli

Salmon kedgerree

Spanish omelette

Mushrooms and tomatoes

Scotch eggs

Pears and apples

Elgaar Farm milk and cream

Wine

A vat of Bloody Mary

Home-made lemonade

Moorilla Sparkling

Elsewhere Sparkling







Key to additional photographs

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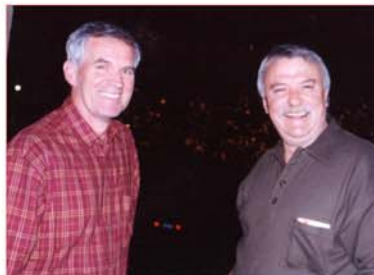
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