

First Cookbooks : Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine.

Jaroslaw Dumanowski

Artis coccinae senior". Mistery of the First Polish Cookbook

The oldest preserved Polish cookbook was published in 1682. It was reissued many times, and its author was famous during his lifetime. The text we edited in 2009 has gained popularity among contemporary gastronomy enthusiasts. The author was recognized as the "father of Polish cuisine", with his recipes and comments on culinary art and the chef's mission becoming a component of the myth of the origins of Polish cuisine.

The author emphasized that he had written the first cookbook in Polish and that he had offered it to the "Polish world". In his recipes, he used the term "Old Polish": "Polish" is also "old" and therefore authentic and stable, but at the same time somewhat out of date.

This outline of Polish culinary history has been recently questioned. We have discovered a handwritten copy of a lost Polish cookbook from around 1540, which was a translation of a Czech text from 1535. But how could all copies be destroyed? Why has the memory of this text not been preserved in the Polish culinary tradition? Can it be considered the first Polish cookbook? Can shifting the myth of the beginning by about 140 years be accepted by the actors of today's culinary scene? Will the difficult, yet medieval language be a barrier for contemporary chefs, who do not only look in old texts for culinary inspiration, but also for confirmation of their aspirations as well as the recently recognized status of creators, celebrities and trendsetters not merely in the domain of culinary fashions?

Rimvydas Laužikas

The 'first Lithuanian' cookbooks

The 'first national cookbook' question is related to specific cultural ideas and the relationships between these ideas and nationality concepts. The first possible national cookbooks in our region are from the 16th century when the Reformation returned attention to national languages' importance. Under this influence, we see the growth of books in national languages in the 16th–17th centuries. From the 17th century, we have the work that we consider the first Lithuanian cookbook – 'Moda bardzo dobra smażenia różnych konfektów'. Another cultural context for editing national cookbooks is romanticism in the first half of the 19th century. During this period, interest in the history and ethnographic culture of different nations grew. In this cultural context, a series of cookbooks in Polish that mention 'Lithuanian' in the title were published. The most popular of these was 'Kucharka Litewska' by W. Zawadzka, first time published in Vilnius in 1858. The third cultural idea is the ethnolinguistic concept of nationality, shaped in the second half of the 19th century under nationalism. On this basis, high culture (literature, theatre, etc.) was created in the Lithuanian language. The first cookbook that appeared in the context of this idea in Lithuanian was 'Lietuvos gaspadinė' written by L. Didžiulienė-Žmona in 1893. In exploring our session's topic, we ask questions about not only the history but also the analysis of the 'first national cookbook' in the discourse of contemporary culinary nationalism.

Oleksii Sokyrko

Ukrainian cookbooks: between gastronomy and identity

Manuscript cookbooks in Ukraine were part of a common tradition that existed in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (16th-18th centuries). In noble and cossack officials families there were numerous handwritten miscellanea, which recorded the recipes of court cooks, extracts from printed books and economic advices. These compilations were willingly exchanged with relatives and neighbours, supplementing their own collections of recipes.

The first printed cookbook based on manuscript recipes was the “Little Russian Confectionery Book”, published in Russian in 1790 in St. Petersburg by the Ukrainian writer Mykola Yatsenko. The language was not accidental: the book is addressed to the Russian public, passionate with the specialties of Ukrainian gastronomy. The most popular were Ukrainian sweets, alcoholic and fruit drinks, the recipes of which formed the basis of the book.

In the 19th century the fate of culinary literature repeated the trajectory of the Ukrainian national resurgence: in sub-Russian Ukraine, under the ban on the Ukrainian printing, gastronomic themes spread only in studies of ethnography and history, although Ukrainian recipes were included in the canon of Russian cookbooks. That is why the first cookbook of original content, written in Ukrainian, was published by the wife of the priest Emilia Levits’kaya in Kolomyia in 1868 under the name "Rusinian Bakery". The absence of censorship bans, as well as the more prominent role of Ukrainians in the life of sub-Austrian Ukraine, led to the emergence of a series of Ukrainian culinary prints in the early 20th century, created in popular canons of healthy and prudent nutrition.