

G8906: Craft and Science: Objects and Their Making in the Early Modern World

Historical Culinary Recipe Reconstruction Assignment

*****Due Monday, September 19 in class
meet in Fayerweather 513*****

General Information and Instructions:

Do the required reading (which can be found [here](#)) and watching **before** you start your reconstruction.

Required Reading:

- Ken Albala, "Cooking as Research Methodology: Experiments in Renaissance Cuisine," *Renaissance Food from Rabelais to Shakespeare: Culinary Readings and Culinary Histories*, ed. Joan Fitzpatrick (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 73–88.
 - See also Ken Albala's blog on: <http://kenalbala.blogspot.nl/>
- Ad Stijnman, "Style and technique are inseparable: art technological sources and reconstructions," *Art of the Past. Sources and Reconstructions. The proceedings of the First Symposium of the Art Technological Source Research Study Group*, ed. by Mark Clarke, Joyce H. Townsend, and Ad Stijnman (Amsterdam: Archetype, 2005).
- Francisco Alonso-Almeida, "Genre conventions in English recipes, 1600-1800," *Reading and Writing Recipe Books, 1550-1800*, Michelle DiMeo and Sara Pennell (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 68-90.
- Syrup of Violets and Science:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdEbMBe0aa8>
- Read over the [HCR resource guide](#) and see also the [online recipe databases](#) and [cooking resources](#) compiled by Meredith Levin.

For an example of an exemplary reconstruction experiment, see:
Maartje Stols-Witlox, "Sizing layers for oil paintings..." *Proceedings of the Second ATSR Symposium* (2008), pp. 148-163.

For a general historical introduction to colorful food preparations see: Melitta Weiss Adamson, *Food in Medieval Times*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2004, pp. 68-69.

HCR Instructions:

Work with a partner to cook a dish based on a recipe found in a sixteenth- or seventeenth-century book or manuscript. As much as possible, try to simulate early modern ingredients, apparatus, and methods. Images of several recipes have been uploaded to the web, and each group will choose a different recipe to decipher and concoct.

- Each group will work from home, and thus each group should include one student who is able to provide access to a standard kitchen (i.e. a kitchen which has a sink, oven, stovetop, and cookware).
 - Some recipes calling for a large amount of ingredients may need to be halved or quartered.
 - Each group will be reimbursed up to \$30 for ingredients (please, provide a receipt and try to pay with cash).
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- Bring your homemade historical dish to class on September 19 for consumption. If necessary, please refrigerate perishable items in airtight containers (which is historically anachronistic, but bacteria do not care about anachronism or historical accuracy!).
 - Document the details of the cooking process in order to give a short 10-minute presentation with your partner in class. The means by which you document and present is up to you and your partner, but feel free to make use of photos, video, audio, notes, PowerPoint, YouTube, Prezi, etc.
 - After you have finished your dish, rewrite the recipe in modern English in order to make it clear(er), using an appropriate amount of detail so that your colleagues in the class have a good understanding of what you did and why you did it.

Select Recipes:

The following recipes can be found either by clicking on the links or by going to the "Home Culinary Recipes" folder in the "Assignments" folder located in the "G8906 Student Files" in Google Drive.

Wellcome Ms. 213: "[A Booke of diuers Medecines, Broothes, Salues, Waters, Syropes and Oyntementes of which many or the most part haue been experienced and tryed by the speciall practize of Mrs Corlyon. Anno Domini 1606.](#)" See [here](#) for catalogue info. from Wellcome.

- A Syrupe for the cough of the Lunges
- A Syrupe of Lycoresse good for the Lunges and Shortnesse of the Breath
- A Syrupe of Vinegar good for to cool in any Fever...
- A Syrupe to cool the Stomach and to allaye Choller

Le Menagier de Paris (1393): See here for [the original French](#) and here for an online translation by Janet Hinson (make sure to check the original French).

- [Beverages for Invalids](#)

- Sweet Tisane
- Bouillon

Kenelm Digby, *The closet of the eminently learned Sir Kenelme Digbie Kt. opened whereby is discovered several ways for making of metheglin, sider, cherry-wine, &c.*, 1669:

- [Conserve of Red Roses](#) [Note: Most roses for sale in stores are sprayed with preservatives and are not expected to be consumed]

Herleian Ms. 279 (c. 1430). [Austin, *Two Fifteenth-Century Cook Books*](#)

- Ryschewys & Fryez, p.45
- Browne Fryes, p. 83
- Gely, pp. 86-87

Jane Baber, Wellcome Collection, Ms 108, (1625?).

- [“To make Paste of Raspberries”](#)
- [“To make Paste of Oranges”](#)

Mayerne, Théodore Turquet de, Sir (1573-1655, attr.), [Archimagirus anglo-gallicus: or, Excellent & approved receipts and experiments in cookery](#) [London]: Printed for G. Bedell, and T. Collins, and are to be sold at their shop at the Middle-Temple-Gate, in Fleet-street, 1658.

- 87. To make candied cakes of plums.
- 134. To make paste of flowers and colour of marble, that which way soever you break it, it shall be like marble, and betwixt the light, it shall look very clear, and shall in eating taste of the natural flowers
- 147. To make Quindiniacks of Ruby colour to print with moulds

Robert May, *The accomplisht cook, or The art and mystery of cookery...* (London, 1671 ed.)

[see pdf [“May Accomplisht Cook 1671”](#) in G8906 Student Files, in folder “Home Culinary Recipes”]

- For making mustard (pp.156-7) (compare the several recipes in May with the Rx for “Excellent Mustard” in fol. 48r, BnF Ms. Fr. 640)

From [Le Thresor de santé, ou mesnage de la vie humaine divisé en dix livres...](#)

A. Lyon, chez Jean Anth. Huguetau, 1607.

- [“Pouldre d’espices assortie” \(Assorted Spices Powder\), p. 395-397](#)
- [Abbreviated translation](#) from: Willan, Anne. *The Cookbook Library: Four Centuries of the Cooks, Writers, and Recipes That Made the Modern Cookbook*. Berkeley: University of California Press, c2012: p. 34. *This recipe is especially interesting for those of you who have French language skills and can compare the original recipe with its translation.

Questions and Food for Thought:

- Think carefully about the ingredients. Are these comparable to modern ingredients? How are they similar or different? What about their purity? Were they exotic or common?
- What about your modern heating apparatus and cookware, how might this impact authenticity? Could your pots, pans, ladles, ovens, and heating elements change the outcome of a recipe?
- What tacit information has been left out of your recipe? What did you do in your reconstruction that was not discussed by the original author?
- Who wrote your recipe? Why did he or she write it down and/or publish it?

Other Resources:

You may wish to search for period recipes on **EEBO**, **Gallica**, **VD17**, **Europeana**, **Wellcome**; also of possible interest are **ECCO** (18th c), **Google Books**, [Archive.org](http://archive.org) and **Worldcat**.

See also the **Rijksmuseum** recipe book collection (a work in progress that already includes 583 titles), you can find the list here:

<http://library.rijksmuseum.nl/cgi-bin/koha/opac-shelves.pl?viewshelf=135&sortfield=>

*click "lists" in the top right and then "receptuurboeken"

<http://www.kookhistorie.nl/index.htm>

For images of kitchen set up and implements

See Scappi's culinary treatise *Opera* (1570), which concludes with several illustrated pages detailing kitchen set up, equipment, and technologies (check it out here, scroll to the end of the book):

<https://archive.org/stream/operavenetiascap00scap#page/n935/mode/thumb>

Other Suggestions for Helpful Databases:

- The digital database of the US National Library of Medicine (NLM)
 - See on how to find recipes in their online catalogue the interview with NLM staff: <http://recipes.hypotheses.org/category/food-and-drink>
- Universal Short Title List and digitized editions: <http://www.ustc.ac.uk/>
- Next to EEBO the just started new digital database project might also be of interest for us: EMMO: Early Modern (English) Manuscripts Online (EMMO), an online searchable database of encoded semi-diplomatic transcriptions of

all Folger manuscripts from the period 1500-1700:

<http://collation.folger.edu/2013/11/emmo-early-modern-manuscripts-online/>

See also the interview with the key organizer: go to the website below and search on this site for EMMO:

<http://recipes.hypotheses.org/category/teaching>

- DIY History: transcribing of culinary manuscripts and cookbooks:
<http://diyhistory.lib.uiowa.edu/transcribe/collections/show/7>

General information about the DIY History project:

<http://diyhistory.lib.uiowa.edu/about.php>

and the interview with the key organizer on:

<http://recipes.hypotheses.org/3216>

- See also culinary historian Ivan Day, historic food recreations:
<http://www.historicfood.com/portal.htm>

Other Interesting websites:

- <http://www.historicalcookingproject.com/>
You can search for 17th century recipes:
[http://www.historicalcookingproject.com/search/label/17th century](http://www.historicalcookingproject.com/search/label/17th%20century)
- Ken Albala's blog <http://kenalbala.blogspot.nl/>
 - Ken Albala's 16th century funnel cake from *The Most Excellent Book of Cookery: An edition and translation of the 16th-century Livre fort excellent de cuisine*
(<http://kenalbala.blogspot.nl/2014/04/sixteenth-century-crespe.html>)
 - See e.g. two examples of reconstructed, yet "inedible" 17th century recipes:
"spinach tart"
(<http://www.historicalcookingproject.com/2014/04/a-spinach-tart-for-history-books.html>)
and
"spice cake"
(<http://www.historicalcookingproject.com/2014/03/adding-bit-of-spice-wont-help-this.html>)