Chapter 9

Recipes as Alternative Archives – A South African Perspective

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Food and history

Raphael Samuel (1985: 2) argues that social history in academia concerns itself with 'real life' and 'ordinary people'. Samuel (1985: 7) further posits that:

> The general effect of the new social history has been to enlarge the map of historical knowledge and legitimate major new areas of scholarly inquiry – as for example the study of house-holds and kinship; the history of popular culture, the fate of the outcast and the oppressed. It has given a new lease of life to extra-mural work in history, more especially with the recent advent of women's history to which social history has been more hospitable than others.

Thus, this enlargement of the historical landscape now provides an ideal opportunity to include food studies. At the start of the twenty-first century, food historian Ken Albala stated that due to the 'interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature' of food scholarship, there would eventually be a 'recognizable discipline known as food studies, of which food history will be an indispensable part' (Albala 2009: 6). The same author also suggests that the recent "intense" awareness of food studies might be deceiving, since it could lead one to consider food history as an emerging field. He argues that quite the opposite is true, in that the history of food as a division of history, is as old as history writing itself (Albala 2009). Consequently, Alan Taylor's view, quoted in Samuel (1985: 16), that 'social history is not a particular kind of history; it is a dimension which should be present in every kind of history' and can extend to the history of food and the people who prepare it.

Aligned to this take on food history is the view of Raymond Grew, a social historian, who maintains that human migrations have, for the longest time, been partly motivated by a search for food. This

means that food habits and recipes accompanied travellers wherever they went, and Grew (1999: 18) therefore argues that: 'Food, the object of considerable record keeping, makes an invaluable historical indicator.'

In '*Understanding Culture: Food as a Means of Communication'*, Nevana Stajcic (2013) indicates that, through the influence of the media, food has gained prominence in recent years. Questions relating to cultural context, including aspects such as origin, taste and history, easily follow from conversations about food. Stajcic (2013: 13) argues that:

> The main reason we should view food as a form of communication is because it is directly linked to both ritual and culture, where ritual is defined as 'the voluntary performance of appropriately patterned behaviour to symbolically effect or participate in the serious life'. Nowhere can this serious life be viewed more closely than in rituals involving food. It is at the centre of every important event in our lives, such as birthdays, weddings, holidays and funerals. Within ritual contexts, food often 'stands in' for expressions of life, love, happiness or grief.

In Stajcic's view, the importance of food communication lies in the fact that it relates to everyday experiences in ordinary lives, an aspect that lies at the heart of social history. Stajcic also states that this may be the reason that food communication research has been neglected or even ignored: it is so integral to everyday life. The point is clearly made that the relationship between food and culture and the understanding of culture through food, means that questions must be asked that relate to ingredients, method, name, origin and serving. The answers to these questions serve to educate individuals about a culture's attitude towards life (Stajcic 2013:14).

This line of reasoning is also highlighted by prominent academics, including the anthropologist David Sutton, who refers to an article in the '*Chronicle of Higher Education'* that acknowledges food studies as 'a hot new field' (Sutton 2002: 3), but also that it initiated a debate over the academic legitimacy of food studies, which was easily labelled as 'scholarship lite' (Sutton 2002: 3). The social psychologist Leon Rappoport (2003) refers to this specific article by stating that, despite the growing popularity of studies in the historical, social and cultural meaning of food, it is still regarded as an 'inconsequential form of scholarship' (134). In addition, Arjun Appadurai (1988) wrote about post-colonial India, questioning the reasons why the culinary history of India was

neglected and not properly documented, and probes the role of colonial powers. Claflin and Scholliers (2012) incorporated contributions from a variety of historians, including those who stand outside academia, in *'Writing Food History, A Global Perspective'*. These authors found that studies in food and food history benefit from meaningful contributions, regardless of whether they originated within the academy or not. This normative approach contradicts those of a previous generation of food historians who exclusively considered so-called academic sources. This principle is also relevant to the South African context as there is a lack of academic documentation of South African cuisines. In addition, it is increasingly difficult to speak of a national dish or cuisine in South Africa due to the country's fragmented and colonial past as well as the richness of ethnic diversities and cultural nuances found in South Africa. The controversial study on *'Die Geskiedenis van Boerekos 1652-1806'* (The History of Afrikaaner Food 1652-1806) serves as an example of research based solely on a selection of "formal" sources (Claassens 2005).

These perspectives serve as motivation and justification to explore the relationship between food and culture as one of the themes of this chapter. Through the study of food products as cultural artefacts, a better understanding of food is sought to confirm identity (belonging), food and communication, food and memory and food and the senses. The aim is to unearth some of the silent voices in women's history; those who have never been heard, however, played an important role, not only in the kitchen, but also influenced South African food culture.

The absence of a conventional archive

Leong-Salobir (2015) argues that cultural artefacts of the domestic realm are now being considered as valuable contributions to historical research. The author points out that household manuals and cookbooks are 'one genre that have become an important source as historical documents' (Leong-Salobir 2015: 154). In this chapter, recipe books and recipes consulted date as far back as the early nineteenth century. In most cases there are no introductory notes to the recipes or an explanatory indication of where the recipes come from. In some cases, there are not even proper instructions of how to make the dish, except for a cryptic list of ingredients. These books were mostly written by women and it can be assumed that the authors believed that most of their "sisters" would know what to do.

Like their servants, the women who penned recipes in manuscripts by hand and later published

household guides and recipe books, will not be found in the conventional archive. Overall, the history of women, especially in the domestic domain and their role as caregivers, has not been considered important enough to be documented. Hetherington (1993: 242) explains that women's history was ignored in the documentation of national history at least until 1960, '... so that before that time women were almost invisible in the historical record ...' All women's history was neglected—white women, black women, servants, slaves and the indentured. Jansen (2019: 5) states that 'The textual silence surrounding the lives of servants is additional proof of the silence and violence of *all* archives.' Another South African voice is that of Baderoon (2014: 50), who describes the colonial kitchen as an '... unrelenting, perilous and transformative arena in which an uneven contest between slave-owner and enslaved was fought. Ultimately enslaved people came to shape South African cuisine in unexpectedly potent ways'. It is therefore argued, that these voices are intrinsic to the pages of the recipe books in whatever format.

The absence of a traditional, formal archive on the history of women and the fact that only a handful of these women, regardless of race or class, are included in the meagre collection of primary sources available locally, poses a challenge, especially when wanting to discover hidden or lost voices in the South African food culture. Therefore, one must turn one's attention elsewhere. This approach validates secondary and oral histories as instruments to transmit lived experiences, even when doing so indirectly. Consequently, it is possible to consult other sources and alternative methods to create the memory of women which, in turn, will (re)create or supplement the archive of women's lives. It must, however, also be kept in mind that culture is not bound to the restrictions of documented formal or official primary sources (Fisher, Lange and Nkambule 2017).

Jon Holtzman is of the view that gender takes centre stage when studying food and memory, especially female forms thereof. He writes:

> ...a wide body of literature emphasizes memory, structured through what is construed as women's special relationship to food, providing access to histories and memories not found in other types of accounts. (Holtzman 2006: 73)

Hence, food is flexible and symbolic in the understanding of self-identity because of the solicitation of a series of inflexible cultural stereotypes that link a specific food to a specific identity. The fact that people express a longing for their mother's or grandmother's favourite family dish, such as milk

tart or that ex-patriots yearn for home dishes, serves as a strong indicator of food's ability to evoke emotion and nostalgia. It is not just the physical object that rekindles this memory, but also cultural (or even national?) identity, tradition and a need for (be)longing. The preparation of food is integral to both culture and heritage, however, the role of women in this act is often overlooked in accounts of cultural studies (Vahed and Waetjen 2010).

Because it was seldom recorded, women's history has, with notable exceptions, been ignored for so long that it is referred to as the 'silence of sources' (Le Dantec-Lowry 2008: 100). Helen Bradford (1996) argues that, should these forgotten gender and feminist experiences be included in a broader reading of history, it will transform the interpretation and understanding thereof. Gerda Lerner (1975: 5) takes this further by stating that traditionally trained historians will be partial when writing women's history, as it will be the history of 'women's worthies' or 'compensatory history'. Alternatively, women's history could also be read as a contribution to society where women were judged according to male standards and on their contribution to a specific movement (Lerner 1975). Lerner asserts that the real history of women is the documentation of their day-to-day existence, on their own terms, in a male dominated world. The oppression suffered unfortunately does not provoke the story of women's history and is therefore, of limited use to the historian. Consequently, traditional historical questions have been applied to women to fit their narratives into male defined vacuums where it is thought they should have been. Lerner (1975: 6) declares that:

> The decisive historical fact about women is that the areas of their functioning, not only their status within those areas, have been determined by men. The effect on the consciousness of women has been pervasive. It is one of the decisive aspects of their history, and any analysis which does not take this complexity into consideration must be inadequate.

The distortion extends to different social classes of women and their respective histories and corresponds with archival historian Antoinette Burton's view that the definitive example of the part of history that is forever lost is epitomised by the lives of slaves that were not recorded (Burton 2003). Similarly, Jansen (2019) draws a parallel to the South African phenomenon where the role of servants and domestic workers has been largely ignored and overlooked.

The patriarchal system under the Dutch dictated that women were not allowed to hold public

office, however, once married, they shared the status of their husbands under Roman-Dutch law (Giliomee 2010: 34). Evidence of the silencing influence of the patriarchal construct is also found in the negating of a married women's identity by defining her as an extension of her husband's status and name. Examples abound and include the handwritten cover of a personal recipe collection from 1819 of a lady who identified herself as de weduwe (the widow) Blanckenberg (née Zeeman) (1819). The researcher's own maternal grandmother, Rachel Cornelia Coetzee (née Pretorius) (1915–1976) identified herself as *Mevr*. (Mrs) M. Coetzee, referring to her husband whose first name was Max, on the cover of her handwritten manuscript of recipes (personal notes: M. Coetzee). The cover and title page of '*South African Cookery Made Easy',* published in 1912, lists the author as Mrs P. W. de Klerk, however, she signed the preface as M. de Klerk using her husband's initials (De Klerk 1912). Similarly, the South African cookbook author Jeanette C. van Duyn first published under her maiden name (Van Duyn 1920), yet was credited as Mrs H. M. Slade in her later work (Slade 1939). Likewise, a contribution for a milk tart filling recipe in '*The Paarl Cookery Book in Aid of War Funds'* from 1918 is attributed to "Mrs. Septimus de Villiers" from the Paarl.

A further silencing is that biographical information on women food writers, including those mentioned above, is scarce and intermittent, if anything is available at all. This trend is not limited to authors of the early twentieth century, it also applies to women like Sannie Smit (1940–1991), who was well-known as the chief home economist of the then South African Meat Board and food writer who co-authored '*The South African Encyclopaedia of Food and Cookery'* (Smit and Fulton 1986).

Against this background it is argued that it is impossible to fully understand the history of gender, women and their identity in South Africa today without including the silent voices when historians try to fill the gaps between romance and reality. What is certain is that both free and enslaved women influenced family life, the households they were running and the psychology of the society at the Cape under colonised rule (Shell 1994: 285). This correlates with the views of Victorian-era English writer Isabella Beeton (1836–1865), who advocated that the role of an ordinary housewife was to cook a good meal and create a well-organised home (Beeton 2006). This paradigm of patriarchy and class systems that silenced the voices of women continued into the following centuries.

Baderoon (2014: 65) believes that 'it is in the art and the daily, unremarked practices of cooking that some of the most radical possibilities of food as history can be seen'. In this context, Jessamyn Neuhaus (cited by Lobel 2005: 264) reminds us that the gendering of home cookery was something

created in the twentieth century, while nineteenth century middle class women were assigned the term "household managers" as they were managing the household staff instead of doing the work themselves.

> Women, it was assumed, learned how to cook from their mothers (or more accurately, learned how to run a household, for most readers of early nineteenth- century cookbooks were elite and middle class women, who oversaw servants who did the cooking) (Lobel 2005: 264).

This is a critical observation since it points to a layering of the silencing in the hierarchy of the gendered kitchen. For example, the memoirs of Petrus Borchardus Borcherds (1786–1871) (Borcherds 1861: 196–197) describe the domestic affairs of a Stellenbosch household under the control of the lady of the house. the lady had servants who were taught the art of needlework and who fulfilled the necessary tasks of making sure bedrooms, nurseries, the pantry and the kitchen were run smoothly. While this could be construed as a romanticised view of women working side by side in harmony, the truth is that, from slavery to apartheid, the kitchen has been a place of traumatic and stressful intimacy with power struggles that had serious cultural consequences that, according to Baderoon (2002: 50), 'denies the brutality of slavery'.

As indicated, the expectation created by the early colonial system was that settler women were assumed to manage the household and by implication also the kitchen space, where they were, more often than not, assisted by enslaved, indentured or servile people. As in other colonised places, the colonists' dependence on local labour, ingredients and methods necessitated compromise and cooperation between the classes (Leong-Salobir 2011). This, according to Chris Eason, undoubtedly produced a:

> ... cuisine of acculturation: British colonists adopting ingredients and cooking techniques from the indigenous population as well as from earlier generations of European settlers and the Malay and Indian slaves they imported. (Barnes 2006: 5)

An early source that gives insight into the running of a typical privileged farmstead is *'Hilda's Diary of a Cape Housekeeper'*, published in 1902, by Hildagonda Duckitt (1839–1905). This source chronicles the daily events and monthly work in a Cape household. Duckitt (1902) writes in her introduction that she:

> ... shall be glad indeed if what I have learnt by life long experience and experiment should lighten the labour of those beginning the responsibilities of housekeeping in our dear old Colony, under conditions new and strange to them. (6)

Duckitt (1902: 6) shares her romantic version of the relationships between mistress and servants under colonial rule. Many of the men and women were indentured to work on the farms and, according to Duckitt, they made 'excellent servants'. They had a man cook who was a 'rescued slave', and who was responsible for baking on Tuesdays and Fridays. The daughters of the house had to supervise the dairy and were assisted by a 'very capable coloured woman' (Duckitt 1902: 9). When they travelled for their annual Christmas holiday they were accompanied by a cook, the housemaid and servants who carried water and brought wood (Duckitt 1902: 13). It appears from Duckitt's (1902) diary that they trained young servants to help the others. They taught them how to read, write and work, so that 'life may go on' (24).

The references to kitchens—and more broadly, households—in the early colonial period resemble the real picture of the advancing authoritarian and ranked society that had emerged at the Cape and which would spread northwards and persist well into the twentieth century. The public sphere, in contrast to the household scenario, has been written about in traditional histories to the detriment of the domestic environment, erroneously sketching a romanticised version of reality. Robert C-H Shell (1949–2015) makes the case that research should shift from interclass relationships to the relationships on a personal level, being 'those in the household' (Shell 1994: 285). Moreover, too many studies of slave societies still present slavery as static, and much of the literature focusses on the introduction and termination of the slave system. Yet, very little is written on the changes within slave societies. Shell (1994) declares that changes during the seventeenth-, eighteenth- and nineteenth centuries need to be incorporated for history to be meaningful and not 'frozen in time' (285).

The link between food, memory, identity and culture is therefore evident and it has also been shown that in the South African context like elsewhere and for a considerable time, women have acted as the primary person responsible for the household, but customarily, did so silently. They did this from privileged positions as mistresses and housewives or as unacknowledged domestic workers and slaves. Regardless of women's social status or the lack thereof, their reality remained one that has been dominated by an overtly patriarchal system that relegated them to the kitchen,

where aspects of their everyday existence remained muted outside of their private domain and therefore, absent from the archive and silent in the sanctioned records of their communities.

To address this shortcoming, it has been suggested that women's histories may be discovered through interdisciplinarity in places other than the obvious record (Springer 2004). This would allow women to enhance the reading of official histories by the addition of their personal experiences through oral accounts, autobiographies and ethnographies (Burton 2003). Proponents of this more inclusive method of archiving suggest alternative means of record-keeping that facilitate histories that are cognisant of a multi-cultural and boundaryless world. Bastian (2006) therefore advocates for the reinterpretation of the structure and substance of the archive to include a complex variety of human activities, including writing diaries, sending memos, cooking a local dish or celebrating a public holiday. The role of cookbooks, women in the kitchen and their relationship with the rest of the community is therefore starting to be examined in research (Le Dantec-Lowry 2008). Based on this approach, the contribution of context is paramount to frame the reading of such sources to include all voices and records (Bastian 2006). In light of this, Burton (2003) questions the nature of an archive and proposes that, beyond its conventional application of producing documents to be read for its disciplinary meaning, it should also be understood:

> ... to indicate that a text like the 'Family History' is itself an enduring site of historical evidence and historiographical opportunity in and for the present... in addition to serving as evidence of individual lives, the memories of home that each woman enshrined in narrative act – for us – as an archive from which a variety of counter histories of colonial modernity can be discerned. (5)

If this alternative archive, proposed by Burton (2003), reflects the various roles of women, it should also explicate their roles as, amongst others, carers and cooks and by definition, embrace the documents that represent aspects of routine domesticity in whatever format they exist. These will include family manuscripts and collections of recipes that were handed down from mothers to daughters. This transmission within the home, where generations of women have taught and demonstrated their family recipes and kitchen lore to the next generation, has been frequently documented. Besides, women have, for the longest time, exchanged recipes in various formats and these exchanges form the essential process that underlies the production of cookbooks (Appadurai 1988). Ray (2009: 111) reminds us that: 'The innumerable recipes that women produced cannot be

explained away as being engendered by the hand of patriarchy.'

Historians only recently began to pay attention to women's history through the lens of the connections between women in the kitchen and their community (Le Dantec-Lowry 2008). As Leong-Salobir (2011: 155) states: '... food carried the flavour of memory, forging material continuities between past and present and connecting the personal to the collective'. It is also a reality that the archive is changing and that many women no longer have family recipe manuscripts since the Internet of Things and search engines make it possible to source and collect recipes online. It is, therefore, now more than ever, important to document women's pasts and to connect the dots when it comes to the history of their everyday lives. Informal and non-academic sources (writings by chefs, restauranteurs, cookbook writers and even hostesses) (Robins 1992) are therefore important informants for those who study food history and culture.

Recipes as the archive

Sarah Noble, quoted in Snell (2017), asserts that recipes represent more than a set of ingredients and instructions:

> Collectively, recipes give us insight into different parts of history. How people lived, what they had available, what their homes and families were like, how society functioned, among many more things. Recipes often times have deeper meanings and connections within our lives than we realize. History is certainly reflected in the cookbooks, diaries, and other examples of culinary literature. By studying recipe books throughout time, we are able to better understand how we came to be where we are with food today.

Therefore, Albala (2012) encourages food historians to use cookbooks as sources to reconstruct the past, however, he also warns against the possible pitfalls of taking translated texts or those adapted for the modern kitchen, at face value. Hence, he proposes five questions that historians, who intend using recipe books as historical documents, should answer. These questions essentially align with those of internal and external criticism proposed by John Tosh, quoted in Schafer (1980), and may, therefore, not be novel. These questions probe the following aspects:

1. Who wrote the book?
2. What was the intended audience?
3. Where was it produced?
4. When was it produced?
5. Why was it written? (Albala 2012: 228)

While these questions may not always prove easy to answer, researchers are obliged to consider the context of their sources with care. The possible contextual informants that cookbooks offer can range from changes in food preferences over time and rules for serving food to formal or informal settings (including those of tables), table manners and etiquette and mealtimes. Other important pointers may include stains on pages, marginalia or other side notes that could indicate that there was a thoughtful interaction between reader and recipe. These blemishes and scribbles are significant as they may attest to the recipe being cooked and not just read.

In *'A hunger for Freedom – The Story of Food in the Life of Nelson Mandela'*, anthropologist Anna Trapido (2008) asserts that food allows for the examination of the past in a manner that bypasses standard responses. She describes the act of eating as universal, yet also visceral, when she writes how familiar tastes may invoke memories, 'complete with associated emotions' (xii). For this reason, Trapido (2008) argues that food may act as a means through which a reader may access historical events in context to experience what it was like to be there. the author uses recipes as '... archaeological evidence to capture the mood of the moment. They are an era as reflected in the bowl of a soup spoon' (Trapido 2008: xii).

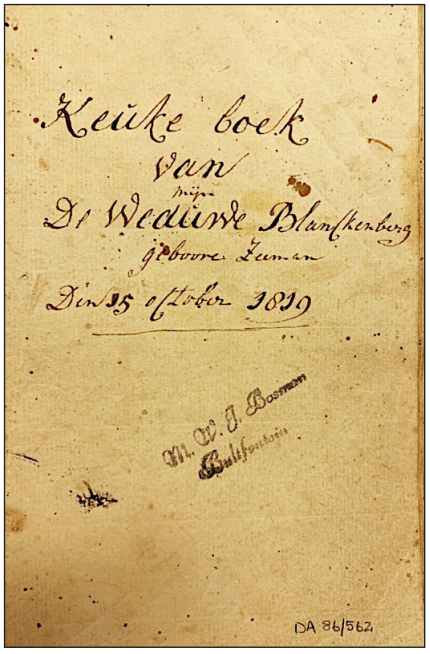
Appadurai (1988) believes that the mere existence of cookbooks represents an attempt to standardise the management of the kitchen and the traditions of the journey from kitchen to table. He also explains that: 'Language and literacy, cities and ethnicity, women and domesticity, all are examples of issues that lie behind these cookbooks.' (3). It can, therefore, be argued that cookbooks may provide information on gender roles, class, ethnicity and race (Albala 2009). Moreover, particular consideration should be given to the cookbooks written for immigrant communities since they might reflect on an effort to preserve identity in a "strange" land. Albala (2009) points out that:

> The early twentieth century produced scores of cookbooks that taught second or third generation descendants of immigrants the traditional recipes and skills that were in danger of being lost. (235)

While cookbooks may lack fictional elements, the structured sequence and descriptions found in recipes could be interpreted as a form of narrative. According to the food writer Carody Culver (2013), 'Cookbook authors use memories, anecdotes and imagery to conjure scenes to which readers can aspire or relate, perhaps prompting responses similar to those experienced when reading fiction.' These stand as a critical source to reflect on the transference of culture, while on the other hand, it can show traces of an acculturation process.

Cape author and poet, C. Louis Leipoldt (1880–1947), explains that, as was the case elsewhere, the earliest cookery books in South Africa were in manuscript form that consisted of domestic recipes, traditional methods of cooking, directions of how to run a household, home remedies and health advice. Such manuscripts were brought to local shores as family treasures and were '... carefully preserved and judiciously expanded by their owners' (Leipoldt 2004: 15). The tradition lived on and historian Celestine Pretorius points out that recipes were handed down orally over generations from mothers to daughters up to, and including, the eighteenth century before printed recipe books were commonly available (Pretorius 1977: 76).

By the early nineteenth century, a great variety of baked goods, including confections, were available at the Cape (Gerber n.d.), where housewives had to make do with compiling their own recipe collections. The earliest local milk tart recipe found for this research was in a handwritten manuscript identified as '*De Keuke Boek van Mijn de Weduwe Blanckenberg Gebore Zeeman Den 15 October 1819'* (Kitchen book of mine, the widow Blanckenberg born Zeeman The 15[th] October 1819)—see Figure 9.1.



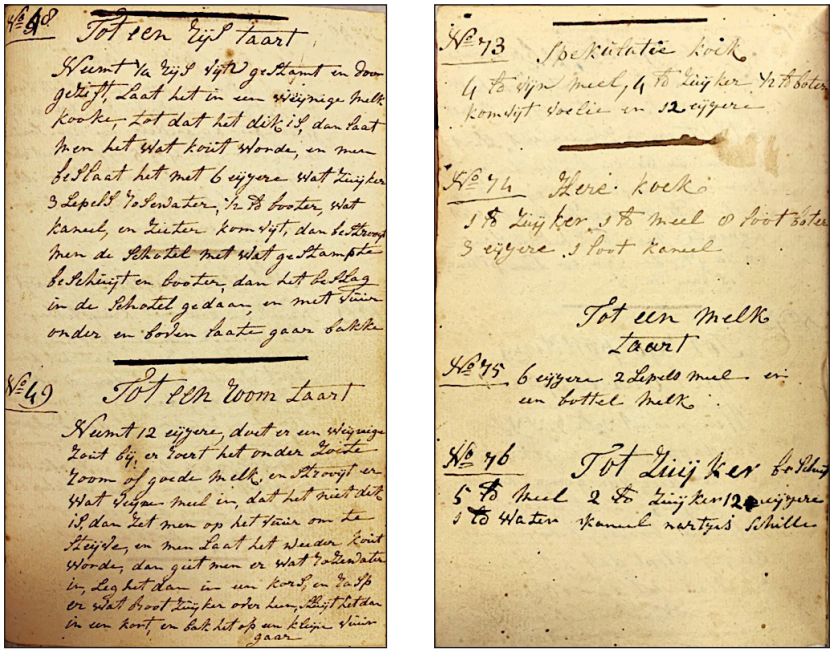


Figure 9.1: The cover and unnumbered inner pages of *Keuke boek van mijn De Weduwe Blanckenberg gebore Zeeman Den 15 October 1819*. Recipe 49 (centre) is for a *Room taart* (Cream tart) and Recipe 75 (right) for a *Melk taart* (Milk tart). (Renata Coetzee Collection, Library of the Stellenbosch Museum)

A handwritten recipe in Dutch for a *Melk Taart* (milk tart) forms part of a series of documents labelled as 'Cookery book Mrs S. J. Hofmeyer February 1884' (Hofmeyr 1884). It lists ingredients to be measured in a *kommetjie* (a cup, small bowl or similar vessel) and calls for combining milk, eggs, a little flour and cinnamon sugar. As in other cases, no reference is made as to what should be done with the filling once it is cooked. It can thus be argued that the tart could be similar to a crustless baked custard or that Mrs Hofmeyr knew the method by heart. One will also often find that manuscript recipes lack specific measurements and methods of cooking. One explanation for these omissions is the intergenerational oral transmission mentioned by Pretorius (1977).

Apart from a recipe for a milk tart filling, the notebooks in the recipe collection of Gwendoline Eunice Basson (née Bondesio) (1912–2005) also contains loose inserts, like an envelope and a note page, referring respectively to *Melktert* and the name *Lettie* and *Lettie se melktert* (Lettie's milk tart) with brief annotations for ingredients, which appears to be the same for both inserts (see Figure 9.2). Such additions are referred to as *incidentalia* as they supplement the content of manuscripts and speak to the universality of Appadurai's (1988) view that women exchange recipes in various formats. It appears that the envelope and note page were at hand when it was necessary to quickly jot down a recipe.

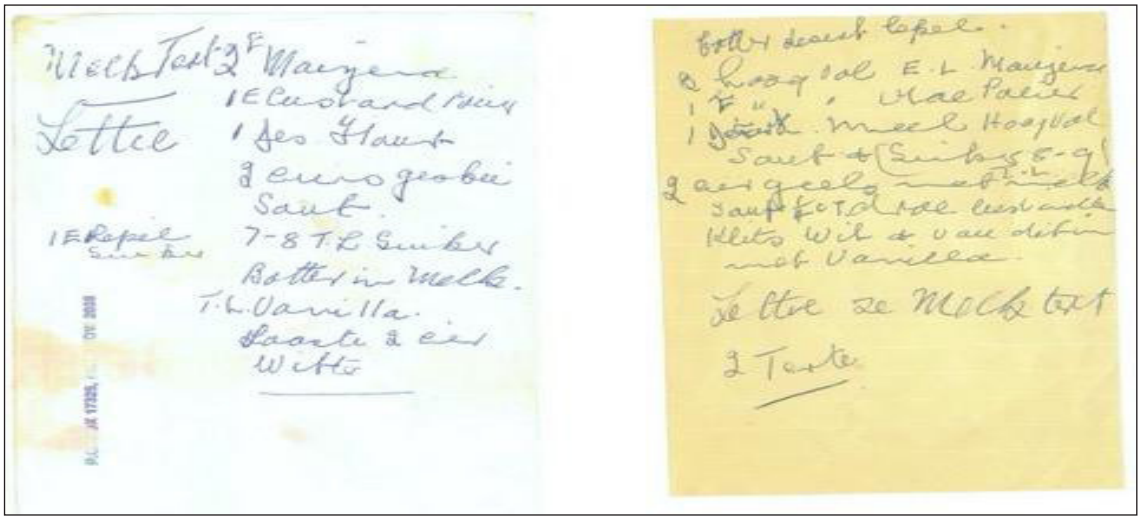


Figure 9.2: *Incidentalia* – an envelope and a note page as loose inserts with the ingredients for milk tart recipes as found in G.E. Basson, *Note book,* Handwritten manuscript, private collection of recipes

Leipoldt (2004: 15) suggests that Dutch, German and French books on cookery were found at the Cape by the eighteenth century. In Leipoldt's (2004: 22) opinion, the first locally published recipes were in a pamphlet printed around 1870 in Pietermaritzburg in the province of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal), South Africa. The first substantial locally sourced and printed recipe book is '*The colonial household guide'* by Mrs A. R. Barnes, published in 1889 (Barnes 1889). The author tellingly refers to herself on the title page as "A Housewife of the Colony". While little is known about the author, it is apparent that she was from Kimberley, Free State province, South Africa—at the time a bustling mining town starting to thrive after the discovery of diamonds. Barnes (1889: iii) declares that: 'The chief object of this book is to assist in their duties the house wives and mothers of the colony' as women here could no longer rely on cookbooks written in England to prepare recipes with local ingredients. She also expressed the hope that her book would lend some support to women who have had little or no experience in cooking. The designation as "housewives and mothers" is indicative of the position and perception of women at the time.

Two of the earliest locally published recipe books were '*Cape Cookery: Simple Yet Distinctive'* by Hewitt (1890), and '*Di Suid Afrikaanse Kook-, Koek- en Resepte Boek'* (The South African Cook, Cake and Recipe book) (Dijkman 1891) by Ms E. J. Dijkman (1840–1908), published in 1890 and 1891 respectively. The foreword to the latter explains that the book was a response to requests from friends and family to share the recipes she had collected over 25 years (Dijkman 1981). By 1956 this book had seen eighteen published editions, with facsimiles of the original reprinted in 1979 and 1982.

Hildagonda Duckitt's '*Hilda's* "W*here is it?*" *of Recipes'*—itself a telling tale—was published in 1891. Leipoldt considers this book as:

> ... an authoritative and comprehensive work on Cape cookery that for a long time remained the standard book on the subject and may even now be consulted with advantage as a thoroughly trustworthy and excellently written and annotated collection of Cape cookery recipes. (Leipoldt, 2004: 26)

While Barnes, Hewitt, Dijkman and Duckitt can rightly be considered the pioneers of early cookery writers in South Africa, several other formats would manifest over time as the role of women in society became more prominent. Magazines and periodicals became one of the most accessible sources

for recipes in the twentieth century. The Afrikaans magazine '*Huisgenoot'* (House Companion), also published in English as '*You'* from 1987, is the oldest commercial periodical that is still published in South Africa and remains a popular title (Froneman 2004). In the first edition in May 1916, it was announced that:

> *'Dit sal seker 'n blije tijding wees vir die vrouwens van ons land om te hoor, dat die Redaksie van 'De Huisgenoot' dit goed gedag het om elke maand 'n paar bladsije spesiaal aan die belange van die die vrouw te wij. Die tijd, dat koerante en tijdskrifte alleen vir mans gedruk word, is verbij.'* (It would be good news for the women of the country to hear that the editorial staff of 'De Huisgenoot' thought it appropriate to dedicate a few pages on issues concerning women every month. Gone are the days when newspapers and magazines were printed only for men.). (Gertruida 1916: 7,10)

The fact that only a few pages would be dedicated to women's issues is an indication of the overtly paternalistic societal values of the time. The article states that women play an important role in current society and that their actions were "starting" to influence society, which served as motivation to develop their ways of thoughts and work—albeit still seriously gendered. This column appeared monthly until '*Die Huisgenoot'* was published weekly in 1923 and addressed knitting and sewing patterns, party planning, advice on caring for babies and recipes.

In April 1935 '*Mrs Slades's South African Good Housekeeping Magazine'* was launched with Jeanette C. van Duyn (b.1884-), also known as Mrs Slade or Mrs H.M. Slade. According to the research of Amy F. Rommelspacher, '*The South African Women's Who's Who'* stated: '...Jeanette [van Duyn] hoped that the magazine would benefit women that lived in rural areas and could therefore not easily attend her various and numerous [food] demonstrations' (Rommelspacher 2017: 24). The magazine continued to inspire women until 1948, which is also the year that '*Mrs. Slade's South African Cookery Book'* (Slade 1948) was published.

The first community cookbooks appear to have been published during the American Civil War (1861–1865) to raise funds for field hospitals (Du Toit 2019). The concept spread to much of the English-speaking world, including colonial South Africa, where the earliest edition was found to be the '*Paarl Cookery Book'*, published in 1918, in aid of the Red Cross. According to Du Toit (2019: 9):

> Being involved in a book empowered women and gave them the feeling of doing something meaningful for their community. It was all about working and building together. In contrast to commercial cookbooks, which usually carried the name of one author, these charity books involved entire communities working together as volunteers.

With reference to the cake sales undertaken by the Women's Cultural Group of Durban in the 1950s, Vahed and Waetjen (2010: 248) write: 'Baking was a women's skill, built upon a heritage of matrilineal knowledges, large family sizes and the alchemy of thrift and pleasure.' This point is reiterated by Crafford-Barnard (1990), who explains that women in this country have built many a church, old age home, school, parsonage and community hall through fundraising by organising cake sales. The storyline of women raising funds through cake sales in order to improve the lives of their communities is a universal one. Albala (2009) argues that historians use cookbooks as sources to reconstruct the past. By the same token, Du Toit (2019: 7) describes community cookbooks as 'treasure troves' of information as they give the reader an untainted look into the lives of ordinary people and what they eat. She adds: 'They have been described as cultural selfies that tell the story of who and what we were and are – both the good and the bad' (Du Toit 2019: 7).

A recent example of this genre is found in the '*District Six Huis Kombuis Food and Memory Cookbook*' (Smith 2016) that captures the bygone spirit of daily life in District Six, established in 1867 and so named as it was the Sixth District of the Municipality of Cape Town, South Africa. By the mid-twentieth century, it was home to a mixed-race, cosmopolitan community with richly layered food cultures. In 1966 the Apartheid regime declared District Six a "whites-only" area, which initiated a process of forced removals and demolitions between 1968 and 1981 (Smith 2016). The book is the outcome of memory methodology workshops involving former residents that collected and documented narratives '... about food that is deeply rooted in the cultural practices and heritage that exists in the fragile memories of those who were forcibly displaced' (District Six Museum n.d.). The curator of the museum and the author of the book, Tina Smith, accounts for the significance of the project as follows:

> The ... title, *Huis Kombuis* [Home Kitchen], was inspired by descriptions of kitchens in participants' homes as being the heart of the home, its central social space. Here

> traditional recipes were brought to life in the rituals of cooking, eating and the sensory exchange at the *tafel* [table]. Culinary rituals and home-craft practices maintained and reinforced deep significances and connections with District Six as a place of home, family and community. The recipes in the book comprise facets of the collective memory of District Six that unlock complex narratives about family histories and cultural life in the district. For many, the story of food is inseparable from the spirit of the place and a sense of belonging. (Smith 2016: 15)

Subsequently, in the twenty-first century, popular media formats have been linked to reach a wider audience. What appears in printed media may also be broadcast on television as demonstrations or sponsored inserts that will also find their way to web pages, personal blogs, social media and even become a book. The order in which these links unfold depends on the specifics of the narrative, the preferences of the participants, their popularity and possibly the interests of patrons or sponsors. The public is not necessarily buying and paging through recipe books as frequently as they used to, resulting in cookbooks being replaced by digital formats and media. In this sense the Internet has broken what once seemed a natural tie between the recipe and the cookbook, just as it has broken the tie between the news story and the newspaper, with the result that one can now find any recipe you want online (Gopnik 2015).

It also means that personal collections of recipes are gathered differently from how they were a century ago. This may also affect the intergenerational exchange of treasured recipes over the long run, since individuals can now gather recipes of their preference by liking, pinning, sharing or tagging them on social media platforms. Amongst the plethora of such examples, one finds different categories, including occasional food bloggers, regular food writers who may, or may not, work across platforms and in different media as well as digital communities whose aim it is to share recipes and tips.

Conclusion

When Baderoon (2002: 14) states that 'traces of history' can be found in one's favourite dishes, the following questions arise: Where will we find the recipes for these favourite dishes? Where is this dish from? Who first prepared it? What will inform the ingredients and the methods of preparation they require? How should they be served? What nuances and narratives do these dishes represent

and what meaning do they embody to those who prepare and ultimately partake of them? A variety of sources, many of which fall outside the definition of the traditional formal archive, must be examined to address these and other questions regarding food products. This includes personal records, such as memoirs, handwritten manuscripts and correspondence, anecdotal and oral accounts, travelogues, printed material, like household guides, recipe books, community forums and publications as well as popular media such as magazines. This list would be incomplete if it did not take account of the evolving format of our day-to-day archives and should therefore, include various formats of social and electronic media, blogs and vlogs.

It becomes clear that the archive was not only silent about the women in history, but also about their day-to-day activities—whether it was baking a tart or recording a recipe for the family collection. These principles do not only apply to recipes for the humble milk tart, they unquestionably extend to an incalculable number of other dishes, documented or undocumented, that have been silently prepared by women and have seldomly been recorded as part of formal history. It is, therefore, fitting to accept Petrini's assertion that food history is as important as a landmark building, and then equally so, that the women who cooked and cared be acknowledged as builders of communities and countries.

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