

THE RESEARCH CENTRE FOR THE HISTORY OF FOOD AND DRINK



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What's Happening:

Sidney Mintz is back

On Thursday, 10 August, 1:00-3:00 pm, the Research Centre is hosting a seminar by Sidney Mintz in the Stretton Room, 4th floor, Napier Building, University of Adelaide.

Mintz is well known and highly respected among food scholars for his groundbreaking works, *Sweetness and Power* and *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*. Nevertheless, his status as a food anthropologist is, as Shakespeare might have said, something that has been thrust upon him. The main focus of his life's work has been Caribbean rural life, social history, and the Afro-Caribbean tradition, wedding the anthropological concept of culture to historical materialist scholarship.

Taking advantage of his brief return to Adelaide, we have arranged for Mintz to give a seminar in which he will discuss how he "became" a food anthropologist, his recent research, and the concept of cuisine and its application (as in "national cuisines").

This is a lunchtime seminar with sandwiches provided, but you **MUST** inform Barbara Santich (barbara.santich@adelaide.edu.au) or Roger Haden (roger.haden@adelaide.edu.au) **BEFORE WEDNESDAY 9 AUGUST THAT YOU WILL BE ATTENDING.**

No RSVP, no lunch!

The Research Centre is convening another of its seminars in October. Resident PhD candidate, Nadia Postiglione, will present a paper based on her research into migrant Italian foodways. See Pg 13.

What's Happened:

Cookery Books as History

The Research Centre in collaboration with Michael Symons and other New Zealand scholars working under the leadership of Helen Leach hosted a conference at the Art Gallery of South Australia on 3-4 July. The two keynote speakers, Elizabeth Driver and Laura Mason, the convener Roger Haden, Helen Leach, and Nadia Postiglione have contributed their impressions of the event. See below, pages 9-12.

Mondovino

On 7 June the Research Centre hosted a screening of *Mondovino*, Jonathan Nossiter's film on the modern wine industry. Rob van Zanten of the University of Adelaide's School of Agriculture introduced the film, and for those who managed to endure all 135 minutes they could then enjoy food from around the world prepared by Chef Leslie Deane and wine from around the world selected by Roger Haden. For Nadia Postiglione's review of the occasion and the film, go to pages 7-9.

**A Research Centre of the
Faculty of Humanities
and Social Sciences**



Conferences

Strasbourg, 22-24 June 2006

Troisième Congrès International d'Economie et Biologie Humaine

This was a huge conference that included a few participants from Australia:

Ralph Shlomowitz, Flinders University: Some Methodological Considerations in the Use of Data on Australian Height.

Aaron Batten and Alan Martina, Australian National University: Diseases Dominate.

R.V. Jackson, School of Business, UNSW@ADFA: A Height-based Index of Regional Nutrition in Rural England, c.1800.

Stephen L. Morgan, University of Melbourne: Height, Health and Welfare in South China over the Past Two Centuries.

Sara Horrell, Cambridge University, David Meredith, UNSW, and Deborah Oxley, UNSW: Weight matters: Body Mass of Men and Women in Nineteenth-Century London.

Paris, 25 October 2006

Sciences, agriculture, alimentation et société en France au XXe siècle

A l'occasion du Soixantenaire de l'INRA, cette journée vise à interroger les constructions réciproques entre dynamiques de la recherche scientifique et de l'innovation technique d'une part, et transformations de l'agriculture, de l'alimentation, du monde rural et de l'environnement d'autre part, et ce depuis un siècle en France.

Les communications (une vingtaine seront retenues) devront présenter une recherche originale récente ou en cours. Outre l'histoire (histoire des sciences, histoire rurale, histoire environnementale, histoire de l'alimentation, histoire économique et sociale...) toutes les perspectives des sciences humaines et sociales (anthropologie, ethnobiologie, sociologie, économie...) sont bienvenues dans cette journée dès lors qu'elles prennent en compte la temporalité des phénomènes étudiés. Si l'accent est mis sur la France et le XXe siècle, des comparaisons internationales sont bienvenues ainsi que des perspectives de plus longue durée.

The deadline for submissions was 15 June; for information contact Christophe Bonneuil, bonneuil@damesme.cnrs.fr

Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India, 16-18 November 2006. Food: Representation, Ideology, and Politics

The Centre for Advanced Studies, Department of English, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India, is organising this seminar. Food is a central part of our lives. However, in all cultures food has always represented more than just a means of survival. Sharing food, eating salt, breaking bread, raising a toast, picnics in the wild, and formal dinners all have certain ideological, political, and social significances. Some foods are taboo, designated filthy, or circumscribed. Some foods are endowed with holiness or endow the eater with purity. Foods have also triggered colonial expansionism. The Spice Route was one of the earliest trade networks. Revolts and revolutions have been sparked by the absence of food. Marie Antoinette's famous comment advising the peasants to eat cake began a new era in world history, while wars have been lost because of hungry soldiers. Globalisation and consumer cultures have added new dimensions to the act of eating in restaurants and the kinds of cuisine available in various parts of the world, while brands like Kentucky Fried Chicken, Coca Cola, or Pepsi have often been the targets of anti-imperialist protests in India and elsewhere. The representation of food, eating practices, last suppers, and other aspects of food culture have also been central to many texts.

The deadline for abstracts (maximum length 500 words) is 31 August 2006. For information contact Dr. Rimi B. Chatterjee, Lecturer, Department of English, Jadavpur University, Kolkata; rimibchatterjee@yahoo.co.in

Leuven, Belgium, 16 February 2007 Beer as a Local and Transnational Commodity

The Africa Research Centre of the K.U.Leuven is hosting a one-day workshop on beer as a local and transnational commodity in Africa. This workshop welcomes contributions from scholars across the humanities and social sciences working in and on Africa. The emphasis is on discussion and the exchange of ideas; graduate students in particular are encouraged to present their work.

This workshop concentrates on the role of beer in Africa's recent past and present. Taking beer and drinking as a tangible lead to study agency and subjectivity, this workshop's ambition is to explore

new, exciting, and especially different pathways to study the cultural, social, and political dynamics of colonialism and modernity. Of central concern are the tensions and ambivalences epitomized by drinking alcohol in general and beer in particular. These tensions relate to economic insecurity, gender, authority, identity, migrant labour, or centralised state rule—to name but a few—and they equally characterise day-to-day activities and the grand, hegemonic narratives (such as on apartheid, civilisation, tradition, or globalisation) in the background.

The underlying question then is what can microscopic studies of beer and drinking tell us about the true nature of the colonial encounter? Of the post-colonial state, of modernity, and of development in Africa?

The deadline for submitting paper proposals is 1 September 2006. For information contact Steven Van Wolputte Department of Social Anthropology, Leuven, Belgium; steven.vanwolputte@ant.kuleuven.be

The University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, 30 May-3 June 2007

Changing Ecologies of Food and Agriculture: Building on 20 Years of Scholarship Joint Meetings of the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society and the Association for the Study of Food and Society

The dialectic between eco-social diversity and economic efficiencies directly or indirectly informs many issues for both organizations and is at the heart of the struggle for sustainability. Victoria is a striking example of this dialectic—an international agro-culinary tourist destination that demonstrably supports its island food community. However, Victoria imported 15% of the food consumed 50 years ago and now imports 90%. Thus, Victoria is a fitting venue for this meeting because it is a microcosm of the larger scale dynamics challenging global agro-food sustainability.

The conference welcomes papers, panels, and events on any topic related to agriculture, food, and society. The deadline for submissions is 31 January 2007. For more information go to the societies' websites: <http://www.afhvs.org> and <http://www.food-culture.org>

Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, 21-23 June 2007. Cultivating the “Next” Agricultural History. Annual Meeting of the Agricultural History Society

In recent years scholars seemed to have paused, looked around, and decided, however consciously, to expand and redefine the field of agricultural history. For some scholars this may provoke a sense of *déjà vu*. Beginning in the late 1970s scholars, dissatisfied with the traditional (or “old”) emphasis on production, distribution, technology, and policy, increasingly turned their attentions to social and cultural themes, including farm communities, women's lives and roles, the immigrant experience, rural culture in the South, and market as opposed to agrarian consciousness and behaviour. While the “new” rural history, as it came to be called, continues to thrive, historians and scholars from a variety of related disciplines are transforming and reinvigorating the field once again. The result—what might be called the “next” agricultural history—embraces both “old” and “new” interpretations of previous generations but focuses most intently on interdisciplinary and global issues. The “next” agricultural history not only “puts the culture back into agriculture,” as outgoing president of the Agricultural History Society, Hal Barron, once put it, but also the environment, geography, economy, science and technology, politics, consumption, indeed, a whole range of scholarly perspectives and methodologies.

The program committee for the 2007 meeting of the Agricultural History Society invites submissions from scholars at all levels and in all disciplines to help cultivate the “next” agricultural history. Historians, economists, geographers, sociologists, and other scholars in related fields are encouraged to submit proposals of all types and formats, from the traditional papers/commentary format, to more informal discussion panels focused on specific themes, to roundtables on recent noteworthy books. The deadline for submissions is 15 October. For submission procedures contact David Vaught at d-vaught@tamu.edu

Oslo, Norway, 26-28 September 2007
From Under-Nutrition to Obesity: Changes in Food Consumption in Twentieth-Century Europe. The Tenth Symposium of The International Commission for Research into European Food History

The deadline for the submission of proposals was 31 May 2006. The theme: While food habits in Europe developed in natural households over many centuries, the twentieth century was notable for the impact of commerce, industry, nutrition policy, and the market on food consumption. This structural transformation involved both the quantity and the variety of food and, as incomes rose, the role of the consumer, emphasizing democratisation, changes in lifestyles, and social distinctions. The Symposium will consider the trend from under-nutrition to obesity in Europe as a social issue and will explore its different branches and perspectives in their historical context.

The sub-themes: 1) The growth of food consumption and the effect of consumer choice. 2) The role and impact of the food industry on food consumption during the twentieth century. 3) The growth of food distribution systems and their impact on consumption during the twentieth century. 4) Social and medical influences on food consumption. For further information contact Dr. Virginie Amilien, SIFO National Institute for Consumer Research, Oslo, Norway, virginie.amilien@sifo.no

La villa Kerylos (Nice), France, 19-20 October 2007

Pratiques et discours alimentaires des élites en Méditerranée de l'Antiquité à nos jours
L'Institut Européen d'Histoire et des Cultures de l'Alimentation et l'Institut de France
Parmi les pratiques culturelles dont usent les élites pour se distinguer des masses et renforcer leur cohésion, l'alimentation joue un rôle essentiel mais méconnu. Cette volonté de se différencier et de se reconnaître peut en effet s'exprimer à travers des usages alimentaires spécifiques et les discours gastronomiques qui les légitiment. Les uns comme les autres concourent au contrôle social en servant de modèles aux catégories inférieures ou dépendantes. Dans les sociétés anciennes, le monopole qu'exercent les élites sur les moyens et les formes de communication rejette dans l'ombre les nourritures « populaires », rendant délicate toute com-

paraison – sinon par l'archéologie. Sur la longue durée menant de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance, il est toutefois possible de repérer les héritages, les filiations et les échos entre les différentes cultures alimentaires qui se sont partagées le bassin méditerranéen ainsi que la manière dont les élites socio-économiques, politiques et culturelles y ont éprouvé la valeur de leurs pratiques et de leurs discours distinctifs.

The deadline for submission of proposals was 30 June 2006. For information contact ieha@wanadoo.fr and stephane.lebreton-ieha@wanadoo.fr

Websites

100milediet.org is the website of The 100-Mile Diet that originated in Vancouver, Canada. Members attempt to source their food from within 100 miles of their residence, not an easy accomplishment given that in North America many foods travel at least 1,500 miles from farm to plate. The organisers are seeking new members.

The European Institute for the History and Culture of Food has a new url for its website: <http://www.iehca.eu>

The Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in New York City has mounted an exhibition on "Feeding Desire: Design and the Tools of the Table," which runs from 5 May to 29 October. The exhibition demonstrates the evolution of western dining from the Renaissance to the present and examines the development of forms and materials, dining mores, etiquette, and the aesthetics of the table. See the website for more: http://ndm.si.edu/EXHIBITIONS/feeding_desire/index.asp.

For a list of food museums in Italy go to <http://www.museidelcibo.it/>

The Michigan State University Library and the MSU Museum have partnered to create an online collection of some of the most influential and important American cookbooks from the late eighteenth to early twentieth century. The goal of this project is to make these materials available to a wider audience. Digital images of the pages of each cookbook are available as well as full-text transcriptions and the ability to search within the books,

across the collection, to find specific information.
<http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/cookbooks/html/project.html>

For Giampiero Nigro's extremely useful material on l'Alementazione in Età Preindustriale go to <http://www.istitutodatini.it/attiv/htm/cd-rom.htm>. The sponsor of the material is the Francesco Datini International Institute of Economic History, located in Prato.

Publications

Rowan & Littlefield has published a tenth-anniversary paperback edition of *In Memory's Kitchen: A Legacy From the Women of Terezin*, edited by Cara de Silva. The book is based on a cookbook of recipes written by women starving in the Nazi concentration camp of Terezin. The survival and subsequent odyssey of the cookbook make a compelling story. For details read the article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* <http://www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/living/food/14553531.htm>

The European Institute for the History and Culture of Food has sponsored the publication of Bruno Laurioux's book on *Gastronomie, humanisme et société à Rome au milieu du XVe siècle: Autour du De honesta voluptate de Platina* (Sismel: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2006). <http://www.ieha.asso.fr>

Routledge has published Carolyn Daniel's book *Voracious Children: Who Eats Whom in Children's Literature*. Carolyn gave a paper at the Research Centre's Symposium on Children and Food in 2005. *Voracious Children* explores food and the way it is used to seduce, to please, and to coerce not only the characters within children's literature but also its readers. This book reveals that food in fiction does far, far more than just create verisimilitude or merely address greedy readers' desires. The author argues that the food trope in children's literature actually teaches children how to be human through the imperative to eat "good" food in a "proper" controlled manner. Examining topics such as childhood obesity and anorexia, the author demonstrates how children's literature routinely attempts to regulate childhood eating practices and only awards subjectivity and agency to those characters who demonstrate "normal" appetites.

The Summer 2006 edition of Food, Culture, and Society has appeared. The editor, Warren Belasco, reports:

Once again *Food, Culture, and Society* offers original and hopefully surprising research from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. In "From Kim Chee to Moon Cakes" Kathleen Ja Sook Bergquist draws from her professional background in social work to examine how Korean American adoptees may or may not use food to establish transnational identities. Her findings challenge any simplistic assumptions that you are what you eat—or don't eat. Along similarly complex lines, in "Eating Death: Vegetarians, Meat and Violence" sociologist Malcolm Hamilton shows that the abhorrence for animal slaughter underlying ethical vegetarianism may not necessarily predict attitudes towards other forms of violence, particularly abortion, capital punishment, boxing, fishing, and hunting. And in "Grandmas to Gourmets" gastronomic historian Michael Symons uses three New Zealand cookbooks to shed new light on the supposed "culinary revolution" of the early 1960s, a period that gave birth to so many of our contemporary food fetishes and, indeed, to modern food studies itself.

Several special sections further our efforts to advance food scholarship and pedagogy. As part of Lucy Long's series on "Food as Entry and Entree in the Humanities" Lisa Heldke writes about the challenges and opportunities facing professional philosophers who dare to think systematically about food. For the "Perspectives on Teaching" section edited by Jonathan Deutsch, food management professor Charles Feldman and nutritionist Kathleen Bauer explain how they might build a comprehensive food and nutrition curriculum around the study of a single spice, cinnamon. And for a new feature on food studies research sources and methods, research librarians Nancy Duran and Karen MacDonald offer a useful overview of indexes, databases, and catalogues.

To receive the journal and become a member of the Association for the Study of Food and Society, go to http://www.bergpublishers.com/us/food/food_subscribe.htm

Publishing Opportunities

Encyclopedia of American Environmental History

Kathleen Brosnan at the University of Houston Center for Public History is the editor of *The Encyclopedia of American Environmental History*, published by Facts On File. This four-volume encyclopedia will include some 800 entries and cover the history of the American environment from pre-colonial times to the present. The editors welcome scholars from all fields. Entries include tobacco, seeds, staple crops, monoculture and vary in size from 500 to 3,500 words. Publication is scheduled for late 2007 or early 2008. Those interested in writing encyclopedia entries may obtain a listing of available topics and other information at each@mail.uh.edu.

Food and Performance, Food as Performance

A special issue of *Text and Performance Quarterly* focusses on food. Performance studies has much to offer to contemporary food studies, and this special issue will encourage and highlight the relationship between food and performance and food as performance. The editors encourage essays that will attend to food as a complex system of performance practices and epistemologies. They are particularly interested in essays that consider the performative and aesthetic aspects of food that also incorporates the “mixings” of race, class, power, sex, and sexuality with politics, history, and contemporary performance culture. Such topics could include but are not limited to food as narrative, the performance of cooking, eating as ritual, and consumption and sex. The editors seek manuscripts from a wide range of interdisciplinary, theoretical, and methodological perspectives, including rhetorical, feminist, ethnographic, performative writing, psychoanalytic, and historical.

The deadline for submissions is 1 April 2007. For details on submission contact Laura Lindenfeld, Communication and Journalism, University of Maine, Laura_Lindenfeld@umit.maine.edu.

Weird Words

Sabrage—the act of opening a bottle with a sabre. The skill of sabrage lies in hitting the bottle hard just at the bottom edge of the annulus, the glass ring at the top of the neck. The blow breaks the neck off

cleanly, complete with cork. Experts advise you to chill the bottle very well, to avoid shaking it, and to remove the foil and wire cage, holding it away from you at an angle of about 40 degrees and striking with the bottle seam uppermost. In truth, a sabre is optional; almost any hard object with an edge will do it. At least one organisation, the *Confrérie du Sabre d’Or*, maintains this tradition at its champagne parties. It supposedly dates from Napoleonic times and was invented by cavalry who found it difficult to open champagne bottles while on horseback.

Cara De Silva

Food Studies and the Popular Market

What follows is an edited version of an article on BookExpo America from the online newspaper *Inside Higher Education*.

Judging from the university presses at this year’s meeting this weekend in Washington, they believe the path to a crossover book purchaser’s library goes through the kitchen. Food is hot. It’s been several years since food studies emerged as a multi-disciplinary field attracting much scholarship, and much of that scholarship is now getting prominent places in press lists, especially those looking for a broad audience.

The University of Illinois Press has high hopes for *The Turkey: An American Story*, which will hit bookshelves for pre-Thanksgiving sales this fall. Andrew F. Smith, who teaches culinary history at the New School, edits a food series at Illinois and has had success there with his own histories of the tomato and the peanut. The book mixes the history of the turkey, discussion of its role in American history, and its preparation. While some recipes are included, they are more for demonstration of the way food preparation has evolved.

Conference attendees received aprons from Duke University Press, part of the promotion campaign for *Good Bread Is Back: A Contemporary History of French Bread, the Way It Is Made, and the People Who Make It*. The book argues that the quality of French bread suffered a century-long decline, which started to reverse only in the 1990’s. The author is Steven Kaplan, a historian at Cornell University who previously wrote a book for Duke about the role of bread in eighteenth-century Paris.

The University of California Press, which publishes the respected food studies journal *Gastronomica*, has had considerable success of late with titles on

wines, and was giving away bottle opener/cork-screws to promote three forthcoming books on wine. Most of the display space in the California booth was devoted to food and drink, although some books aren't close to being coffee table books. For instance, a leading figure of food studies, Warren Belasco of the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, has a new book coming out from the press in October, *Meals to Come: A History of the Future of Food*.

Correspondence

To the editor,

Flattered as I am to be reviewed in your April 2006 newsletter, I must point out that *Last Chance to Eat, the Fate of Taste in a Fast Food World* is not an academic book but a personal take on the state of our diet.

The personal interpretation of food, the sensual intermingling of food with people, events, and emotions, is a literary tradition—I refer to Elizabeth David, MFK Fisher, Sybille Bedford and Colette. How such a book is received depends entirely on whether the reader goes along with the author rather than on any parsing of the “facts.”

Obviously Barbara Santich, your reviewer, didn't go along with my story of food. Fair enough. But to criticize a book like mine for something that's not in it strikes me as misleading.

I chose information relevant to me, just the way Brillat Savarin, Elizabeth David, MFK Fisher did. I make and they made no pretence about being omniscient. Indeed that would rob a book of what value it has. To me, it is the words and style of writing that create meaning better than any marshalling of factoids.

And like Oscar Wilde, I believe that life imitates art rather than vice versa, so should my future dystopia prove right, I shall be happy to take credit for it. Just to clear up some misunderstandings, it seems to me wilful to say I should have singled out *Fast Food Nation* as a source for my chapter on beef. In fact, as the bibliography shows, I had many sources. Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* was singled out because it was the most significant to me.

Re sources for the dry-cleaned shrimp—perhaps Australia is free of this pernicious practice, but it's well-known among fishmongers in North America, and as I noted in my book, the use of dry-cleaning fluid is okayed by the FDA. Exactly what other

source is required?

Errors are always regrettable but I hardly think the misspelling of one word in a Carême recipe detracts in any meaningful way from the book. Alas, the cash-strapped publishing industry can no longer afford the kind of checking they did in the past.

I don't usually respond to reviews, good or bad. But I chose to answer Barbara Santich because her review ran in a university newsletter that is distributed among students.

Now *Last Chance to Eat* is popular among students in North America who have told me that they have learned for the first time about the egg crisis, raw milk cheese controversy, the aging of beef, the apple returning to Asia, and the paint-stripped scallop. Jessa Crispin, the twenty-something blogger whose website *BookSlut* is one of the most influential book blogs, picked *Last Chance* as one of her top books of 2004. That pleased me even more than *Last Chance* being awarded the 2005 James Beard Award for Writing on Food, the most prestigious prize of all.

Best Wishes, Gina Mallet

gina@ginamallet.com

Gina Mallet's *Last Chance to Eat, the Fate of Taste in a Fast Food World* has been published worldwide, won the 2005 James Beard Award for Writing on Food, *Cuisine Canada's* Gold Medal for food writing, is the leading excerpt in *Best Food Writing in 2005*, and was named one of *BookSlut's* top five books of 2004. She is now working on *Elixirs of Youth, Scientists, Scallywags, Food, Genes and Diet*.

Barbara Santich replies:

Gina Mallet is absolutely correct when she writes that her book is “a personal take on the state of our diet.” I think it should be clear that my disappointment with the book is also personal. After all, I did praise both the contents of the book and the way in which it was written. Nevertheless, my criticisms still stand, even if they, too, reflect my personal preferences. Gina Mallet writes that, “scallops, according to Bill Gerencer, are recovering in New England waters.” I would have thought that this information could be confirmed and even quantified by the government body that oversees fishing. I still think Eric Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation* was pertinent to the chapter on beef and *E. coli* because his description of slaughterhouse practices explains

exactly how the contamination can occur, but there are probably other sources equally relevant. In her introduction Gina Mallet describes her book as a quest “to understand how and why ... the world of food had been turned upside down.” As just one reader, I think I would have liked her subsequent understanding to be communicated with more detail to support it.

Parkerofagi, Rollandofili, and Globalophobics: Shadow and Light of the Grotesque World of Mondovino

Nadia Postiglione reviews *Mondovino*.

2004 was a glorious year for the world of wine. Alexander Payne’s *Sideways* and Jonathan Nossiter’s *Mondovino* brought to the international lime-light issues previously overlooked by the media and related to the international spread of the culture of wine in the last decades, such as the transformation of the world of wine, and the new trends of drinking behaviours. On 7 June the Research Centre organised a seminar on the impact of globalisation on the world of wine. The showing of *Mondovino*, introduced by Rob van Zanten of the University of Adelaide’s School of Agriculture, was followed by an eclectic and delicious selection of dishes from around the world prepared by Chef Leslie Deane and matched by Roger Haden’s selection of wines from different latitudes.

Presented for the Cannes Festival competition in 2004, *Mondovino* bluntly documents the transformation of the world of wine under the tentacles of globalisation. The seminar represented a gluttonous chance to re-open the wounds cynically inflicted by Nossiter two years ago.

Mondovino opens the Pandora’s Box of the world of wine, giving life to a kaleidoscope of stories at once disturbing and fascinating. Nossiter unleashes the small and the big fishes of the wine industry, the old world against the new, the famous against the plebs, and the label against the terroir. It resembles a low-budget documentary as a result of the use of hand-held cameras, a technique that raised the ire of David Stratton. The frequent changes of context and the lingering on details at first glance insignificant makes the viewer uneasy. The film is a continuous changing of horizon and jumping from one latitude to another. This fragmented style has received criticism for lacking a narrative key.

Driven by a manicheistic instinct, Nossiter lines up

two different ways of intending, doing, and drinking wine. *Mondovino* is a grotesque parade of thau-maturge-oenologists, minstrels of the terroir, Don Quixote-vignerons, and picaresque entrepreneurs all acting in the show of global winemaking.

The wicked are definitely the leading actors of the film. Nossiter introduces the French wine-maker Michel Rolland as the *deus ex machina* of the global homologation of wine, the sorcerer of the global vil-lage, the sole holder of the panacea for all the evils of the modern wine. From the Far to the Middle East, from the Old to the New World, all Rolland’s patrons execute devotedly his formula: micro-oxy-genation + new barrels. The result of this take-away consulting is success on the international markets, the enthusiastic confirmation of the critics, and the spread of similar wine styles from the Republic of China to California.

The other global patriarch of wine is the undisputed critic, American Robert Parker. If Rolland represents the alchemist of the global wine, the Merlin of the wineries, Parker is the shaper of the international taste. His scores are accepted as oracles; his palate has the power to build and destroy the myths of the wine, to pilot the tastes from one country to another. The film stresses the “parkerisation” of the wine industry and of wine consumption. Parker loves the full-bodied, glycerine-doped, and vanilla-scented wines, and in consequence the wineries smooth, make-up, and dress their wines in the likeness of Parker’s ideal.

The Mondavi of California, mercilessly portrayed searching for a strip of terroir on which to raise their flag; the premier grand cru Mouton Rothschild, traitor of the French ideal of the terroir by jointing with Mondavi; the Marquises Frescobaldi getting rid of the ancient rival Marquis Antinori in order to prevail on the Tuscan wine panorama, with the help of Mondavi—all of these wineries, among the most powerful in the world, close Nossiter’s circle of the global wine-making lobby.

The most grotesque part of the film is the crude display of the galaxy of wineries all revolving around the Parker-Rolland court. Amazing are Mondavi’s next-door neighbours, the Staglin, with their amoral paternalism, immortalized by Nossiter sitting around a copy of the table from *The Godfather Part II*. Emblematic are the Argentinean feudal family of Bodega San Pedro, peronist, budding vigneron,

baptised by the hands of Rolland, and waiting for the market consecration.

Who does Nossiter place on the pedestal? Who can save us from the cataclysm of micro-oxygenation and from the spiral of the globalisation? Hubert De Montille and Battista and Lina Colombo are the last partisans-vignerons still resisting the global “mcdonaldisation” of wine. Mr. and Mrs. Colombo in Sardinia are still among the few producers of the Malvasia di Bosa, a wine with a long tradition of local production, completely forgotten as a result of the Italian policy promoting the national wine heritage. Unlike the Colombos, De Montille in Burgundy does not need to struggle for the recognition of the quality of his wine and of the history of his land. The identity of his wine is its own terroir. The terroir, the most anthropological representation of land, is a way of thinking of a wine, untranslatable in any language. It is the result of a complete adherence of the land to the vine, to its product and to its producer. The old vigneron is fighting to hold his daughter—a novice but brilliant wine-maker—tight to their terroir, not to let her be enchanted by the chimeras of the wine lobbies.

In conclusion, Mondovino, despite the absence of Nossiter’s final and clear condemnation, confirms its ability to dismantle the positivist myth of globalisation and raises interesting issues on this process. First, globalisation is now dominated by the rule of chaos and disorder, and the global world of wine seems more of a jungle than a village. Second, wine remains a business for rich people, and globalisation will never carry out any principle of equality on the wine market. Rich, powerful and famous are the families involved in the winemaking, and rich are the people who can afford a glass of super-Tuscan, French-Californian, Rolland-made, Parker-palate wine.

Third, and most important, Nossiter’s cross-section of the world of wine shows clearly that globalisation is not a process of democratisation of the market and of consumption. America, graspingly followed by the mercenary tradition of the old world, lays down the law for the international markets. As for the new wine countries, globalisation represents a real opportunity of improvement only for the realities already consolidated. Globalisation is a rhyme for rationalisation which implies the “physiologic” disappearing of small outsiders who until now have represented, at least culturally, an alternative to the

mainstream way of cultivating, making, and distributing wine, an inspiration for anyone who writes and communicates about wine, and a pleasure for the non-lobotomised drinkers from all around the world. For all the rest...let’s drink water.

Cookery Books as History: International Impressions

England: Laura Mason

“Culinary historians reveal unsuspected competitive streak” was the surprise incidental finding from the Cookery Books as History Conference. This discovery actually resulted from an evening quiz organised by Barbara Santich. (The prawns wrapped in knafeh pastry, part of the evening’s menu, were a delicious revelation too.) I would not have discovered this and much more without a kind invitation from Roger Haden to speak at the conference, something that led to both my first visit to Australia and a shift in my perspective on the world of cookery literature. As one whose perception of recipe books has tended to be Anglocentric, or at least Eurocentric, I was fascinated by papers relating to cookbooks published in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. Elizabeth Driver’s keynote address showed the importance of communities, including religious ones such as the Presbyterians, in collecting and publishing recipes at grass-roots level. This is something that has received little attention in the United Kingdom. I was pleased to learn more about how geographical distance from Europe and the problems of frontier environments reshaped cookery and evolved new food traditions related to European cookery but distinct from it.

The two-day conference also provided much more, with papers that approached the subject from many angles: as literature or as historical records, for social context, nostalgia, or as evidence of migration. The range of subjects, including papers that bravely addressed contemporary publications, magazines, and internet blogs, was impressive, as were the diverse methods used to analyse them. If the art gallery, whose conference room provided a very pleasant venue, had allowed it the debates would have gone on far beyond the allocated time. Many thanks to the organisers for the imaginative program, warm welcome, and for providing me with an excuse for a visit to Australia, the first of many, I hope.

Laura Mason was one of the keynote speakers at

the Conference. She is the author of *Sugar Plums and Sherbet: The Prehistory of Sweets, Traditional Foods of Britain, Food Culture in Great Britain, and Farmhouse Cookery*.

Canada: Elizabeth Driver

My answer was an immediate “Yes!” to Michael Symons and Roger Haden when they contacted me in February to ask whether I might like to speak at the *Cookery Books as History Conference*. How could I resist the opportunity to spend three days with a group of people who shared the same special interest? Never mind the distance from Toronto to Adelaide or the pressing obligations of daily life.

I have spent many years doing bibliographical research and, as my *Culinary Landmarks* is about to go to press, I have been thinking of other ways to explore Canadian cookbooks than through the lens of publishing history, so it was fascinating and refreshing to hear papers that took different approaches to cookbooks, whether the use of hermeneutics as an interpretive tool, Colin Bannerman’s “number crunching” of recipe types and ingredients, Raelene Inglis’ statistical analysis of periodical food pages, Duncan Galletly’s tracking of annotations, Helen Leach’s determined pursuit of the evolution of Pavlova, or Michael Symons’ perspective on classical antipodean baking as revealed in cookbooks. As I listened to the papers, most of which referred to books from parts of what used to be the British Empire, I found myself alert to similarities and differences of evolving culinary traditions in the former colonies and to the web of connections between them; is there the seed of an idea here for a future conference? Francis Bonner reminded me that sexy Graham Kerr stirred the hearts of women not just in Canada but in Australia, New Zealand, and Britain too. Upon my return to Toronto, it occurred to me that it might be interesting to compare the works of Tasmania’s Edward Abbott and Canada’s nineteenth-century kitchen chronicler Catharine Parr Traill. When I tasted Paul van Reyk’s Burgher-aunt’s Christmas fruitcake with (what was for me) a surprise mixture of Sri Lankan spices, I felt a visceral connection through my taste buds across a cultural and geographic divide. Community cookbooks, stove technologies, and regionalism are subjects I have investigated in Canada, but I gleaned fresh insights from the papers focusing on these top-

ics in Australia and New Zealand. I was especially intrigued by Kerrie Handasyde’s explanation of how the Church of Christ cookbooks express the community’s faith-based practices and values. Catherine Kerry’s paper on ground-breaking chef Ferran Adria’s new cookbook and Liane Colwell’s review of today’s cookbook trends reinforced for me the importance of keeping up with current developments, even for those carrying out retrospective studies. Whereas the majority of papers examined the history that is recorded in cookbooks, Nathalie Cooke offered a powerful explanation of how cookbooks make history. In the 300 words allotted for this report (and I am already well over the limit), it’s impossible to do justice to all the wonderful papers. My only regret about the conference was that there was not more time planned for the group to discuss papers at the end of each session.

I mustn’t forget to mention the delicious lunches (may I have the recipe for the Sri Lankan-inspired sandwich fillings?) and yummy “History in the Baking” at breaks, or Monday evening’s grazing-dinner-cum-trivia-competition, which brought out a fierce competitive spirit at our table (the winning team “Jamie”) and was so much more fun than a formal banquet.

Thank you to the Research Centre for the History of Food and Drink and Director Roger Haden for a fabulous symposium.

Elizabeth Driver is the author of the soon-to-be-published *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks (1825-1949)* and *A Bibliography of Cookery Books Published in Britain, 1875-1914*. Elizabeth has also edited or co-edited five classic Canadian cookbooks, including the *Robin Hood Cookbook*, *The Home Cookbook*, and most recently *Edith Adams Omnibus: Classic Canadian Cookbook Series*.

New Zealand: Helen Leach

If any of us came to the conference thinking that cookery books are a unified genre, we surely left with a sense of their diversity of purpose, content, and meaning. What a richly varied group of cookbooks we were exposed to, from the Sharp manuscript books, the *New Zealand Truth* weekly columns, and the modest Church of Christ compilations, to foodie blogs and the lavish (pretentious?) works of Ferran Adria! In keeping with their broad range, these sources inspired very different forms of

analysis. Some of us are fascinated by their detail and are applying quantitative methods to detect trends through time, whether in particular dishes, recipe categories, or even the construction of the books themselves. Others are examining the authors of cookbooks and their roles in the construction of national cuisines, or the determination of the authentic (whatever that is). Our keynote speakers showed us that we share this diversity of sources and approaches with North America and Britain. It was a thrill to hear Elizabeth and Laura and talk to them during the conference.

Numbers spared us from the necessity of holding parallel sessions; so we all got the opportunity to hear each other's presentations. I came away delighted that cookbooks are increasingly appreciated as sources by scholars from a growing range of disciplines. Thank you Roger, Barbara, Lynn, and your team for a most enjoyable and convivial meeting. Helen Leach teaches at the University of Otago, where she heads a team of scholars examining New Zealand's culinary tradition with the aid of a grant from the Marsden Fund.

Italy: Nadia Postiglione

The Conference on Cookery Books as History represented a great chance to get a picture of the current trends in the field of gastronomic research. The contributions have opened an in-depth, wide reflection on the great potentiality of cookery books as historical sources and on the different approaches to their analysis.

The conference produced a kaleidoscope of readings and interpretations on the potentiality of cookery books as means of historical investigations applied to disparate fields. Elizabeth Driver's historiographic research on Canadian culinary heritage, the articulated methodological approach to cookery books suggested by Laura Mason, Barbara Santich's questioning of the historical significance of Edward Abbotts' recipes and cookery advices, all of these contributions have demonstrated the application of rigorous methodologies to cookbooks as means and ends of historical investigations.

The issues presented by the younger scholars pleasantly impressed me. Particularly, Kerrye Handasyde looked at Christian community cookbooks, a source rather overlooked within the religious communities' genre, stressing odd at-

tempts in them to cross the religious sphere and the drifting into hedonistic and more eccentric cookery practices. Benjamin Buckland, analysing the role of Mary Fisher's cookbooks in the spread of the popular representation of French cuisine in America, questioned the significance of the "authenticity" in relation to the processes of invention and reproduction of culinary popular myths. Moreover, the traditional meaning of authenticity implodes in the issues opened by Isabelle de Solier, who investigated the sense of the raising phenomenon of the internet food writers—the foodie bloggers debuting on the web as new gourmand actors.

But probably one of the most stimulating issues was introduced by Sian Supsky. Her contribution opens the promising but still undervalued issue of cookery books as literary engagements and narrative voices, more than a whole of collected recipes. Supsky stressed the function of writing beyond its object, food. Cookbooks are, after all, books and the process involved in writing about food, even when strictly prescriptive, follows a more or less articulated narrative process. Even the most prescriptive and analytical cookbook presupposes the choice of a specific narrative structure. The literary dimension of cookery books represents one of the most interesting perspectives, and it opens multiplex levels of interpretation in which the writing voice, worlds, and food are strictly interrelated. Supsky investigated this connection focusing on cookbooks based on diary style. In this genre the writer is involved as narrating first person, as subject, and not only as cookery connoisseur. Through a reading of Stephanie Alexander's diary-cookbooks Supsky focused on the complex coexisting of prescription and illustration of recipes, of narration and memoir in the autobiographic cookery books.

The two-day conference offered the chance to examine the potentiality as well as the limits of cookbooks as historical source and the different approaches to the study of their history. Whatever they are, books to cook or to read, however we like to use them, as historical documents, as prescriptive books, as collection of recipes, or narrative works, cookery books remain defined culinary systems irremediably affected by fecund idiosyncrasies, undermined by creative incoherencies, weakened by paradoxes, and irrational contaminations. Whenever they are written and to whomever they are addressed, cookery books remain anarchist texts,

unsolvable rebus, whose fascination lies in their infinite questioning and answering about food, cookery, and history.

Nadia Postiglione received her master's degree from the University of Bologna, where her thesis on *Il Segno del Cibo: Per un'Ermeneutica del Neorealismo* in Levi, Alvaro, Silone was supervised by Massimo Montanari. She is currently a PhD student at the University of Adelaide.

Australia: Roger Haden

After taking part in the 2nd Wellington Symposium of Gastronomy in November 2005, I was sure a conference on cookery books would draw wide interest. Many if not most of the papers presented on that occasion were related to cookery books, and, moreover, several researchers were working on cookery books as the result of a Marsden Fund grant, within a team headed by archaeologist Helen Leach (University of Otago). I was therefore initially delighted when all "the Marsden group" members decided to attend the Conference on Cookery Books as History. Once I had posted the call for papers on the website, however, other surprises were in store. Several scholars from Canada and the United States were also interested in coming. More interest came from interstate Australia. By the cut-off date, we probably needed three days of presentations. (I must now apologise for the "time compression" during the conference. A lesson for next time!)

What accounts in part for the interest is that cookery books comprise a genre we all know yet have historically failed to discuss seriously outside the kitchen and the dining room. Cookery books are for cooks, or so the simple logic that seems to have applied would suggest. Yet scholars of all persuasions (and who often but not always have an abiding interest in cookery books if not, indeed, in cookery) are presenting what they know in forums around the world. As scholars, we know some of the reasons for this late flowering. Food studies and gastronomy have only recently been added to the higher education curriculum, something that reflects a deep historical prejudice within academe. But we no longer need to dwell on the negative. We have much to look forward to, if Cookery Books as History is anything to go by.

I had little trouble attracting two world-class food historians and writers in Elizabeth Driver and Laura Mason. They were both excited to be coming to South Australia (for the first time) as much as to the conference. Liz and Laura's papers beautifully counter pointed one another. Liz opened proceedings with an account of Canada's cookery book history and its legacy, laced with many insights into the ways in which cookery books might be

read as historical documents. Liz took us right into the world of the bibliographer, detailing culinary influences and changes in styles over a century and a half, and with great aplomb managed to blend biographical insight with a grand historical sweep, offering many insightful interpretations within what appeared to be a veritable topography of Canadian cookbooks.

Laura opened proceedings on the second day from a very personal perspective: "my favourite cookbooks." This simple proposal developed into a fascinating account of both grand and modest cookbooks, and, like Liz, Laura provided many fascinating insights into the (imagined) minds of their authors. Whether piecing together the cultural inheritance of a just post-war Malayan community cookbook or tracing the influence and success of the famous Mrs. Marshall (her ice-cream recipes have recently been rediscovered by Heston Blumenthal), Laura's account resonated with her personal love of and fascination for cookbooks. Looking as it were beyond the recipes themselves, Laura's meticulous analysis showed us something of the importance and pleasure of making broader interpretations; as scholars, it reinforced that cookery books must be approached as historically complex blends of the personal and cultural.

Both Liz and Laura's enthusiasm and pleasure in coming to our conference were matched by most who attended. We all enjoyed ourselves! To me the connection between pleasure and knowledge has always been important. Cookery books are of course a case in point. The specific kind of knowledge cookery books impart, and how they achieve this, should be underlined for future research. Certainly such knowledge comprises more than recipe instructions. Indeed, the conference strongly reinforced the sense in which cookery books might better be understood as historical, biographical, as well as didactic texts. The range of subject matter covered by the conference papers reflected this, and the approaches were as varied as the topics.

For so long regarded as something less than "literature" (or excluded from it), cookbooks will surely come to be regarded as something more than any genre label can define. While some belong to the "popular" and others to a "higher" cultural field, they are, by this fact alone, always more than simply "manuals of instruction." Cookery books are idiosyncratic historical documents that, ostensibly, help one to cook, and thereby to transform food.

Yet, in truth, cookbooks also transform their users, readers, and their worlds. They are (as Elizabeth David understood so well) aspirational texts which perhaps succeed as no other books do, because of that deeply felt relation they evoke between ourselves and our food. Thus, not unlike “great works of literature” cookery books can have the power to really touch; to communicate, and to arouse desires that in themselves are transforming.

Thanks to all those who made the conference possible. Let’s hope it will inspire further research in this exciting field of study. Special thanks to Michael Symons, Cathryn Kerry (and the staff of CKFOOD), Paul van Reyk, Craig Hill, Barbara Santich, Tony Brooks, Margaret Meyler, Nadia Postiglione, Dani Signorini, and Chris McElhinney. Thanks also to the Art Gallery of South Australia and the National Wine Centre of Australia.

- As Director of the Research Centre, Roger Haden convened the Conference.

The Research Centre for the History of Food and Drink

Invites members and their guests to a lunchtime seminar 12.00—1.15pm, Tuesday October 17th

**Bring Your Lunch
Tea and Coffee Provided**

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Level 4, Napier Building
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Cultures of Food and Starvation in Southern Italy, 1900-1950

Culinary economy, home-grown fruits and vegetables, plentiful olive oil, and freshly made pasta: these are often thought to be the basis of Italy’s so-called “Mediterranean cuisine.” In the case of Southern Italy, however, as scholars have argued, this is but a romantic myth of “the simple life” compared to the hardship and struggle experienced by the poorer classes in southern Italian regions.

Looking at official enquiries, ethnographic sources, neo-realist literature, archival photography, and documentary film, the discussion centres on the social and environmental conditions specific to Southern Italian food culture, its roots and its legacy.

Nadia Postiglione is a native of Naples, where she completed her BA (Hons) in the Philosophy of History at The University of Naples “Federico II” (2000). Nadia completed a Masters in the Culture and History of Food at the University of Bologna (2004). Nadia’s master’s research centred on the history and heritage of Southern Italian food in the 19th and 20th centuries, with particular attention paid to issues related to the poorest classes. Nadia has also found time to run a family restaurant in Naples for five years, before coming to Australia. Here she has continued her research into food culture by undertaking a PhD in the School of History and Politics at Adelaide University. Nadia is looking at the migration of Southern Italians to South Australia, and specifically, at the foodways practices they brought with them, and how, over time, these influenced Australian eating patterns.