Alena Minko

FRUMENTY: A EUROPEAN RECIPE IN THE MEDIEVAL CULINARY TRADITION

MA Thesis in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Central European University Private University

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May 2024

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in the Medieval Culinary Tradition

by

Alena Minko

(Russia)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University Private University, Vienna, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of the Master of Arts degree in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern
Studies.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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Author's declaration

I, the undersigned, **Alena Minko**, candidate for the MA degree in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

This thesis is devoted to one recipe from medieval culinary tradition – *frumenty*. In general, it was a wheat porridge made with milk and eggs, sometimes colored with saffron. Thickness and yellow color were its characteristic features. The thesis investigates this recipe in order to establish its content and variations and to see if it was an English specialty, as it is sometimes believed, or a European phenomenon and belonged to the medieval culinary culture overall. For that, cookery books from England and France dating from the thirteenth-sixteenth centuries are taken as a source material. The recipes are analyzed to establish the exact preparation and alterations of this dish. Menus which often were written alongside recipes are investigated to put *frumenty* into a wider context of medieval banquets, in particular the place of this dish among other foods as well as the occasions when it was served. The ingredients are closely analyzed to see the cultural and socio-economic connotations behind them. English recipes are compared to French ones to see if they relate to each other or are completely different.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first two focus on the English material, and the third is on the French to give the research a comparative dimension. All the *frumenty* recipes identified in the cookery books under investigation are in Appendix 1 (English recipes) and Appendix 2 (French recipes). The present thesis may act as a methodological exemplar of how one recipe can be studied in the wider context of culture, religion, and society.

Acknowledgments

This thesis would not see the light of day without the help of many people who gave me ideas, suggested topics, lent books, taught classes, and were genuinely surprised when they found out I was researching one recipe from the medieval culinary tradition. I would like to thank my supervisors Gerhard Jaritz and Katalin Szende for being my guides on this academic journey, my fellow MA students and great great friends Davide Politi, Tvrtko Srdoc, Ivan Mileković, Lauren Baker, Alejandro Laguna Lopez, Ada Kök, and fish lady Daria Ageeva. I am equally grateful to Éloïse Adde not only for teaching me but also for letting me stay with her cats and distract myself from the thesis for a while, and to Tommaso De Santis for being an ever-present emotional supporter.

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List of Abbreviations

DMF   *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français*

MED   *Middle English Dictionary*

VAL   Valais (Switzerland), Library of Valais, S 108

BN   Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds français, 19 791

VAT   Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Regina 776 (olim 233 and 2159)

MAZ   Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, 3636 (olim 1253)

Introduction

The dish under consideration – *frumenty* – is quite suitable for modern tastes, and it was eaten during the Middle Ages as well as later centuries.[1] I have chosen to examine this dish for my master's thesis because of the scholarly discourse surrounding the culinary tradition of *frumenty* in medieval society. While it is commonly recognized that it held a significant place as a staple dish, researchers lack consensus regarding its specific composition and characteristics. Paul Freedman defines *frumenty* as a "wheat porridge with scrambled eggs" which, as I will show, is a misunderstanding of the recipe.[2] Constance Hieatt and Sharon Butler define *frumenty* as "a dish of boiled, hulled wheat, resembling a modern wheat porridge or pilaf", which is much closer to reality, especially because *frumenty* employs saffron and therefore has a characteristic yellow color, just like a pilaf.[3] Still, the texture of the *frumenty* would have been different from the pilaf's.

The overall goal of this thesis is to understand what *frumenty* meant for a medieval person in material and cultural sense. This breaks down into smaller research tasks:

1. What *frumenty* was made of, and what ingredients and techniques were used in its preparation?
2. Were there any variations and what provoked them?
3. What part of a meal did *frumenty* constitute?
4. What place did the recipes occupy in cookery books and did they change with time?
5. What were the social and economic connotations of the dish? Could it have been eaten by anyone in medieval society?
6. Is it a uniquely English phenomenon, or did it belong to the European culinary tradition?

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[1] One can find a reference to the *frumenty* of barley in *The Commonplace Book of Countess Katherine Seymour Hertford* (1567). See https://www.medievalcookery.com/notes/mscodex823.txt (accessed 13.05.2024). It was still known in the twentieth century, as can be seen from the article "Frumenty for Constipation" by Josiah Oldfield published on December 18, 1937, in *The British Medical Journal*, p. 1252.

[2] Paul Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 30.

[3] Pilaf is a Middle Eastern dish consisting of boiled in broth rice or sometimes wheat with spices. Constance Bartlett Hieatt and Sharon Butler, eds., *Curye on Inglysch: English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century, Including the "Forme of Cury,"* Early English Text Society. Supplementary Series 8 (London New York Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 190.

The research that I am about to present is not a ground-breaking one. It does not deal with a completely new piece of information about the past but rather strives to reinterpret one thing we have already known in a clearer and detailed way. I believe it may act as a methodological exemplar of how one recipe can be studied in the wider context of culture, religion, and society.

This study is focused on the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. The starting point is the time when culinary treatises appeared in medieval Western Europe.[4] The second point is a conventional end of the Middle Ages, and it is important because the early modern world changed the way knowledge (including culinary) is distributed – it introduced the wide use of the printing press. This thesis uses cookery books as its main source, and their nature was modified with this new technology. Therefore, taking later sources into consideration will be a task of different research.

One of the premises of this research is that aristocratic culinary culture in the Middle Ages was relatively coherent. In the matters of food, the differences between the strata of society were more striking than differences between countries.[5] This comes as no surprise if we think of all the marital connections between European courts which contributed greatly to the cultural exchange. At the same time, *frumenty* is believed to have been an English dish.[6] This thesis will analyze whether it was so or rather it was enjoyed throughout Europe.

In 1995 Melitta Weiss Adamson in the Introduction to a book of essays titled *Food in the Middle Ages* wrote: "The history of food is an area which has long been neglected by scholars, and to this day is not regarded as a discipline in its own right".[7] Today this statement does no longer hold true (not least due to her own work). The interest in this field has witnessed a steady growth in the academic community since the 1980s. Nowadays medieval and Renaissance food history has proved to be a widely accepted and even beloved topic of interest for both the academy and the wide audience, judging from the number of publications on it for the last decades.[8] The 2010s were also marked by the continuation of the "cultural turn" in history

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[4] Bruno Laurioux, "De l'usage des épices dans l'alimentation médiévale," *Médiévales* 2, no. 5 (1983): 16.

[5] Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present*, 2. ed, An Illini Book Culinary History (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), p. 40.

[6] Florence White in her cookbook in 1932 even calls it "our oldest national dish". See Florence White, *Good Things in England: A Practical Cookery Book for Everyday Use, Containing Traditional and Regional Recipes Suited to Modern Taste: Contributed by English Men and Women between 1399 and 1932* (London: Cape, 1932), p. 363. This opinion has more to do with creating English national identity rather than with historical facts.

[7] Melitta Weiss Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, Garland Reference Library of the Humanities, v. 1744 (New York: Garland Pub, 1995), p. vii.

[8] Alban Gautier and Allen J. Grieco mention that there are 3,000 bibliographical records (books, articles, exhibition catalogues, etc.) listed on the food bibliography website (www.foodbibliography.eu) in eight languages

which started in the 1980s and 1990s. Historians were more concerned with cultural issues like values, ideas, and attitudes towards food and its consumption rather than its production, caloric intake, and prices of foodstuffs, that has been discussed by economic historians in the past.[9]

Back in 1995, Johanna Maria van Winter pointed out that there were several dishes present in medieval cookbooks throughout Europe that suggested the universality of medieval European cuisine. But sometimes dishes titled with the same name were prepared in different ways. This is why she encouraged researchers to take a closer look at each group of recipes with the same name and trace the evolution of these dishes. She did this work on *blancmanger*, *bruet d'Alemaigne* and *galentine*.[10] Following her steps, I chose one recipe that I encountered while working with English culinary manuscripts – *frumenty* – and decided to take a closer look at its composition and the environment in which it circulated.

To do this research, I relied on cookery books written in England and France between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. The name of the dish, even though it may have been spelled in a slightly different manner, served me as a guideline. The culinary history of medieval Britain is remarkably well documented. We have lots of information on this subject in manorial records, household accounts, extant menus for various occasions, literary works, and, of course, cookery books. Constance B. Hieatt counted in 2002 that forty manuscripts containing culinary recipes in Anglo-Norman and Middle English were known and accessible to researchers, not counting all the miscellaneous remarks on food and scattered recipes in codices on other subjects.[11] I believe that in 2024 this number became even greater. For this thesis I have consulted all the medieval cookery books from England and France that had *frumenty* recipes in them and created two tables which are presented as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.[12]

The cookbooks as a separate genre of literature appeared at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Some researchers link this event with the transition "from memory to

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(English, French, Spanish, German, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese and Catalan). This was in 2012, and nowadays there are many more. See Alban Gautier and Allen J. Grieco, "Food and Drink in Medieval and Renaissance Europe: An Overview of the Past Decade (2001-2012)," *Food and History* 10, no. 2 (July 2012): 74.

[9] Gautier and Grieco, "Food and Drink in Medieval and Renaissance Europe": 76.

[10] On *galentine* see Johanna Maria van Winter, "Interregional Influences in Medieval Cooking" in Adamson, *Food in the Middle Ages,* p. 45. On the first two dishes see Johanna Maria van Winter, ed., *Van soeter cokene: recepten uit de oudheid en middeleeuwen* (Haarlem: Fibula-van Dishoeck, 1976), pp. 11-30.

[11] Melitta Weiss Adamson, ed. *Regional Cuisines of Medieval Europe: A Book of Essays*, Routledge Medieval Casebooks (New York London: Routledge, 2002), p. 19.

[12] There is one sixteenth-century recipe in the French table – its presence will be explained in the third chapter.

written record" in Michael Clanchy's terminology when the clergy lost its privilege in book production, so the secular treatises on surgery, falconry, and cookery appeared.[13] The appearance of the latter, however, does not signify any culinary revolution.[14] On the contrary, changes in food preparation were slow and progressed over time.[15]

The culinary recipes circulated orally before they were put onto parchment, although the texts usually do not reflect this previous stage. Probably because it was not the cooks who eventually wrote the recipes down but physicians, and they used the medical recipe as their model.[16] Several later collections are copies of earlier treatises. Scribes from the same geographical areas could use the same exempla to make their copies, so nowadays researchers can identify this connection and group manuscripts into "families".[17] The same recipes appear in cookery books over and over not only because the scribes copied them from the same exempla, but also because the cook's profession was a conservative one. Authority played a key role in transmitting culinary knowledge, and innovation was rather created by mistake of faulty memory or an inattentive scribe.[18]

Most of the early cookery books are anonymous, and therefore it is assumed that the recipes and techniques they describe are representative and typical. Later a tendency appeared for well-known cooks to gain a reputation during their lifetime, and so they claimed the authorship of some recipes or even of entire collections.[19] This is exactly what happened with *Le Viandier de Taillevent* which will be discussed in the third chapter. But even they based themselves on the existing culinary tradition. In the English case, there is only one recipe collection later titled the *Forme of Cury* that has an authorship and claims to have been "compiled of the chef Maister Cokes of kyng Richard the Secunde".[20] All other culinary books analyzed in this thesis remain anonymous.

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[13] Henry Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks: From Kitchen to Page over Seven Centuries*, California Studies in Food and Culture 64 (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017), pp. 51-2.

[14] Toby Peterson, "The Arabn Influence on Western European Cooking," *Journal of Medieval History* 6, no. 3 (January 1980): 317-341.

[15] Laurioux, "De l'usage des épices dans l'alimentation médiévale": 16.

[16] Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks*, p. 56.

[17] Ibid., p. 50. In the database used for this thesis, for example, Harleian MS 4016, Douce MS 55, and Additional MS 5467 belong to the same family.

[18] Adamson, *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 49

[19] Ibid., p. 63.

[20] Samuel Pegge, *The Forme of Cury : A Roll of Ancient English Cookery, Compiled, about A.D. 1390, by the Master-Cooks of King Richard II, Presented Afterwards to Queen Elizabeth, by Edward Lord Stafford, and Now in the Possession of Gustavus Brander, Esq.: Illustrated with Notes, and a Copious Index, or Glossary, a*

Cookbooks as a source type is a curious one. Very often codices that contain them also include other texts – anecdotes, household advice, medical treatises and charms, chronicles, and many more.[21] Like other texts, they can have dedicatory letters, prefaces, and other forms of paratexts. That is why it is important to make a clear distinction between a recipe as a text type and a recipe collection.[22] The recipe is a recognizable text type which means that it has certain linguistic features that can be identified even without proper context, *id est* culinary books.[23] It is important because sometimes they could be written on the margins of another text. Many recipes start with "take/nym something" and end with the phrase "and serve/messe it forth" which helps to identify it even if one does not have a title. The latter happened from time to time because titles and rubrics were written by a different scribe – *rubricator*, and sometimes he did not do his job. Also, not all recipe collections had a table of contents, and even when they did, the recipes listed in it did not necessarily correspond to the actual content of a book.

Dealing with the cookery books from the Middle Ages, one must be very cautious in interpreting them. As many scholars before pointed out, culinary manuals that were indeed used in the kitchen daily, normally did not survive because of the natural deterioration.[24] Manuscripts with recipe collection that we have nowadays often served another purpose than to be guides in preparation: they could be a kind of showpiece, they could be just read like any other text, or be something else, and this helped them to come down to us in archives and libraries.[25] Therefore, one has to take into consideration the textual and physical context of the recipe collections as well.

Another issue when dealing with medieval culinary books is that they lack detailed descriptions of preparations and measurements. This leads to thinking that they were addressed to skilled readers or young apprentices, so either they already had some background knowledge on cooking or acquired it on the spot. Thus, books served as an additional source of inspiration

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Manuscript of the Editor, of the Same Age and Subject, with Other Congruous Matters, Are Subjoined. (London: Printed by J. Nichols, printer to the Society of Antiquaries, 1780), p. 1.

[21] Medical recipes very often go alongside culinary ones. The reason for that is probably because they form a similar text type. See Ruth Carroll, "The Middle English Recipe as a Text-Type," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 100, no. 1 (1999): 27–42.

[22] Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks*, p. X.

[23] Carroll, "The Middle English Recipe as a Text-Type": p. 28.

[24] Paul Aebischer, "Un manuscrit valaisan du Viandier attribué à Taillevent," *Vallesia*, 8 (1953): 82.

[25] Although there are examples of cookery books clearly used in a kitchen – the Valais manuscript (S 108) of *Le Viandier de Taillevent* has grease splatters, and one side of its margin is smoother indicating where it was frequently touched with fingers. See note 25 on page 9 in Terence Scully, ed., *The Viandier of Taillevent: An Edition of All Extant Manuscripts* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988).

rather than a step-by-step manual.[26] Moreover, some culinary treatises like *Liber Cure Cocorum* are written in verses, and researchers made assumptions that it was made as a mnemonic technique to facilitate memorizing recipes rather than consulting a cookbook every time one had to prepare a certain dish.[27] Another issue is the absence of punctuation in medieval recipes which can mislead the researchers in their interpretation of the consequence in the preparation of a dish. Also, the scribes who copied the recipes sometimes made spelling mistakes, or combined parts of different recipes without noticing, or misinterpreted the instructions because they were inexperienced in cooking. The only possible solution to this problem that I see is to have some culinary background and devise what kind of procedure is possible and is more likely to be employed. Another solution is to look at the later copies. The nature of cookbooks is to grow, so the further one recipe collection gets from its author, the more details and modifications it acquires.[28]

My research is based on the textual analysis of recipes from medieval cookbooks. What is a recipe? Terence Scully defines it as "a series of instructions for the combination of ingredients that ultimately will compose a prepared dish".[29] The reader of a recipe normally would find inside a list of ingredients needed to make a certain dish, as well as utensils used in cooking, and directions on what should happen to the foodstuffs to become a desired dish. In terms of language, a recipe consists of nouns and verbs, with adverbs and adjectives appearing occasionally. Medieval recipes follow this pattern exactly, consisting mainly of verbs in the imperative form ("take", "pyke", "stampe with a pestel" in English cookbooks or "prenez", "lavez", "remuez" in French), describing kitchen appliances used in the preparation ("pot(te)", "morter and pestel", "vessel" in England or "pouelle", "pot" in France) and, additionally, ways to serve the dish (the standard verb for this in Middle English vocabulary was "messe (it) forth", while French recipes usually omit this part).

I use a philological approach and identify the object of my research by its name - *frumenty*. When we are dealing with the Middle Ages, terminology can be both a curse and a blessing. My focus on the title *frumenty* led me to restrict my sources to the cookery books written in English and French. However, it does not mean that German-, Dutch, or Spanish-speaking

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[26] Barbara Santich puts it this way: "Recipes are often written in a "culinary shorthand" which lacks in precision, and their interpretation involves certain assumptions as to the nature of the utensils and implements used". See her article in Adamson, *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 61.

[27] Bruno Laurioux, "Un exemple de livre technique : les livres de cuisine à la fin du Moyen Âge," *Gazette du livre médiéval* 14, no. 1 (1989): 13-14.

[28] Scully, ed. *The Viandier of Taillevent*, p. 7.

[29] Adamson, *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 3.

regions were completely ignorant of this dish. They may have known about it but called it differently. Or, on the contrary, a similar name was given to a completely different thing.[30] For example, the Hungarian white wine "Furmint" also received this name from the same Latin root "frumentum" – "grain, corn" for its wheat- or straw-like color.[31]

The close reading serves me to identify what the recipe was like, and whether it shared the same ingredients and modes of preparation and service in different places where the recipes were written. Also, it helps me trace the changes in recipes and the dish itself over time. I use a comparative method to identify differences between the English and French recipes in the way how the dishes there were prepared and served. This method is also employed to see if *frumenty* was a solely English phenomenon or not. Finally, I implement a "thick description" approach coined by Clifford Geerz to put the recipes in the context of how they were understood by people in the Middle Ages.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first two are based on the close analyses of English culinary collections from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. The first chapter is dedicated to the composition of the frumenty – how it was made, what ingredients and kitchenware were used, and what the variations were. The text analysis helps to identify changes in the recipe over time. The second chapter puts this scrutinized dish into a wider cultural and socio-economic context. It looks at what factors provoked the changes in the recipe, be that religion, the social position of the eater, his or her wealth, or other factors. The third chapter goes outside England and looks at the *frumenty* recipes in France which is assumed to be a culinary influencer for the British Isles because of the tight connections between the two states.[32] The recipes are analyzed in the same manner as the English ones so that I could compare them. The conclusion sums up the results and proposes further directions of research.

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[30] Adamson, *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 25. In the article, she points out that *blancmanger* which means "white food" in one of the first recorded recipes was colored with saffron, so it was not white, as the title suggests, but yellow in hue. So, when dealing with medieval recipes, one has to be vigilant as their titles do not always represent what we assume they are. Medieval cooks, just like we do today, changed and adapted recipes.

[31] Jancis Robinson, Julia Harding, and José F. Vouillamoz, *Wine Grapes: A Complete Guide to 1,368 Vine Varieties, Including Their Origins and Flavours* (London: Allen Lane, 2012), p. 375.

[32] Scully, ed. *The Viandier of Taillevent*, pp. 28-9.

Chapter 1: What is *frumenty*?

Porridge was a staple dish in medieval food culture enjoyed by all classes and eaten on a daily basis. It could be thin (*running*) or thick (*stondyng*) and made of all sorts of ingredients. Peasants used vegetables together with cereals – leeks, cabbages, garlic, and onions. Aristocrats also could enjoy such humble foodstuffs but usually, they would elevate them by adding luxury products – spices, sugar, almond milk – to make them more suitable for their constitution.[33] Apart from that, porridges with only high-status ingredients also made a substantial part of the nobles' diet. And *frumenty* was one of these dishes.

In this chapter, I will analyze which foodstuffs and kitchenware were used to make *frumenty*, and what modes of preparation it underwent. I will also try to identify a "standard" version of this dish and its variations, as well as changes in time.

I have identified sixteen English culinary treatises from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century which have at least one *frumenty* recipe, but the number of them can go up to three in one recipe collection. One source mentioned a *frumenty* only in a menu without giving a recipe explaining how to prepare it.[34] My source base is not extensive as I could have overlooked some recipe collections or simply did not find an available edition, but it comprises the first two culinary treatises from the British Isles - Additional MS 32085 and Royal MS 12.C.xii, the most well-known English treatise – *The Forme of Cury*, as well as many other less famous texts from all three centuries during the Middle Ages when cookery books appeared on the British Isles and started to circulate. Therefore, this source base should be representative and sufficient for my research goal.

As I mentioned, I have analyzed the first two cookery books from England - Additional MS 32085 and Royal MS 12 C xii dating from the late thirteenth – early fourteenth centuries. They were written in Anglo-Norman and use the word "froment" in the sense of "wheat" but have no *frumenty* recipes.[35] Still, the Anglo-Norman culinary culture was familiar with this dish.

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[33] Maggie Black, *Food and Cooking in Medieval Britain: History and Recipes*, (London: English Heritage, 1985), p. 13.

[34] MS Cosin V. III. 11 (C), edited in Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 39.

[35] In all French cookbooks which will be discussed in Chapter 3 the word used to designate "wheat" is "froment". Additional MS 32085 has recipes on ff. 117r-119r, it is dated 1320-1340. MS Royal 12 C xii has recipes on ff. 11r-13r. Both are kept in the British Library and were edited in Constance B. Hieatt; Robin F. Jones, "Two Anglo-Norman Culinary Collections Edited from British Library Manuscripts Additional 32085 and Royal 12.C.xii." *Speculum*, Vol. 61, No. 4. (Oct., 1986): 859-882. They were translated into Middle English in the first quarter of

Walter of Bibbesworth in his educational poem *Le Tretiz* mentions *veneysoun oue le furmente* among the foods that an aristocrat of the mid-thirteenth century could see on the table.[36]

The earliest appearance of *frumenty* in the English recipe collection can be found in Douce MS 257 dating from the 1380s.[37] It is a parchment volume written in one hand that contains not only recipes but also various mathematical and calendar treatises, riddling verses, and practical jokes, most of which, apart from the recipes, are in Latin. As Constance B. Hieatt puts it, this book seems to reflect the far-ranging interests of its bilingual owner and was probably served as a sort of encyclopedia to refer to in any life situation.[38]

This manuscript has two *frumenty* recipes out of ninety-two in total – for flesh and fish days. The meat version of this porridge is put first – one can see the same placement in many other recipe collections. To prepare it, one must take clean wheat grain and pound it in a mortar so that the husks go off, then boil it until the kernels break (*seyt yt til yt breste*), take it out of the water, and let it cool. After that one must take animal broth with either almond or cow's milk and mix with the cooked grain.[39] Then egg yolks and saffron are added. Everything is boiled together and then served with fat venison or fresh mutton.

This recipe will serve as the first point of reference for the flesh version of *frumenty*. I would not call it the "standard" as some aspects of this recipe, as will be shown later, are incorrect in the culinary sense and will lead to destroying the dish. Nevertheless, ingredients-wise, this text lists all the staples that are found in most of the later recipes: wheat grain, milk, broth, egg yolks, saffron, and venison (or mutton) to serve with it. The preparation of the grain will be the same as well: first hull it, boil it in water, and only afterwards cook it again in milk. It is the part with eggs that needs to be improved.

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the fourteenth century in BL MS Add. 46919, ff. 19r-24v, which, as expected, also does not have any *frumenty* recipes. This manuscript is edited in Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, pp. 43-58.

[36] William Rothwell, ed., *Walter de Bibbesworth: Le Tretiz from MS. G (Cambridge University Library Gg.1.1) and MS. T (Trinity College, Cambridge 0.2.21) Together with Two Anglo-French Poems in Praise of Women (British Library, MS. Additional 46919)* (Aberystwyth: The Anglo-Norman Online Hub, 2009), p. 93.

[37] From the Bodleian Library, ff. 86r-96v. It was first printed by Samuel Pegge who owned the manuscript in his edition of *Forme of Cury* under the title of *Ancient Cookery:* London, 1790. Both parts of Pegge's volume were reprinted by Richard Warner in *Antiquitates Culinariae: Tracts on Culinary Affairs of the Old English* (London, 1791).

[38] Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 18.

[39] To describe this cooking procedure, the author uses the verb "temper" which is normally employed to describe the act of moistening spices with some kind of liquid (for example, with vinegar) to make a sauce. The importance of this verb in the culinary vocabulary of the Middle Ages is extensively covered by Terence Scully in his article "Tempering Medieval Food" in Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, pp. 3-24.

The lent version which in this recipe collection is titled "*formenty* on a fichssday" calls for hazelnut milk instead of cow's and, as expected, omits eggs. The preparation is very close to that for a flesh day but simpler. First, one must boil the wheat with the "aftermilk" (*aftermelk*) of the hazelnuts until it evaporates, then color it with saffron and add "the first milk" (*þe ferst mylk*), cook everything together and serve. The two variations of the hazelnut milk in this recipe refer to how the nut milk was made: the water could be added to the ground nuts several times, resulting in milk of different thicknesses. The *first milk* would be thicker than the *aftermilk.*

The second recipe is much shorter than the first one and even less detailed. It does not give any information on how to serve *frumenty*. The use of hazelnut milk is unique and does not appear in any other recipes. Instead, almond milk becomes a staple alternative for animal milk during fast days. But it was not just a substitute – it could be used on flesh days too, as this recipe indicates. This appreciation of almond milk and its use throughout the year seems to be a specifically English feature in cookery.

I have found two more recipe collections from fourteenth-century England that have *frumenty* recipes in them, plus one menu of which I have written earlier. One of them is Ashmole MS 1444.[40] It is an in-quarto volume that consists of all sorts of texts that were at some point reassembled. The recipes are found in MS III together with two *Ancient Collections of Remedies*, a tract on the stenciling of blood in phlebotomy with charms, a book of remedial recipes for "wowndis and to oþer hortes of manys body", and a treatise on herbs *De colleccione herbarum*.[41] So, the culinary part in this manuscript is preceded mostly by medicinal treatises. Among thirty recipes there is only one for *frumenty* and it is placed first. The title specifies that it is "*furmenty* with venison", although there are no variations of it, so there was no real reason to specify which of the *frumenties* it was. The recipe itself is the same as in Douce MS 257 – even the wording is repeated with some very slight changes.[42] The only significant difference is the appearance of salt which is added to the dish right before serving.

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[40] Bodleian Library, edited in Constance B. Hieatt, ed., *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, Textes Vernaculaires Du Moyen Age, v. 5 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 39-44.

[41] The full description of this manuscript can be found in William Henry Black, *A Descriptive, Analytical, & Critical Catalogue of the Manuscripts Bequeathed to the University of Oxford by Elias Ashmole, Esq.* (Oxford, 1845), pp. 1206-10. There are also thirty-three culinary recipes in part IV, but there is no *frumenty* among them.

[42] The Douce MS 257 recipe says, "bray it [the wheat] in a morter wel", and Ashmole MS 1444 leaves out the adverb "wel". The verb "nym" (take) is substituted with "tak" (take), "temper yt al" became "temper it withal", and the venison lost its adjective "fat".

The third recipe collection from the fourteenth century which has *frumenty* recipes is the famous *Forme of Cury*. This text on "the [proper] way of cooking" did not come down to us in the original manuscript, but we have nine copies from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[43] They present the text of the *Forme of Cury* with some variations, but the *frumenty* recipes can be found in all of them.[44] No edition would show the texts of all the extant manuscripts parallel to each other. Therefore, in this study, I will content myself with the collated edition and take it as a representation of the food culture at the court of King Richard II in the second half of the fourteenth century.[45] This text reflects the highest level of culinary art as it was compiled by the "master cooks" of the royal court with the advice of a physician. So, the dishes described in it were not only exquisite but also healthy.

There are two main groups of manuscripts containing the *Forme of Cury*: single-text (A, B, M) and multiple-text manuscripts (H, C, W, J, P, Ar). Interestingly, mss A and B are made in the form of a scroll and not a codex. Such design might have evoked the pipe rolls used in England between the twelfth and the nineteenth century for keeping the annual records of the Exchequer and the manorial accounts.[46] Some scholars suggest that the *Forme of Cury* was compiled to compete with *Le Viandier of Taillevent*, a French cookery book created at about the same time.[47] The recipes in the *Forme of Cury* coexist with other texts in the form of multiple-text manuscripts. Often medical recipes go alongside culinary ones. Menus and treatises on activities connected to food like husbandry and feast organization are written together with

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[43] These manuscripts are:
1.   Manuscript A: London, BL Add. 5016, 1420s.
2.   Manuscript B: Bühler 36, Morgan Library, New York, 1420s.
3.   Manuscript H: British Library, Harley 1605, 1400s.
4.   Manuscript C: Durham, University Library Cosin v.iii.11, late fourteenth century.
5.   Manuscript W: New York, Public Library Whitney 1, the first half of the fifteenth century.
6.   Manuscript J: London, BL Cotton Julius D viii, the second quarter of the fifteenth century.
7.   Manuscript P: Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales Peniarth 394 D, the second quarter of the fifteenth century.
8.   Manuscript Ar: London, BL Arundel 334, the second quarter of the fifteenth century.
9.   Manuscript M: University of Manchester Library, GB 133 ENG MS 7, late fourteenth century.
[44] *Frumenty* recipe is present (it is the first) in mss C, J, W, P, Ar, and M; *frumenty with porpoise* – in mss A, B, H, C, J, W, Ar, and M, another *frumenty with porpoise* – in mss A, B. and M.
[45] First, it was printed by Samuel Pegge in 1780, then re-edited by Richard Warner in 1791 without reference to the manuscript, which he wrongly stated had been lost. I used a more recent edition: Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, pp. 93-146. The manuscript M, as it was discovered the latest, was described in a separate article: Constance B. Hieatt, "Further Notes on The Forme of Cury et al.: Additions and Corrections," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester,* vol. 70, no. 1 (1988): 45–52.
[46] Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch,* p. 24. One of the manuscripts which contains a French household book *Le Ménagier de Paris* was also made in this form. I will speak about it in the third chapter of the thesis.
[47] Terence Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY, USA: Boydell Press, 1995), p. 5. Moreover, *Le Viandier de Taillevent* also has a *frumenty* recipe in it. I will elaborate on this issue in the third chapter.

them. Other texts may be of religious, historical, or literary character, reflecting the scope of readers' interests as was the case of Douce MS 257.

The *Forme of Cury* has three recipes for *frumenty*: one for meat days and two for fish out of two hundred and five in total (if combined from all the extant copies, in each manuscript the number of recipes oscillates from 133 to 194). In general, the meat version of *frumenty* in the *Forme of Cury* repeats the two recipes I analyzed earlier from Douce MS 257 and Ashmole MS 1444.[48] Again, there are slight wording alterations: one is told to boil the wheat grain specifically *in water*, to take *raw* egg yolks, not the venison but mutton is followed by the adjective "fat". Salt is mentioned, as in the recipe from Ashmole MS 1444. The biggest difference comes after the egg yolks are added to the milky porridge: this time the author says not to boil the mixture (*lat it nau3t boyle after þe eyren ben cast þerinne*). A real cook must have made his contribution to the alteration of this instruction. Previous recipes that told to boil the porridge after the eggs were added were wrong about this step. If one tries to follow them, one will get a porridge with scrambled eggs which easily burns. Since the *Forme of Cury's* recipe acknowledges and rectifies the error in the recipe, I suggest taking it as the main point of reference for *frumenty* on meat days.

The first *furmente with porpays* recipe is written in a very laconic manner.[49] One must pound blanched almonds (the blanching of almonds is never described, I assume, one could purchase them already prepared that way) and mix them with water. Then "make *furmente* as bifore", so there is a textual connection between this recipe and a previous one.[50] The preparation is the same, but instead of animal milk, one must use almond milk and serve the dish with porpoise.

The second *furmente with porpeys* is much more detailed.[51] As with *frumenty* for meat days, the preparation of this dish starts with the wheat. One must take the grain and pound it in a mortar, cleaning out the dust, then wash it and boil it until it becomes "tender and broken" (*tyl it be tendre and brokene*). Then one must take the "second" milk of almonds and mix it with the wheat to boil them together – here one can see that the almond milk was prepared in the same manner as with hazelnuts, and it had several varieties different in thickness. So, one must

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[48] Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 98.
[49] Ibid., p. 114.
[50] This is an interesting aspect because this recipe is present in manuscripts A, B, and H, which do not have another *frumenty* recipe before that. It may signify that the scribe was not very diligent in copying all the recipes, or, as in the case of ms B, the first pages were lost. See Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 24.
[51] Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch,* p. 125.

take *þe first mylke* of almonds and add it, presumably, to make it creamier, and saffron. The porpoise, if it is fresh, should be boiled together with *frumenty*, then taken out of the pot, carved up, and served on a separate plate with hot water. If it is salted, one must boil it separately.

This recipe does not only provide much more comprehensible instruction on how to cook a *frumenty* with porpoise, but it is also more varied, as in the case of fresh or salted porpoise. It also contains one indication of the texture of the dish: one is told to boil wheat with almond milk "til it be stondyng", so the reader understands that the *frumenty* should be thick. I propose to consider this recipe as a "standard" for *frumenty* on fish days, as one can see many very similar recipes in later cookbooks.

The first recipe for *frumenty* from the fifteenth century comes from the Arundel MS 334 dated from the second quarter of the fifteenth century or a bit later. In general, the recipes that this manuscript has are very similar to those in the *Forme of Cury* – they were clearly copied from there as well as from other sources. At the same time, the *frumenty* recipes in it differ from the *Forme of Cury* in some respects, which is why I want to analyze them separately.[52]

The recipe collection in Arundel MS 334 does not have either a date, a title, or an affiliation to any cook(s). It was written alongside a medical treatise (*De Regimine Sanitatis*) and a chronicle "beginning A. D. 1326 and ending A. D. 1399".

Here the meat version of *frumenty* is titled "potage de *frumenty*" which signifies what type of dish it was – a pottage.[53] It repeats the recipe from the *Forme of Cury* completely with one small addition. The author says that egg yolks should be beaten "in a vessell" before one adds them to the pot with *frumenty*. To me, this addition looks like another detail added by a real cook from his experience in the kitchen. Also, it gives an idea on how many pieces of kitchenware were used – not only a pot, but also a separate vessel for eggs.

The lent version titled "*frumenty* with porpoise" is as laconic as the second recipe from the *Forme of Cury*.[54] To make it, one must take an already crushed wheat grain (often the process of pounding grain in a mortar is described but here the author calls for an already "streyned that is for to say brosten" wheat, *id est* pre-boiled), mix it with milk, and boil it, stirring well.

Then one must add sugar and color the dish with saffron. This is the first time when sugar appears in the recipe which may indicate the changing tastes towards sweeter foods.[55]

Then the author creates a distinction between two variations of *frumenty*: if it is served for a lord, one must add beaten egg yolks and stir them well so that they do not curdle (*that hit quayle noght*); in other cases, one must make the dish with a broth instead of yolks. So, this recipe puts broth and egg yolks into status-symbol opposition, which no other recipe does. This detail will be further examined in the next chapter.

Another social aspect of *frumenty* can be drawn from a recipe in Harleian MS 1735 which is known as *John Crophill's Commonplace Book*.[56] The manuscript consists of two parts, the first is dated from the first half of the fifteenth century, and it contains the culinary recipes as well as charms for wounds and childbirth.[57] John Crophill was a part-time medical practitioner in Wix in northeast Essex and bailiff for Wix Priory, a small community of Benedictine nuns. This codex, again, shows a tight connection between cookery and medicine in the Middle Ages.

The only *frumenty* recipe in this manuscript is for a "standard" version. However, it does not mention venison to go alongside it which was probably not available for a rural physician. The preparation is the same as in many other sources: the wheat must be pounded in a mortar with a little bit of water to hull it, then boiled in water, cooled down, mixed with cow's milk, and cooked again, after which egg yolks and saffron are added. The author of the recipe warns the cook that he should keep the porridge from burning which most other instructions do too.

Harleian MS 279 and Ashmole MS 1439 are dated from the same period – 1430-1440 – and they have almost identical two *frumenty* recipes in them.[58] The first is all about food and has

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[55] There was a trend of using more sugar towards the end of the Middle Ages. See Jean-Louis Flandrin, "Le sucré dans les livres de cuisine français, du XIVe au XVIIIe siècle," *Journal d'agriculture traditionnelle et de botanique appliquée* 35, no. 1 (1988): 219.

[56] The manuscript is kept in the British Library, and its culinary part was edited in Lois Jean Ayoub, "John Crophill's Books: An Edition of British Library MS Harley 1735" (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, University of Toronto, 1994). The manuscript is unique in that it contains a lot of marginal illustrations depicting animals, fruits, nuts, vegetables, and cooking utensils. Although they were added later than the recipes were put into writing, the images correspond to the recipes. This manuscript was digitalized by the British Library but, unfortunately, after the massive cyber-attack at the beginning of 2024, it is no longer available. But one can have a glimpse at them in a blog post by Sarah Peters Kernan: https://recipes.hypotheses.org/8817 (accessed 6.05.2024).

[57] The recipes are on ff. 16v–28v.

[58] Harleian MS 279 is kept in the British Library and Ashmole MS 1439 – in the Bodleian. Both were edited in Thomas Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books. Harleian MS. 279 (Ab. 1430), and Harleian MS. 4016 (Ab. 1450), with Extracts from Ashmole Ms. 1429, Laud MS. 553, & Douce MS. 55.* (London: Published for the Early English Text Society by N. Trübner & Co., 57 and 59 Ludgate Hill, E.C., 1888), pp. 1-64.

only 258 recipes and the *Bills of Fare of several Banquets*. The second codex copies the first very meticulously – even the *Bills* are there, as well as additional nineteen recipes for sauces.[59] The only difference between the *frumenties* in these manuscripts is the spelling so I will analyze them together.

To make *venysoun with furmenty* according to them, one must take wheat grain and pick it up clean, then pound it with a pestle (a new tool) in a mortar with a little bit of water to help the hulling. Once the husks are gone, one must put the grain in a pot and boil it until it "breaks". Then the instructions become a bit confusing: the recipe says to "set yt [the pot] douun", and soon after set it over the fire again, stirring well, until it is "sothyn wyl". What purpose this double boiling technique served is unclear as it is not explained or recorded in other sources. After boiling the grain, one must add milk and cook them together (which type of milk is not specified). What is left is to add saffron and salt, and then the dish is done. The venison in this recipe appears as an accompaniment for *frumenty* which is served on a separate plate.[60]

So, the sugar and egg yolks disappear from this preparation. Otherwise, it is very similar to the recipes analyzed before. The textual difference is revealed in the presence of adverbs "enough" (*y-now*, *euene*) and "well" (*wyl*) which can be applied to the time how long something should be boiled, how many spices one must add, as well as how exactly the cook must stir the mixture.

The second recipe in this collection is titled "*furmenty* with purpaysse" and is meant for fast days.[61] It was clearly written by the same author and meant to be copied together with the first recipe. It starts by telling the reader that *frumenty* should be made "in þe maner as I sayd be-fore" but with almond milk (so, in the first case, it was probably animal milk), sugar (not salt) and, again, saffron. So, the lent version of the dish in this case is sweet while the feast version is not. The porpoise should be boiled, cut into pieces, and served alongside *frumenty*.

Another three manuscripts from the mid-fifteenth century have almost exact *frumenty* recipes – with venison and with porpoise. The first of them, Harleian MS 4016, belongs to the same "family" as Harleian MS 279 and Ashmole MS 1439 and contains many of the same recipes.

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[59] Constance B. Hieatt also notices that "Harley 279 and Ashmole 1439 are very closely parallel, sharing much the same division titles and containing most of the same recipes in the same order. See Constance B. Hieatt, "The Third Fifteenth-Century Cookery Book: A Newly Identified Group Within A Family," *Medium Ævum* 73, no. 1 (2004): 27.

[60] Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, pp. 6-7.

[61] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

But Harleian MS 4016 is often more detailed which is expected from a later copy.[62] Another difference is that Harleian MS 279 had an inner division of dishes into three parts: *Kalendare de Potages dyuers* (to which *frumenty* belongs), *Kalendare de Leche Metys*, and *Dyuerse bake metis*. Harleian MS 4016, on the other hand, has no perceptible logic for its arrangement.[63]

Douce MS 55 is very similar to Harleian MS 4016 as it contains the same recipes in nearly the same words. The latter has a few of them that are not in the former, and vice versa, and the order is different.[64] It is a very carefully written copy executed by a single scribe. Unlike most Middle English culinary books, it is fairly consistent in spelling. The recipes are arranged in five subdivisions, the first of them is untitled.

Additional MS 5467 repeats the recipes and their order from Douce MS 55.[65] Apart from a culinary treatise, it has menus, medical entries, Nicholas Bollard's *Treatise on grafting trees*, a chronicle, and two works translated by John Shirley (1366-1456), a well-known translator and transcriber of manuscripts of his time.[66] So, again, the text on food is put into writing alongside other works which together reflect the scope of interests of the book's owner.

The first recipe for "*furmente* ove[ques] venesoun" starts by taking wheat and crushing it into pieces (for that action the author uses an unusual verb "kerven" which normally means "to carve up meat") in a mortar, winnowing the dust, washing the grain and boiling it, again, until it "breaks" (*tll hit breke*).[67] Then the wheat is drained from water, the milk is added, and this mixture is set over the fire to boil until it becomes thick. After that one must take beaten egg yolks, saffron, salt, and sugar (this time both of them). Then there is a novelty in the text. The author says to take the porridge from the fire and put it on coals, which produce much less heat until it cools down. Other recipes usually simply say not to let it burn, but this one is much more precise on how to achieve it.

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[62] Hieatt, "The Third Fifteenth-Century Cookery Book": 28.

[63] It is kept in the British Library and was edited in Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, pp. 65-107.

[64] Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books,* p. vii. The manuscript is now kept in the Bodleian Library. It was collated by Thomas Austin and printed as Harleian MS 4016 in Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, pp. 65-107. The difference between the two manuscripts is analyzed in Hieatt, "The Third Fifteenth-Century Cookery Book": 28-9.

[65] It is edited in Hieatt, "The Third Fifteenth-Century Cookery Book": 27–42.

[66] *Index of the Additional Manuscripts, with Those of the Egerton Collection, Preserved in the British Museum, and Acquired in the Years 1783-1835* (London: Printed by Order of the Trustees, 1849), p. 119; Hieatt, "The Third Fifteenth-Century Cookery Book": 30.

[67] Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books,* p. 70.

At this point, the *frumenty* is ready, and it is the venison's turn. Again, the preparation depends on whether the meat is salted or not. Fresh venison should be washed, boiled, and carved, while salted one should be boiled twice – the second time after it was cut into pieces. I assume this step was necessary to get rid of the excess salt and characteristic flavor. During the second boiling, one must blow away the grease, and then all that is left is to serve it alongside *frumenty* is a dish with a small amount of hot broth.

The second recipe which is for "*ffirmenty* with porpeys" (in other manuscripts – "pourpays en *furmente*" or "porpas ov[esque] *furmente*") is also very detailed. It does not simply tell the reader to make *frumenty* as before with some alternative ingredients.[68] It gives instructions even on how to make almond milk. First, one must wash the almonds (whether blanched or unblanched is not specified), pound them in a mortar, mix them with water, and then strain them through a sieve. Then comes the usual recipe for this dish: clean the wheat, hull it in a mortar (probably, a different one as medieval cooks had all sorts of mortars for spices, sauces, grains, and whatnot), and after that boil it in water. When it is "boyled ynowe", one can add the almond milk made earlier and cook it until the porridge thickens. In the end come the spices – saffron, sugar, and salt (again, all three). The porpoise is prepared as described previously with an additional step: here the recipe says to bone the "fish" first "as a salmon" and then boil it and cut it up in pieces. So, even though the recipe itself does not change, the text becomes more explicit and detailed.

The most extensive *frumenty* recipe that I have found comes from Rawlinson MS D 1222 dated from the mid-fifteenth century.[69] It is a small in-octavo codex that has some folios missing, and some paper pages added, so it is impossible to reconstruct the textual context of the recipe collection. The content of the latter is copied from various sources and divided into categories such as "fish broiled or roasted", "rostede metes", and "gely", although it seems that this order was neglected when the codex was rebound.

The *frumenty* (spelled as *furmente*) recipe in it comprises both meat and fish versions in a single text. The preparation is the same as described before, but there are much more details on the process and the wording is different from all other cases. The wheat should be clean "þat non oþer corne be amonge, no cokkel [weed], no sedes". One should pound the grain in the mortar as long as the husks appear, and while doing so, one must keep the wheat moist with water.

[68] Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, p. 105.
[69] It is now kept in the Bodleian Library. It is edited in Hieatt, *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 66.

When washing the hulled corn, one must "rubbe hit bytwext þy handes" and change the water often, so it was not cleaned in running water. Then, when no more husks appear, one can add the grain to a pot. The author even gives the measurements: five gallons of water to a "potel" of wheat.[70] When the mixture is boiled, the reader is told to take the pot from the fire and leave it in the hearth (again, on the coals) overnight (*late it stand al ny3te*), so there is also a temporal measurement.[71] Then the recipe says to add the cow's milk and boil it with the beef bones and "oþere good fleshe" which can be regarded as a variation on adding milk together with broth which was suggested in other recipes.[72] Veal kidneys and suet could also be added if a cook had them on hand. Egg yolks should be beaten in a bowl before adding them to the mixture. Of course, one must stir the porridge to keep the eggs from curdling (*quaylyng*). If there are any pieces of egg whites, one should take them out of the *frumenty* with a ladle. The last remark gives a new piece of information on what kitchenware was used.

At this point, the porridge is ready to be served in bowls to the "pryncypales", *id est* the most important guests sitting at the high table. The author makes a precision that it should be thick (*chargeaunt*). The rest of the *frumenty* is transferred to another pot (probably, a smaller one), but no more boiling is needed. There, if a cook wants (*yf þu wil*), he can make it sweet, I assume, by adding sugar. Salt and saffron, on the other hand, are mandatory. This batch of *frumenty* then can be served with venison. When the best part of the dish was brought to the table, the cook could add more milk to the pot, boil it again, and serve to "oþer pepul".

The fish version does not occupy more than two sentences in this recipe: the reader is told to make it in the same manner as described earlier but with almond milk which is expected. Other types of "fish" like sole or whale are suggested to go alongside porridge instead of porpoise. This is a unique case that is not repeated in any other cookbook analyzed in this thesis.[73]

Another lent recipe of *frumenty*, a much shorter one, can be found in Beinecke MS 163 dated from 1460 which is also known as the *Wagstaff Miscellany*.[74] Its content is indeed miscellaneous as many different texts accompany the culinary recipes: treatises on astronomy,

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[70] A gallon varied according to the type of liquid, which was being measured, the region, and the period, so it is hard to say what it was in this case; a pottle is half a gallon, so the wheat to water ratio was 1:10.

[71] The same instructions are given by French recipes – more on that in Chapter 3.

[72] For example, in Arundel MS 334.

[73] Constance B. Hieatt who transcribed this recipe pointed out that this was the only reference to whale in an English recipe that she has had encountered. See Hieatt, *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 66.

[74] The recipes are on ff. 56-76. It is kept in Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. It was edited in Constance B. Hieatt, ed., *An Ordinance of Pottage: An Edition of the Fifteenth Century Culinary Recipes in Yale University's MS Beinecke 163* (London: Prospect Books, 1988).

hunting, and the interpretation of dreams, a parliamentary text, medical recipes, a poem on hawking, and a charm against thieves.[75] The cookery part is very long and has one hundred eighty-nine recipes some of which relate to those in the *Forme of Cury* but do not duplicate them, while others were copied into and from many other culinary treatises (for example, from Rawlinson MS D 1222), but the *frumenty* recipe seems to be a unique case.

There is only a fast version of *frumenty*. The reason why the meat option with venison was omitted could be because it was considered too obvious – the editor of this manuscript notes that it contains very elaborate and complicated recipes and does not bother to record simple and common dishes.[76] The preparation of "*frumente* yn lentyn" does not differ from the recipes analyzed earlier – the wheat is cleaned, first cooked in water, then in milk, saffron is added, and finally it can be served with boiled and carved porpoise on separate plates. What differs is the text itself. The instruction is rather short, but the author manages to include some commentaries coming, as it seems, from his (or rather the cook's) personal experience. He says to boil the wheat in almond milk "tyl hit be *resonabull* thykke" calling upon the reader's rationale. Then the author adds: "loke thy whete be tendyr" (look [that] the wheat was tender). So, he decided to appeal to the desired texture of the dish rather than warn the cook about the burning as most other recipes do.

The recipe for "*fformente* in lentyn wyt porpays" from Sloane MS 442 word-by-word repeats the one in Beinecke MS 163 adding only "wyt porpays" in the title and some spelling variation.[77] In general, all the recipes from Sloane MS 442 can be found in Beinecke MS 163, but the latter has supplementary fifty or so entries, and the order may differ. One must have been a copy of another, so Sloane MS 442 can also be dated from the mid-fifteenth century. Apart from culinary recipes, it has medical writings – remedies for hair loss and "corrupt winds of the stomach", herbals, the "Books of Galen, Hippocrates, Socrates, and Æsculapius", some surgical texts with illustrations, etc. Thus, this manuscript does not provide any new

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[75] The full description of this manuscript can be found in Barbara A. Shailor, *Catalogue of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University*. (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 216-7.

[76] Hieatt, ed., *An Ordinance of Pottage,* p. 18.

[77] This manuscript is kept in the British Library. It has recipes on ff. 6r – 25v and was edited in Marit Mikkelsen Talgø, "ffor þe knyghtys tabylle and ffor þe kyngges tabille: An Edition of the Fifteenth-Century Middle English Cookery Recipes in London, British Library's MS Sloane 442". (Master's Thesis, Master in Literacy Studies, Faculty of Arts and Education, University of Stavanger, 2015).

information on the *frumenty* but supports previous arguments on how it should be prepared and in what textual context it circulated.

A very short recipe for "*furmente* with porpas" comes from Trinity College Cambridge MS 0.1.13 dated 1465.[78] This manuscript has one hundred-two culinary recipes, some of which are copied from Beinecke MS 163, others – from MS Harley 279. As in many other instances, medical entries go alongside culinary ones.[79] The *frumenty* recipe is written in such a lapidary manner that it omits the first step when the wheat is boiled in water and instructs to start by cooking the grain in almond milk. After this procedure, all that is left is to add saffron and sugar, and the dish is ready to be served. The text of the recipe does not imply that there should have been a venison version of *frumenty*.

Holkham MS 674 which is known as *A Noble Boke off Cookry* was composed in 1468 and it goes back to the pattern of having two recipes for *frumenty* – with venison and porpoise.[80] The scribe was probably a French speaker as he used some French words in his text (for example, "mortoire" instead of "mortar"). Also, other recipes were discovered in a different manuscript written by the same hand but in French.[81]

Interestingly, in this recipe collection, the fast version comes before the feast one which no other cookery book does. The two recipes do not refer to each other in any way, so probably they were copied from different sources. The lent version is the same as the previously analyzed cases with some minor changes – mostly in text rather than in the preparation itself.[82] For example, the reader is told to first pound the wheat and boil it in water and then to pound almonds and make milk out of them, when previously the recipes instructed to do these two procedures the other way around.

The feast version does not call for venison to accompany the porridge, but in other respects, it repeats other recipes.[83] The wheat should be pounded in a mortar, winnowed, washed, first boiled in water, then in cow's milk, mixed with egg yolks (*kep it that it byrn not*), colored with

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[78] Edited in Hieatt, ed., *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 141.

[79] James Montague Rhodes, ed., *The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College. A Descriptive Catalogue. Vol. 3: Containing an Account of the Manuscripts Standing in Class O, Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, first published in 1902), p. 11.

[80] It is kept in the Oxford Library and was edited in Mrs. Alexander (Robina) Napier, ed., *A Noble boke off cookry ffor a prynce houssolde or eny other estately houssolde: reprinted verbatim from a rare ms. in the Holkham collection*. (London: Elliot Stock, 1882).

[81] Napier, ed., *A Noble boke off cookry,* p. ix.

[82] Ibid., pp. 86-87.

[83] Ibid., p. 100.

saffron, seasoned with salt and sugar (which were not mentioned in the lent recipe), and after that the dish is ready to be served. Interestingly, in this recipe collection, it is the meat version that is with sugar, while in other manuscripts it was usually the fish one.[84]

The most surprising recipe for *frumenty* (text-wise) comes in verses from a culinary poem *Liber Cure Cocorum* (*The Sly3tes of Cure* in Middle English or *The Art of Cookery* in modern language) dated 1470.[85] This poem served as an appendix to the *Boke of Curtasye*, also written in verses, so the two were probably meant for a young noble to learn the ways of courtly life.[86] As a culinary text, it is of great interest not only because of its form but also because it has a chapter on *petecure*, *id est* simple dishes meant for guests of modest social rank. *Frumenty* does not belong to them. It is the first recipe in the whole poem categorized as a "pottage".

Although it is written in verses, the recipe gives the reader all the necessary steps to prepare the dish with some added phrases like "as I þe kenne" (as I teach you) or "nede þou mot" (needs you must) which serve to create a rhyme and keep the rhythm. The novelty of this recipe is that it gives a further understanding of the social distinction within this dish. The author says that *frumenty* should be decorated with "sugur candy" (chunks of sugar as it was sold in lumps and not as a caster sugar) if it is served in "grete lordys howce*"*. "Black sugar", meaning a less refined and therefore a darker variety, is used for "mener menne", *id est* for people of lower rank.

These are all the recipes for *frumenty* from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that I have identified.[87] It seems that the preparation as well as ingredients that went into it did not change much during these centuries. The typical recipe can be described as follows: first, one must

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[84] For example, in Harleian MS 279.

[85] Sloane MS 1986 from the British Library, ff. 27r-56v, edited in Richard Morris, ed. *Liber Cure Cocorum. Copied and Edited from the Sloane MS. 1986 by Richard Morris, Author of "The Etymology of local Names", Member of the Philological Society*, (Berlin: Published for the Philological Society by A. Asher & Co., 1862).

[86] Rhymed form was a popular mnemonic technique to help people to better remember the text. See Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks*, p. 56.

[87] I have also analyzed several English cookery books from the sixteenth century, in particular Catherine Frances Frere, ed. *A proper newe booke of cokerye. With notes, introduction and glossary; together with some account of domestic life, cookery and feasts in Tudor days, and of the first owner of the book, Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Margaret Parker his wife.* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd. 1913) (originally it is from the mid-sixteenth century); *A book of cookrye: Very necessary for all such as delight therin. Gathered by A.W. And now newlye enlarged with the serving in of the Table. With the proper Sauces to each of them convenient.* (London: printed by Edward Allde, 1591); Thomas Dawson, *A Good Huswifes Handmaide for the Kitchin Containing Manie Principall Pointes of Cookerie, As well How to Dresse Meates, After Sundrie the Best Fashions Vsed in England and Other Countries.* (London: Published by Richard Jones, 1594), but they did not have *frumenty* recipes. I do not think that it speaks of the discontinuation of this tradition as this recipe was still made even in the nineteenth century. Rather, my selection was unfortunate.

clean the wheat grain, pound it in a mortar with a pestle, add a little bit of water to help the hulling, then winnow the grain and boil it in a pot with water over the fire. Once it is done and cooled down, one can add the milk, and boil it again until it thickens. Then one must beat the egg yolks in a separate vessel, and mix them with the porridge, but keep an eye on it for they can curdle and burn. When the texture is right, spices such as saffron, salt, and sugar can be added. After that, the dish is ready to be served with boiled venison in separate bowls. The typical fast version is prepared in the same fashion, but animal milk is substituted with the almond one, no eggs are added, and the dish is served with porpoise instead of meat. The main characteristics of the dish are that it is thick and yellow – the former is explicitly stated in many recipes, and the latter is deduced from the permanent presence of saffron. Egg yolks, when used, also contributed to both the thick texture and the yellow color of the dish.

The mutton which was suggested as an alternative to venison in the cookery books from the fourteenth century disappeared in the fifteenth. The same applies to hazelnut milk which appeared in one cookbook and was never mentioned since. Almond milk as an alternative to cow's milk became a staple for fast days. Sugar as an ingredient in *frumenty* started to be used in the fifteenth, but it cannot be said that its presence grew with the taste for sweeter dishes, as its use was rather sporadic – it could have been added or omitted based on a cook's or scribe's will. Salt is not mentioned in all recipes either. It was a mundane seasoning that did not always need mentioning. Broth makes an appearance in recipes from time to time and is used together with milk to boil the wheat in it. In some recipes, egg yolks are omitted.

The main change happens to the text of the recipe itself. With some exceptions, it becomes more detailed and elaborated with time. Some recipes from different manuscripts are almost identical, which speaks of the popularity of certain culinary treatises in general and *frumenty* in particular as they served as *exempla* for scribes. At the same time, when copied to a new codex, some authors add practical details on how a pot with *frumenty* can be slowly cooled down, how to keep it from burning, how to get rid of egg whites if they happen to get into the dish, etc. Others, like the author of *Liber Cure Cocorum*, tried to make the recipe more entertaining and memorable hence the rhymed instructions appeared. The last distinction that can be discerned in recipes is the social one: which ingredients were appropriate to which guests. This aspect of *frumenty* will be addressed in the next chapter.

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Chapter 2: The cultural and socio-economic context of *frumenty*

Beyond providing for the necessary calorie intake, food also served a social communication system.[88] Just like clothes, jewelry, paintings, furniture, and houses, it was a visible indicator of the social status of the consumer. Not only the quality and diversity of food eaten by a person, but also its quantity was significant. But since food is temporal, to preserve the knowledge of it and to boast about how exquisite your meals were, one had to put it down into writing in the form of culinary books.[89] Lists of dishes served at a banquet were used not only as an aide-mémoire for the organizers but also to show off the refined taste and richness of the host. Others, like the growing bourgeoisie in the late Middle Ages, tried to imitate this way of eating as closely as their financial means (and sumptuary laws which appeared because of that) would allow.[90]

Usually, the recipes that were written down were in some respect exceptional – whether they used exotic ingredients or were difficult to prepare. Simple, everyday dishes were not the subject of cookery books as they were too well known and therefore not worthy of wasting parchment. *Frumenty* appears to be that kind of dish in some respect. It was such a staple of medieval banquets that some culinary treatises mention it only on menus and do not provide a reader with a recipe assuming that the latter knows how to cook it.[91] For example, in Cosin MS V. III. 11 dating from the fourteenth century, there is a mention of "*furmynte* in venesoun" to be served at the king's table during a feast, but no explanation of how to prepare it.[92] The French cooks were supposed to know this dish as well: the most famous culinary treatise from this part of Europe written in the fourteenth century by Maistre Chiquart, *Du fait de cuisine*, lists *frumenty* among the dishes served during the second course for a king's table but does not provide a recipe for it.[93]

[88] Adamson, *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 124.

[89] It was not the only reason to create cookbooks but one of them, as I have identified in the Introduction. Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks*, p. 37.

[90] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 65.

[91] Terence Scully even names this dish "the most common" and "undoubtedly the universally known" among all boiled cereal dishes. See Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages*, p. 38.

[92] To be fair, there are no recipes at all in this manuscript, only menus. In my opinion, it serves as an argument that the *frumenty* recipe was recognizable, even if there was no description of it. Edited text is in Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 39.

[93] Terence Scully, "Du fait de cuisine par Maître Chiquart, 1420 (Ms. S 103 de la bibliothèque Supersaxo, à la Bibliothèque cantonale du Valais, à Sion)", *Vallesia*, 40 (1985): 142.

Ingredients

Most of the ingredients that went into making the *frumenty* were of high social recognition. The base and the main ingredient of this dish was wheat grain, which gave the name to the recipe itself: from the Latin word *frumentum – grain, corn*.[94] Lords could obtain it in the form of rent payments from the peasants working on their land, or it could be purchased at a town's market. Wheat grain was greatly valued in medieval society and always occupied the highest positions in the hierarchy of prices.[95] The reason was that the wheat required high-quality soils which limited the acreage of fields where it could have been planted. Also, it tended to yield less than, for example, barley. And with the refinement of the grain to make it whiter, the final yield was even less. The best varieties of bread in English late-medieval society – *wastel*, *paindemain*, *cocket* (from the 1500s it was called *manchet*) – were made of the purest wheat without bran which was thought to be not only socially more elevated but also healthier and more nutritious, according to the humoral theory.[96]

Milk is another staple ingredient of *frumenty* which is mentioned in every recipe. The church calendar prescribed what kind of milk should have been used: during fast days, nut milk was the only option (once hazelnut milk is mentioned, normally almond milk would have been chosen), while during feast days both varieties – nut and animal milk – could be used, or a cook could have opted for one of them.[97] Normally milk was taken from any animal, be that sheep, goat, or cow. Only by the beginning of the sixteenth century, the preference was given to cow's milk among other varieties.[98] In *frumenty* recipes we see this preference already from the fourteenth century as no other animal milk apart from the cow's is called for. Raw milk was

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[94] See definition: https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.04.0059:entry=frumentum (accessed on 15.01.2024). The dish under consideration in this thesis should not be confused with a Greek dish *trahanas* which is often translated as *frumenty* in English-speaking world.

[95] Christopher Dyer, "A Simple Food with Many Meanings: Bread in Late Medieval England," *Journal of Medieval History* 49, no. 5 (October 20, 2023): 632; 635. The "Feeding the City" project organized by the Institute of Historical Research in 1993 published research on grain prices in London in 1288-1315, where one can see that during that time wheat remained the most expensive grain of all. See Bruce M. S. Campbell, ed., *A Medieval Capital and Its Grain Supply: Agrarian Production and Distribution in the London Region c. 1300*, Historical Geography Research Series 30 (Belfast: Queen's University of Belfast and the Centre for Metropolitan History, Institute of Historical Research, University of London, 1993), p. 112.

[96] Dyer, "A Simple Food with Many Meanings": p. 646. The fact that medieval cookery was heavily influenced by the medical theory of the period can be underlined with an example of the *Forme of Cury* which was compiled with the advice of a "master of physic", i.e. a physician.

[97] Recipe №1 in Douce MS 257, edited in Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 62: "And nym fayre fresch broþ & swete mylk of almandys or swete mylk of kyne and temper yt al" [And take fair fresh broth and sweet milk of almonds or sweet milk of cow and mix it all]. Dishes with almond milk could be served not only during fast days but during feast days too. See the menu for the service on flesh day in Arundel MS 334, edited in Warner, *Antiquitates Culinariae,* p. 71.

[98] Black, *Food and Cooking in Medieval Britain*, p. 11.

thought not suitable for adults to drink. Cooked milk, on the other hand, was widely enjoyed in all manners of dishes, both peasants' and aristocratic. It could be used in porridges like *frumenty*, in hot beverages like *posset* or *caudle*, or to make custards.[99]

In rich and noble households during fast days, dairy was usually substituted with almond milk which was not available for lower social classes. At the same time, one should not think of almond milk as purely an alternative for the fast season – it was an autonomous foodstuff used in many aristocratic dishes, both for fast and feast days. In England, almonds were a luxury import from the Near East, but they were so beloved by the nobility that they used them in dozens of recipes anyway. The poorer folk instead could harvest hazelnuts and make milk from them.[100]

Medieval culinary books rarely have recipes on how to make almond milk, as it was assumed that any professional cook knew how to prepare it.[101] Many *frumenty* instructions tell simply to "take almond milk" as if it was always on hand. Others make only a brief note on how to make it: "Take almaundes blaunched. Bray hem and drawe hem vp with faire water", omitting that the liquid should also be strained through a sieve to get rid of the small pieces of crushed almonds.[102] One recipe indicates that there were two varieties of nut milk: "þe first mylke" and "the secunde mylke of almaundes".[103] It seems that they indicate different stages in the production of almond milk as water could be added to the crushed nuts several times, resulting in milk of different thicknesses. The more watery "second" milk was used to boil the wheat, while the thicker "first" milk was reserved for adding to an almost done dish to make it more creamy.[104]

The church calendar also prescribed if egg yolks were added or not. Normally, they were beaten in a separate bowl and then added after the wheat was boiled with milk. Although some recipes instruct that the mixture should be boiled again after the egg yolks were added, it must have been a mistake of a scribe. If one tries to do so, he or she will end up with scrambled eggs and porridge instead of rich and thick *frumenty*. Many more recipes give sensible instructions and

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[99] Black, *Food and Cooking in Medieval Britain*, p. 12.
[100] Ibid., pp. 14-15. As was shown before, one recipe for *frumenty* (№89 in Douce MS 257) calls for hazelnut milk, so, apparently, this foodstuff could be used in aristocratic households too.
[101] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages,* p. 93.
[102] Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 114.
[103] Ibid., p. 125.
[104] The same technique is used in the recipe from Douce MS 257, but the author calls them "þe ferst mylk" and "þe aftermelk" of hazelnuts. See Warner, ed. *Antiquitates Culinariae*, p. 49.

say to keep the pot from fire, leave it on coals to cool down, or at least not let it boil again.[105] Egg yolks were an important ingredient as they provided the dish with a characteristic yellow color and thickness. Interestingly, not all "meat day" recipes call for them even though they are allowed to be used. Instead, the desired hue is achieved by adding saffron and the texture by boiling the porridge down with milk.[106]

One recipe indicates that adding egg yolks was a feature of the *haut cuisine*: "and for a lorde put no brothe therto, but put therto a few zolkes of eyren beten".[107] Interestingly, this recipe puts broth and egg yolks into status-symbol opposition, which no other recipe does. Both eggs and meat broth were widely available ingredients to all social classes, so I do not think this opposition has its roots in the availability of products. Rather, I would argue that the difference between them lies in what texture and color they give to the dish, yellow and thick being the preferred one. Another explanation may be in the quantity. English recipes do not give numbers on how many eggs should have been used, but the French recipes do. *Le Ménagier de Paris*, a household manual from the fourteenth century which will be described in the next chapter, indicates that hundreds of eggs were needed to make *frumenty*. Taking this number into consideration, one can understand why eggs could have been reserved only for the *haut cuisine* version of the dish.

More often broth and egg yolks are added together to the dish.[108] In general, broth as an ingredient is rarely mentioned, and it is not clear what kind of broth is needed. I assume that it should have been a meat broth since it is mentioned only in feast recipes of *frumenty* served with venison. One recipe says that the bones of beef and other animals could have been taken to make a broth.[109] So, it could have consisted of any meat available, not necessarily of venison.

When it was a feast day, venison almost always accompanied *frumenty*. Generally speaking, *venison* is an umbrella term used for different varieties of meat obtained through hunting. One cookbook from the mid-sixteenth century clarifies that it means deer – fallow deer or red

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[105] For example, Ashmole MS 1444 and Douce MS 257 instruct to boil the *frumenty* after the egg yolks were added, but the *Forme of Cury* (all manuscripts), Arundel MS 334, Harleian MS 1735, Douce MS 55, Additional MS 5467 all tell not to do it.

[106] For example, the recipes from Ashmole MS 1439 and Harleian MS 279 do not call for eggs.

[107] "…and for a lord put therein no broth but put therein beaten egg yolks". Recipe № 406 in Arundel 334, edited in Warner, *Antiquitates Culinariae*, p. 81 (If not stated otherwise, the translation is mine).

[108] For example, in recipes from Douce MS 257, Ashmole MS 1444, the *Forme of Cury*, and Rawlinson MS D 1222.

[109] See Rawlinson MS D 1222, edited in Hieatt, *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 66.

deer.[110] I believe the same understanding of this term can be applied to the earlier times in England. Venison was not an easily available, every-day kind of meat. It was a game that in England after the Norman conquest was reserved for the elite who had obtained grants from the Crown to hunt it, and poachers were severely punished or even executed.[111] Only small forest animals like rabbits and coneys were allowed to be hunted by the common folk.[112] An important feature of venison is that it can be served throughout the year with no particular attachment to a season or month.[113]

Meat seems to be an addition to the dish rather than its integral part. It is not always mentioned neither in recipes nor in menus.[114] That is why *frumenty* was the main dish and venison was a kind of garnish, even though meat occupied a higher position in the medieval hierarchy of foods. If it is featured, normally it was boiled, carved into thin slices, and served on separate plates.[115] If it was salted, an additional boiling was required to get rid of the excess salt. For example, "venysoun with *furmenty*" in Harleian MS 279 instructs how to serve the dish: "dresse it forth, & þin venyson in a-nother dyshe with fayre hot water" (or with broth from boiled venison).[116] This "fayre hot water", or, in other cases, broth, I believe, was meant to keep the meat warm during long feasts, and thinly cut pieces were easier to eat.

The titles suggest that the connection between *frumenty* and venison was a tight one. It is further supported by other recipes in cookbooks. For example, "canabens wit bacon" which was a dish of fava beans with bacon should be served "as þu seruyst venyson wit formente" meaning that strips of bacon should be placed in another dish.[117] Even when another type of meat was called

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[110] Frere, ed., *A proper newe booke of cokerye*, p. 5.
[111] C. M. Woolgar, D. Serjeantson, and T. Waldron, eds., *Food in Medieval England: Diet and Nutrition*, Medieval History and Archeology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 162-75; Christopher Michael Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England, 1200-1500* (New Haven, Mass: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 11.
[112] Black, *Food and Cooking in Medieval Britain*, p. 10.
[113] This piece of information comes from the same sixteenth-century English cookery book, but I suppose it was the same in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. See Frere, ed., *A proper newe booke of cokerye*, p. 5.
[114] For example, in Arundel MS 334, Harleian MS 1735, and Sloane MS 1986.
[115] See in Harleian MS 4016, Douce MS 55, and Additional MS 5467.
[116] Austin, ed. *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books,* p. 7. Broth is called for instead of hot water in recipes in Harleian MS 4016 and Douce MS 55. Another example can be found in the recipe for *Canebyns* in Holkham MS 674 where we are instructed that beans and bacon should be served separately like *frumenty* and venison: "lay them in *another disshe* and serue them as ye do furmente and venysen" [lay them in another dish and serve them as you do with *frumenty* and venison]. Edited in Napier, *A Noble Boke off Cookry*, p. 84. Also, in the recipe of *Joutes* (№3) in Harleian MS 279: "<…> and serue it forth in a dysshe, an bakon y-boylyd in a-noþer dysshe, as men seruyth furmenty wyth venison <…>" [and serve it forth in a dish, and boiled bacon in another dish, as people serve *frumenty* with venison]. Edited in Austin, ed. *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, p. 6.
[117] Sloane MS 442, edited in Talgø, "Ffor Þe Knyghtys Tabylle and Ffor Þe Kyngges Tabille", p. 77. Also, in Holkham MS 674, edited in Napier, ed. *A Noble Boke off Cookry*, p. 84.

for, it did not change the name of the dish.[118] Lent version did not follow this rule, as the porpoise changed the naming to "*frumenty* with porpoise" indicating that it was a fish equivalent of venison. It also could be used fresh or salted. Although biologically porpoise is a mammal and relative to dolphins, in the Middle Ages it was considered a fish and therefore allowed to be eaten on fast days.[119] It is clear from the recipes themselves: often the title for this version of the dish goes as "*frumenty* on the fish day", or the dish is listed among those that should be served "on the fyssh-day", or the recipe compares porpoise with fresh salmon in their preparation.[120]

Normally porpoise was boiled (*sothyn* in Middle English terminology). One recipe gives the idea that porpoise should be boiled together with *frumenty* and then taken out to be served on a separate dish. But if it was salted, then it should have been boiled "by hym self" which helps to get rid of the excess salt.[121] There is only one recipe that suggests taking sole or whale instead of porpoise.[122] Normally, porpoise together with sturgeon was reserved for a king's table only, since both of them were considered a "royal fish", but he often gave away these foodstuffs to share with the nobility so that they too could enjoy "*frumenty* with porpoise" on a fast day.[123]

Saffron was added to *frumenty* no matter what day of the calendar it was which contradicts the opinion of certain researchers it was used on fast days as a substitution for egg yolks to give food a yellow color.[124] It was the only spice consistently used for this dish and the only one

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[118] For example, the recipe from Ashmole MS 1444 is titled "*furmenty* with veneson" but it says that mutton can be used as an alternative.

[119] Not only porpoises but also other not-fish creatures like barnacle geese and puffins were considered to be fish since they were created in the sea, and beavers, who still existed at that time in Britain, were said to have fishtails because they had scales on them. See Black, *Food and Cooking in Medieval Britain*, p. 9.

[120] For "*frumenty* on the fish day" see recipe in Douce MS 257, edited in Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 49. For a *frumenty* with porpoise listed as a dish appropriate for a fish day see Arundel MS 334, edited in Warner, ed., *Antiquitates Culinariae*, p. 362. A porpoise is compared with salmon in Harleian MS 279, edited in Thomas Austin, ed. *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*. London, 1888, p. 17.

[121] Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 125.

[122] Rawlinson MS D 1222, edited in Hieatt, ed. *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 66.

[123] Black, *Food and Cooking in Medieval Britain*, p. 8; Harlan Walker, *Fish: Food from the Waters Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1997* (Totnes: Prospect books, 1998)*, p. 14. On porpoise being a "royal fish" see Mark Gardiner, "The Exploitation of Sea-Mammals in Medieval England: Bones and Their Social Context," *Archaeological Journal* 154, no. 1 (January 1997): 179. Probably, in France, the situation was different as *Le Ménagier de Paris* has a recipe for sturgeon and includes it in one of the menus. Interestingly, the preparation of sturgeon is said to be done in the same manner as for venison. See Gina L. Greco and Christine M. Rose, eds., *The Good Wife's Guide: = Le Ménagier de Paris: A Medieval Household Book* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 2009), p. 307.

[124] See Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 73. At the same time, there is evidence that saffron could be used together with egg yolks if the latter did not provide a dish with enough of a yellow hue. For example, it is the case for the author of *Ménagier de Paris*, see recipe №234 (also in the recipe for *frumenty*!) in Greco and Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide*, p. 312.

called for the *frumenty* in English recipe collections.[125] It had given the dish a yellow color which was very characteristic of this dish and the medieval culinary culture in general and extensively used in aristocratic cookery.[126] The fact that saffron was used intentionally to give *frumenty* yellow color and not a particular taste is underlined by the language itself: many recipes instruct that one should not "take" this ingredient like any other but "coloure yt [*frumenty*] wyth safroun".[127]

Saffron (*crocus sativus*, or real saffron) was (and still is) one of the most expensive spices in the world because it is difficult to cultivate and requires a lot of manual work while harvesting by hand.[128] Like other spices, it was highly valued in medieval society, because it was an imported commodity brought to Europe from the far and "mystical" East. Therefore, only the upper crust of society could afford it, and even they used it in small amounts.[129] The merchants could adulterate the spices to increase their weight by mixing them with other substances. For example, saffron could be mixed with sandalwood to lower the price or with gold dust to reach the desired weight.[130] It means that, depending on the quality and quantity of the saffron used by a cook, *frumenty* could vary in color from reddish (if it was mixed with sandalwood), light-yellow (if he had only a small amount of saffron) to vibrant yellow color (if combined with egg yolks). As a cheaper alternative to saffron curcuma was known and employed in the Middle Ages. Sometimes it was called in sources the "yellow root", so clearly it had the same coloring function.[131] However, it is never mentioned in any *frumenty* recipes.

Occasionally salt is called for as a seasoning to be added at the last stage of preparation, right before serving the dish. One can assume that it was used every time but not every recipe made note of it. At the same time, some recipes place it up to the cook to decide whether to add salt or not: Rawlinson D MS 1222 says: "yf þu wil, <...> salt hit" (if you want, salt it).[132] If a dish was still not salty enough, a diner could salt it to his or her taste – normally there would be a

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[125] Sugar at that time should also be regarded as a spice, but its employment in *frumenty* was optional. Certain researchers argue that in the Middle Ages saffron was not regarded as a spice but rather as a coloring agent only. See Adamson, *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 35.

[126] Ibid., p. 62.

[127] Arundel MS 334, edited in Warner, ed. *Antiquitates Culinariae*, p. 51.

[128] Tibor Wenger, "History of Saffron," *Longhua Chinese Medicine* 5 (June 2022): 15.

[129] There were certain places in Europe where saffron was produced but it was of inferior quality. Even in England itself, it was possible to grow saffron, for example, there is a town called Saffron Walden which successfully grew saffron in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. See Pat Willard, *Secrets of Saffron: The Vagabond Life of the World's Most Seductive Spice* (London: Beacon Press, 2002), pp. 110-6.

[130] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 66.

[131] Although sometimes the "yellow root" could mean parsnip or carrots. See Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages,* p. 92.

[132] Hieatt, ed. *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 66.

salt cellar at every table during a meal.[133] Salt in England could be mined or evaporated from seawater – either way, it was a staple condiment in cooking at that time.[134]

One of the optional condiments was sugar which was not yet a staple sweetener in late medieval England, therefore it was used sparingly and mostly for decoration rather than as an ingredient. It is not featured in fourteenth-century recipes of *frumenty* at all, and since the mid-fifteenth century, sometimes it appears in both versions of the dish in one recipe collection.[135] Although many recipes use the adjective "swete" to describe almond or animal milk, it does not mean that these foodstuffs were sweetened with sugar – more probably it was a figure of speech.[136] This argument is further proved by the fact that the same recipe can describe cow's milk as "sweet" and call for sugar.[137]

Europeans first encountered sugar cane during the Crusades around the year 1100. It came to them in the form of cones called "loaves" which could be refined and white in color or less pure and therefore of a more natural brown hue.[138] This difference found its reflection in cookbooks of the period: certain *frumenty* recipes differentiate between white "sugur candy" reserved for the lord and "black sugur" meant for "mener mener", that is for people of lower ranks.[139] As with the bread, the purest and the whitest variety of sugar is reserved for the nobility. By the end of the Middle Ages, sugar started to be used more extensively, judging from the increasing number of recipes calling for it. Still, it retained its medicinal connotations and, therefore, was used in delicate dishes and the ones designed for the sick.[140] As for *frumenty* recipes, there is no observable tendency to use more sugar towards the end of the Middle Ages.

Fast days were numerous in medieval times. In Europe every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, not counting Lent and other long fasting periods, were declared as fish days when neither meat nor animal products were allowed for consumption.[141] Preachers insisted that to be truly penitential, food eaten during fast days should not be prepared luxuriously.[142] But, as

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[133] Black, *Food and Cooking in Medieval Britain*, p. 24.
[134] Ibid., p. 15.
[135] For example, in Harleian MS 4016, Douce MS 55, and Additional MS 5467, all of which are from the middle of the fifteenth century, there are two recipes for *frumenty* – with venison and with porpoise, and both call for sugar.
[136] For example, in Douce MS 257, Harleian MS 279, Harleian MS 4016, etc.
[137] For example, in Harleian MS 4016.
[138] Black, *Food and Cooking in Medieval Britain*, p. 15.
[139] Morris, ed., *Liber Cure Cocorum*, p. 7.
[140] Jean-Louis Flandrin, "Le sucré dans les livres de cuisine français, du XIVe au XVIIIe siècle," *Journal d'agriculture traditionnelle et de botanique appliquée* 35, no. 1 (1988): 220.
[141] Walker, *Fish: Food from the Waters,* p. 51.
[142] Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England, 1200-1500,* p. 8.

we can see from the *frumenty* recipes for the "fish" day, it did not differ much from the "meat" version. Still, socially elevated foodstuffs like saffron, sugar, and porpoise are used in them. Therefore, the dish met the ecclesiastical requirements only nominally.

One of the main characteristics of medieval cuisine is the variety of spices used in cooking. Using spices was a social indicator: the higher up the social ladder one was, the more and more variety of spices one could use.[143] Compared to Antiquity and later culinary traditions, the Middle Ages were keener on using a lot of different spices in the same dish.[144] Given this premise, *frumenty* appears to be relatively modest in this respect – its recipes call for only two spices: sugar and saffron. Both are very important for English cuisine in general at that time. Saffron appears in 40% of recipes and sugar – in 30%, being the most often used spices, followed by ginger (23%). This tendency appears to be particularly English and not pan-European since recipes in French culinary manuscripts put ginger in the first place (27%).[145] At the same time, Italian manuscripts also cherish saffron the most and call for it in 25-45% of their recipes.[146]

As I have indicated in the Introduction, one of the issues of working with medieval cookery books is that they rarely give extensive instructions on how to prepare a certain dish. The absence of measurements is also very noticeable. Some researchers suggest that this information was not needed because recipe collections were aimed not at the broad audience but at specialists – cooks, or majordomos who supervised the kitchen and who knew how many spices were usually added or how long a certain kind of meat should have been cooked.[147] They did not need this information written down as they knew it from practice. Therefore, their recipe style was rather telegraphic, without any unnecessary embellishments of style. It is true for certain cookbooks, for example, one of the earliest from the British Isles written in Anglo-Norman in 1320-1340 from MS Royal 12.C.xii which contains laconic recipes:

> "Caudel ferree. Vyn, amydoun, reysins sant pepyns a mettre leynz, sucre pur abatre la force de le vyn."[148]

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[143] Laurioux, "De l'usage des épices dans l'alimentation médiévale": 29.
[144] Ibid: 16-17.
[145] As will be shown in the third chapter, in French cuisine ginger even made its way into *frumenty* recipes.
[146] Laurioux, "De l'usage des épices dans l'alimentation médiévale": 18.
[147] Aebischer, "Un manuscrit valaisan du Viandier attribué à Taillevent": 84.
[148] "Hot caudle. Wine, amidon [wheat starch], raisins without seeds to put in it, sugar to reduce the power of the wine" (translation is mine). The recipe is taken from Hieatt and Jones, "Two Anglo-Norman Culinary Collections Edited from British Library Manuscripts Additional 32085 and Royal 12.C.Xii.": 859–82.

But there are other instances of more eloquent cookery books, some of them even written in verses, for example, *Liber Cure Cocorum*. This form demanded auxiliary language constructions to help with rhyming. Only one *frumenty* recipe from Rawlinson MS D 1222 has a measurement indication: it says that for a "potel" of wheat one needs five gallons of water.[149] But this is an exceptional case. The recipe in this respect is inconsistent and further does not provide measurements for milk or spices.

In conclusion, *frumenty* was a dish that in its most basic version consisted of simple ingredients also available for most people – wheat, milk, and eggs. But it made its way into aristocratic cookbooks by adding luxury ingredients to this solid base – saffron, sugar, venison, and porpoise. Church regulations played a very important role in deciding which of the versions – with meat or fish – was going to appear on a dining table. Another factor was social status and money – if the eater could have afforded to buy sugar and saffron for his *frumenty*, he would have certainly done it. But not all luxury products could be purchased with money. The right to hunt venison was dispensed by the royalty to the aristocracy, so it was a purely status-symbol foodstuff.

Frumenty in a cookbook and on a table

What part of a meal did *frumenty* constitute? As I mentioned in a previous chapter, one recipe has the title "potage de *frumenty*" (Arundel MS 334) which indicates that this dish was considered a pottage. This notion is further supported by the composition of cookbooks. Not all medieval culinary treatises had a clear inner organization but most of them divided the recipes into categories – roasts, pottages, subtleties, baked dishes, and so on, in the same way as they were served.[150] For example, Harleian MS 279 has three parts: "Kalendare de Potages dyuers", "Kalendare de Leche Metys", and "Dyuerse bake metis", and *frumenty* belongs to the first of them. Also, the author of *Liber Cure Cocorum* who made a table of contents for his work put this dish into the "de potagiis" category.[151]

[149] Hieatt, *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 66.

[150] Ibid., p. 63; Carroll, "The Middle English Recipe as a Text-Type": 28. Although not all researchers recognize this fact, see Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks*, pp. 89-90.

[151] Morris, ed., *Liber Cure Cocorum*, p. 1.

Making a porridge was an alternative to making bread as it was easier – it did not require any milling, kneading, or baking with their many pieces of equipment.[152] All one needed was a pot which every medieval household had and a hearth to cook it which used less fuel than an oven. While the grain for bread should have been prepared at a mill, the wheat to make *frumenty* could be hulled and pounded by the cook himself. The majority of recipes instruct to sort the grain and get rid of occasional seeds, weeds, or other grains. The hulling was done simply in a mortar with a pestle which also helped to break the kernels into smaller pieces. Porridge was considered a lowly dish, but still, it was enjoyed by all classes of society.[153] And if prepared with high-status ingredients, it could be enjoyed by the upper classes too, as was the case with *frumenty*.

Now that I have identified what place *frumenty* occupied in the cookbooks, it is appropriate to concentrate on when it was brought to the table during a meal. For this, I have analyzed the menus which sometimes were written down together with cookbooks and other times circulated separately from them. The cook did not organize a feast. Even though he could be a very important person in the kitchen and receive the honorary title "master" as was the case with the author of the *Forme of Cury*, when it came to banquets and deciding what dishes to serve to which guests, and therefore, to write a menu, the marshal (or maître d'hôtel in French circumstances) appeared on the stage.[154] It was not a simple activity and required a lot of skills from a person. When Chaucer describes the Host who gave shelter to all the pilgrims at the beginning of the journey in *Canterbury Tales* as a person "(qualified) to be a master of ceremonies in a hall" (*for to been a marchal in an halle*, line 752), one should take it as a compliment to him and a sign of his generosity, hospitability, and wisdom in household management.

Dinner was a lengthy process in a medieval and early modern aristocratic household. On the time devoted to dinner speaks eloquently this anecdote:

> "An Italian hauing a sute here in England, to the Archbishop of Yorke that then was, and comming to Yorke Towne at that time, when one of the Prebendaries there brake his bread, as they terme it, and therevpon made a solemne long dinner, the which perhaps began at aleuen, and continued wel nye fower in the afternoone, at the which dinner this Bishop was: It so fortuned that as they were set, the Italian knockt at the gate vnto whom the Porter perceiuing his errand, aunswered, that my

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[152] Although it was never regarded as a substitute for bread. Dyer, "A Simple Food with Many Meanings", p. 650.
[153] Dyer, "A Simple Food with Many Meanings": 634.
[154] Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks*, p. 17.

Lord Bishop was at dinner. The Italian departed, and returned betwixt xii. and one, the Porter answered they were yet at diner, he came againe at two of the clocke, the Porter told him they had not half dined: he came at three a clock, vnto whom the Porter in a heate answered neuer a worde, but churlishly did shut the gates vpon him. Whereupon others told the Italian, that there was no speaking with my Lord, almost al that day, for the solemne dinner sake. The Italian Gentleman, wondering much at such long sitting, and greatly greeued, because hee could not then speake with the Bishops grace, departed straight towards London, and leauing the dispatch of his matters with a deare freend of his, tooke his iourney towards Italie. Three yeares after it happened that an English man came to *Rome*, with whom the Italian by chaunce falling acquainted, asked him if he knewe the Bishop of Yorke. The Englishman saied, he knew him right well. "I pray you tell me," quoth the Italian hath the Bishop yet dined?"[155]

In the fourteenth century, *frumenty* appears in two menus from MS Cosin V. III. 11 which describe what was served during two banquets for King Richard II.[156] As can be seen from the layout of the texts, these feasts consisted of three courses, each comprising from seven to fourteen dishes (with an additional one or two "soteltee"). Both *frumenties,* in particular "*furmynte* in venesoun" or "venesoun with *furmynte* in potage", i.e. the meat version of the dish go with the first course and is even written the first on the list. One can imagine that it was the *Forme of Cury's* recipe for *frumenty* that cooks followed.

Harleian MS 4016, although itself written in the mid-fifteenth century, lists two menus of dishes from both the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[157] The first feast was given for King Richard II by the Duke of Lancaster in London on September 23, 1387, and the second was organized already during the time of King Henry VI to celebrate John Stafford becoming the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1443. Both of them consist of three courses, and *frumenty* ("*furmenty* with veneson") appears first in the first of them. One must not think that the first course was reserved for the pottages and that there is a connection between *frumenty* being a pottage-like dish and serving during the first course. If one takes a look at what is served alongside it, one can find all sorts of dishes: pottages, roasts, tarts, jellied dishes, and each course closed with a subtlety. So, each course rather represented a feast in miniature, and the dishes in them usually do not repeat.

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[155] Thomas Wilson, *Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique, 1560*, ed. G. H. Mair ([Oxford]: At the Clarendon Press, 1909), pp. 154-5.

[156] The first feast probably was given by Thomas baron Despenser between 1394 when he had livery of his lands and 1397 when he was made earl of Gloucester; the second is dated from roughly the same time. The text itself was written into a codex in the early fifteenth century. See the description on the website of the Durham University Library where it is now kept: https://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ark/32150_s10c483j42s.xml (accessed 11.05.2024). The text is edited in Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, p. 39.

[157] Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, pp. 67-8.

This idea is further justified by the numerous menus from Harleian MS 279.[158] Here in three menus *frumenty* is served during the second course and in four menus – during the first (all of them consist of three courses in total). The occasions were various: this dish was served for the coronation feast of King Henry IV in Westminster in 1399, during the wedding of the same King in Winchester in 1403 (the feast lasted for several days, so first *frumenty* was served with venison and then with porpoise as on a "fish-day"), during the banquet of John Chandler celebrating him becoming a bishop of Salisbury in 1417 (it was not a fast day, so *frumenty* was served with venison), the banquet of John Stafford when he was consecrated as the bishop of Wells in 1425, and during the wedding of Earl of Devonshire. So, the dish was seen as elevated enough to be served to a king or any high prelate in England.

In the fifteenth-century menu from Arundel MS 334, the fast version of "*firmente* with the purpoys*" is served during the first course of a meal "on fyssh-day" which consists of three courses and thirty-three dishes in total.[159] The second fish menu, as well as three flesh menus that are given in the same manuscript do not call for *frumenty* at all. Sloane MS 1986, on the other hand, suggests serving *frumenty* with venison in the first course on a flesh day as one of the standard options.[160]

Medieval feasts reflected the hierarchical structure of society. Not all dishes served to the king's table were brought to other guests. In Beinecke MS 163 there is a menu that lists what should be served to the "knysthys tabyll" and what – to the "kyngges tabyll".[161] Although these are two different tables, they share some dishes, and *frumenty* is one of them – it was served equally to knights and kings. At the same time, the menu for a fish day does not call for *frumenty* at all.

Holkham MS 674 also provides a lot of information on what was served for various occasions.[162] For example, *frumenty* with venison was prepared for the first course (out of three, as usual) on a feast given by Henry IV after a jousting tournament in Smithfield, as well as when George Neville became the Archbishop of York in 1465. A fast version with porpoise was served in the first course of a meal to celebrate the installation of Richard Clifford as a

[158] Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, pp. 57-64.
[159] Warner, ed., *Antiquitates Culinariae*, p. 71.
[160] Morris, ed., *Liber Cure Cocorum*, p. 54.
[161] Hieatt, ed., *An Ordinance of Pottage*, p. 100. The same menus are copied in Sloane MS 442 which is edited in Talgø, "Ffor Þe Knyghtys Tabylle and Ffor Þe Kyngges Tabille", p. 121.
[162] Napier, *A Noble Boke off Cookry*, pp. 3-22.

bishop of London in 1407. *Frumenty* with venison appears in five more menus without identification to what event they belong. It is also featured among the mid-day (*dener*) dishes for January, but the calendar ends on February, so it is impossible to tell if *frumenty* was an exclusively January dish or not.

All dishes brought for those of royal blood, as pope, emperor, empress, cardinal, king, queen, prince, archbishop, duke, or earl should have been tasted for poison before service, as the fifteenth century conduct manual *The Boke of Nurture* written by John Russell instructs.[163] *Frumenty* was a royal dish so it must have undergone the same procedure.

An early sixteenth-century treatise on carving *The Boke of Kervynge* says that the carver who was responsible for preparing meat for his sovereign should not touch venison with his hands but only with a knife. He should cut the meat into twelve pieces and place them on top of the *frumenty* in the same manner as was done with peas and bacon.[164] As for the fish version, the same manual indicates that the tail and liver of the porpoise were appropriate to go alongside the porridge.[165]

Not everyone at a feast had a right or an opportunity to taste every dish brought into the dining hall. An example of this we see in the detailed household records of Dame Alice de Bryene for the year from September 1412 to September 1413. She gave a New Year's feast on 1 January 1413 hosting more than 335 people but among dishes brought to the table, there were only two swans, twelve geese, and twenty-four capons.[166] Clearly, not everyone at the table could have a taste of those meats.

Another issue is that the same dish could slightly differ depending on what it was meant for. As was mentioned in the first chapter, a *frumenty* recipe from Rawlinson MS D 1222 says that once the dish is ready, it can be served to the "pryncypales", i.e. the noble guests who received the freshest portion. Even the recipe calls this part "þe best". The rest of the dish was transferred

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[163] Edith Rickert, ed., *The Babees' Book: Medieval Manners for the Young. Done into Modern English from Dr. Furnivall's Texts by Edith Rickert* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1923), p. 76.
[164] *The boke of keruynge*. London: Enprynted by wynkyn de worde at London in fletestrete at the sygne of the sonne, The yere of our lorde god M.CCCCC.xiij. [1513] (without pagination): https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A16373.0001.001/1:2.4.1?rgn=div3;view=fulltext (accessed on 08.04.2024). Peas and bacon, I assume, are the same dish as beans and bacon that were discussed earlier in this chapter.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Vincent Burrough Redstone, John Ridgard, and Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, eds., *The Household Book of Dame Alice de Bryene of Acton Hall, Suffolk: September 1412 to September 1413, with Appendices* (Bungay: Paradigm, 1984), p. 28.

to another pot (probably, a smaller one) with some additional milk (maybe to thin it out and therefore enlarge the volume) and then served to "oþer pepul".[167]

In conclusion, *frumenty* appears to be a staple dish for feasts organized on various occasions be that the coronation of the king or a jousting tournament throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Usually, it was served during the first or the second course as a "potage" dish. It is not featured in every banquet but still quite often. The meat version with venison seems to be favored more than its fish alternative with porpoise as the latter is mentioned much more rarely. Also, *frumenty* transcended social borders and was served to both kings and their noble subjects, even though with some adjustments to its contents.

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[167] Hieatt, ed. *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 66.

Chapter 3: *Frumenty* outside England

To understand if *frumenty* was solely an English dish or a European culinary phenomenon, I analyzed culinary books from France. This chapter is most definitely not extensive research on *frumenty* outside England as it would require taking into consideration hundreds of texts which is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, it should serve as an indicator that *frumenty* was not an exclusive phenomenon of English cuisine. The name *frumenty* itself suggests that this dish is not originally English but probably an adopted one, since the root *frument* is not English but Latin. Here again, the title served as an indicator if this recipe was present in a cookbook or not. I could have taken another route and searched for recipes that have the same mode of preparation rather than the same title but that amount of work would be, again, beyond the scope of this thesis.

So far, I found recipes for *frumenty* in four French culinary collections (*Ménagier de Paris*, *Le Viandier de Taillevent*, *Le Recueil de Riom,* and *Livre fort excellent de cuysine tres-utile et profitable*). These collections date from the late thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries and therefore represent a scope of the French culinary tradition in the Middle Ages in total. *Le Viandier de Taillevent* is the earliest culinary treatise from this part of Europe.[168] Other cookery books from medieval France that did not make it into the source base of this thesis because they did not contain *frumenty* recipes are the *Enseignements* (fourteenth century), the *Du fait de cuisine* of Maitre Chiquart (1420), and the so-called *Vivendier* (1425).[169] I chose to look at the French recipes as it is generally assumed that English culinary tradition in the Middle Ages was under heavy influence from the French side of the Continent.[170]

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[168] Adamson, *Regional Cuisines of Medieval Europe* p. 48.

[169] *Du fait de cuisine* has a mention of *frumenty* being served during the second course separate from the venison. See Chiquart, *Du Fait de Cuisine =: On Cookery of Master Chiquart (1420): "Aucune Science de l'art de Cuysinerie et de Cuysine,"* ed. Terence Scully, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, v. 354 (Tempe, Arizona: ACMRS, 2010), p. 142.

[170] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages,* p. 23. It does not mean that the art of cookery did not exist on the British Isles before the appearance of these Anglo-Norman books, but rather it was transmitted in oral form.

French recipes for *frumenty*

Le Viandier de Guillaume Tirel dit Taillevent

The earliest mention of *frumenty* (*formentee* or *fromentee* in different manuscripts) in French cookbooks comes from *Le Viandier de Guillaume Tirel dit Taillevent*. As its name suggests, this cookbook is mainly about "viande" – that of animals and fish. But in medieval French, the word "viande" could designate food and nourishment in general, not only animal flesh. Accordingly, the word "viandier" means "a man who provides the food" and not "the butcher".[171]

The book starts with recipes for meat dishes – first pottages (*potages lians*), then roasts, after which comes fourteen entremets, to which *frumenty* belongs. The latter were meant to be presented between the first and the second courses, and usually, they were somewhat lighter and fancier. Their content varied: they could be made of meat, fish, or be a kind of porridge like *frumenty*. Then come "viandes pour malades", *id est* dishes for the sick and convalescent which was a very typical chapter in medieval cookbooks.[172] After that fish dishes followed which provided an alternative for many fast days during the year. Then in some manuscripts, there are chapters on sauces and spices.

Le Viandier is known in four existing manuscripts, all of which have *frumenty* recipes.[173] The earliest among them (the Library of Valais in Switzerland, S 108, VAL) is dated from the second half of the thirteenth century or the latest the very beginning of the fourteenth century.[174] Interestingly, it is made of parchment in the form of a roll, just like two manuscripts of the *Forme of Cury*, with 128 recipes inside and no other texts.[175] There are indications that this manuscript was actually used in a kitchen – there are grease splatters, the parchment is smoother along the margin as if fingers frequently held the roll open at this point, also the ink

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[171] See Dictionnaire du Moyen Français (1330-1550) [further as DMF] on *viande*: http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/viande; and on *viandier*: http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/viandier1 (accessed 06.05.2024).

[172] For example, *Le Ménagier de Paris* also has it. See recipes №303-311 in Greco and Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide*, pp. 326-7.

[173] There were two more manuscripts but one was destroyed in a fire on June 6, 1944, with no copies left and another simply disappeared. See Ernest Langlois, "Notices des manuscrits français et provençaux de Rome antérieurs au XVIe siècle," in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale et autres bibliothèques*, Imprimerie nationale, vol. 33, 2 (Paris, 1889): 55.

[174] Aebischer, "Un manuscrit valaisan du Viandier attribué à Taillevent": 74.

[175] Paul Aebischer supposes that all early culinary manuscripts had the form of a roll. See ibid, p. 83.

is rubbed.[176] The form of a roll was meant to remind of ancient manuscripts and therefore gave gravitas to the text. Such an early dating of this particular manuscript suggests that Guillaume Tirel in fact was not the author of *Le Viandier*, but he simply adapted the already existing collection of recipes and gave it his name.[177] This detail is of interest because it shows that recipes were not the invention of a particular person but rather were created collectively, taken from various sources, adapted, and modified. This is the exact reason why one can say that one studies the whole culinary culture when looking at a single recipe.

The second manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds français, 19 791, BN) made of 18 folios with only the text of *Le Viandier* is dated from the fourteenth century.[178] It is a relatively small in-quarto manuscript on vellum with 140 recipes inside.

The third manuscript (Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Regina 776 (olim 233 and 2159, VAT) is dated from the first half of the fourteenth century.[179] It is made of paper bound in parchment with 199 recipes inside. It was rebound at a later stage, so it is impossible to reconstruct the textual milieu in which the culinary book circulated in the Middle Ages.[180]

The last manuscript, dating from the fifteenth century (Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, 3636 (olim 1253), MAZ) has *Le Viandier* alongside excerpts on medicine, astrology, mathematics, etc.[181] This paper copy has 133 recipes inside.

Another manuscript from the fifteenth century, as I indicated, was lost in a fire but one has some information about it.[182] In this small in-folio paper document *Le Viandier* was followed by *Le Journal de la Recepte / de la terre & baronnie de la haie-Dupuis pour ung an*

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[176] See note 25 on page 9 in Scully, ed. *The Viandier of Taillevent*.

[177] Aebischer, "Un manuscrit valaisan du Viandier attribué à Taillevent": 80.

[178] It was used as the base for the first edition of *Le Viandier de Guillaume Tirel dit Taillevent* made by J. Pichon and G. Vicaire in 1892. Jérôme Pichon and Georges Vicaire, eds., *Le Viandier de Guillaume Tirel, dit Taillevent : publié sur le manuscrit de la Bibliothèque nationale avec les variantes des mss. de la Bibliothèque Mazarine et des Archives de la Manche / précédé d'une introduction, [d'une bibliographie des manuscrits et des éditions] et accompagné de notes par le baron Jérôme Pichon et Georges Vicaire*, vol. 2 (Paris: Techener, 1892), pp. 1-34. In my research, I use Terence Scully's more recent edition because it has better readings of the manuscripts, and it comprises all four extant copies of *Le Viandier*. Terence Scully, ed., *The Viandier of Taillevent: An Edition of All Extant Manuscripts* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988).

[179] ff. 48r-85r.

[180] Apart from *Le Viandier*, there is a text called *Jugement des songes enigmatiques* (ff. lr-46v). See Ernest Langlois, "Notices des manuscrits français et provençaux de Rome antérieurs au XVIe siècle" in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale et autres bibliothèques*, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, vol. 33: 2 (1889), p. 54 and Scully, ed., *The Viandier of Taillevent*, p. 4.

[181] ff. 219r-228r.

[182] Saint-Lô, Archives Départementales de la Manche, Serie E, Archives de la baronnie de la Haye-du-Puits, ff. 39v-46r.

commenchant / au terme saint michiel Ian mil iiif chinquante & quatre et finissant / Ian revolu & acomply tant en argent grains fromens et / advoinne sail poyure commin poullailles oefz et autres choses… [1455-1456], so the recipe collection was paired with land acquisition accounts.

The sixth copy of *Le Viandier* is dated from the fifteenth century but disappeared at some point. It was a large volume, written in French with ten texts inside, the last of which was the recipe collection.[183] *Le Viandier* was written there alongside a treatise on the properties of things, a history of Thebes and Troy, Paulus Orosius's work, a book by the Roman poet Lucan, *Roman de la Rose*, works by Jean de Meun and Mathieu of Boulogne, *On the Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius, and other texts.[184] So, the culinary treatise was accompanied by works on philosophy, history, and poetical texts, although it is impossible to establish if these texts coexisted from the moment they were copied into this codex or if they were bound together at a later stage.

The process of making *frumenty* in these four recipes is described fairly similarly. First, one needs to prepare the wheat grain and wash it well, then cook it in water. Once it is done, one must drain the water, take boiled cow's milk, and add it to the porridge, stirring often. Then one should take the pot from the fire and let it cool, after which one can add a large number of egg yolks. This part could be considered a core recipe.

Then, there are some variations. Three out of four recipes in *Le Viandier* do not specify how exactly wheat grain should be "prepared" (*appareillié*) before cooking. Only the BN manuscript explains this process which is very similar to how it is described in most of the English recipes: "Take picked wheat, then moisten it with warm water and put it in a cloth, then beat it with a pestle until it hulls and wash it well in water".[185] The only difference would be that *Le Viandier's* recipe does not mention a mortar being used to hull the grain but the moistened grain is put into a cloth.

One recipe (VAT) tells simply to take the pot from the fire once milk is added while two other recipes (VAL and MAZ) indicate instead that the porridge should cool down a bit before one

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[183] See the description in *Inventaire du due de Berry de 1416.* Art. 919. Archives nationales.
[184] Pichon and Vicaire, *Le Viandier de Guillaume Tirel, dit Taillevent*, p. iv, n. 1.
[185] "Prennés forment bien esleu, puis le mouilliés de eaue tiede et le liés en un drapel, puis batés du petail dessus bien fort atant qu'il soit tout espouillié et lavé tresbien en eaue*"*. Compare it with an English recipe, for example, from BL Harleian MS 279: "Take whete and pyke it clene, and do it in a morter, an caste a lytel water þer-on; an stampe with a pestel tyl it hole". Edited in Austin, *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery Books*, p. 1-64.

adds egg yolks. The BN version is the most detailed in this respect as it also adds that *frumenty* should not be too hot when one adds the yolks. But none of the recipes, unlike some of their English counterparts, explain that if you add egg yolks to a hot porridge or you let it boil after this step, the dish will burn.[186] Also, only one *Le Viandier* recipe (MAZ) makes a note that egg yolks should be beaten before adding them to *frumenty*. This detail is featured in some English recipes as well.[187]

Interestingly, *Le Viandier's* recipes of *frumenty* are not unanimous on whether it is mandatory to add saffron which I consider to be an integral part of English recipes to give it a characteristic yellow color. The color was an important feature for French cooks in general as many other dishes explicitly indicated in their titles which hue they should have had (*rosé de lapereaulx*, *broet violet*), and saffron together with egg yolks were a staple yellow colorant.[188] Nonetheless, the Vatican copy says that only "some people add spices and saffron" (*aucuns y mettent espices et saffren*). At the same time, the dish still should be yellow (*et doit estre jaunette*). I assume that the desired color, in this case, would be achieved not by adding saffron but because of the large amount of egg yolks. For saffron to give a vibrant yellow color to a dish, it would be necessary to use it in a quite substantial quantity, while the recipes advise adding just "a bit" (*un pou*), which is expected from the one of the most expensive spices on the market. At the same time, the role of saffron as a coloring agent in medieval cookery is undisputable as already in the next recipe for *garlins/tailliz* after *frumenty* Taillevent tells to take "saffron to give it color" (*saffren pour luy donner couleur*).[189]

Two recipes (VAL and MAZ) mention that "enough" (*asses*) sugar should be added to the dish – not to sweeten it substantially but rather as a spice or a decoration. The main difference from the English recipes of *frumenty* is that *Le Viandier* calls for spices (*espice*) to put into the dish in addition to saffron and sugar – for BN it is a must-have ingredient, and other copies testify that only "some people" (*aucuns*) use them. Also, BN specifies that these should be "fines

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[186] See, for example, in *Liber Cure Cocorum*: "Lye hit up with 3olkes of eyren, / And kepe hit wele, lest hit berne". Sloane MS 1986, edited in Morris, ed., *Liber Cure Cocorum*, p. 7.

[187] For example, in Arundel MS 334: "<…> and take raw zolkes of eyren and bete hom wel in a vessell, and do in the pot <…>". Edited in Warner, ed., *Antiquitates Culinariae*, p. 51.

[188] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 61. In general, saffron was one of the main spices in medieval French cookery until the fifteenth century used primarily for its coloring agency and because of its high price as a status symbol. See Laurioux, "De l'usage des épices dans l'alimentation médiévale": 19-20.

[189] VAT, edited in Scully, ed., *The Viandier of Taillevent*, p. 118.

espices" which in *Le Viandier* usually signified ginger, cinnamon, clove, and grain of paradise.[190]

Another difference from the English recipes is that some *Le Viandier* instructions tell to add venison broth (*l'eaue de la venoison*) into an already prepared dish, while in their English counterparts, if this ingredient is used at all, it is added while boiling the grain, together with milk.[191] Although, in English recipes, it is not so clear if it was a broth of venison or other animals.[192] The mention of venison in some *Le Viandier* recipes is the only indication of an association between this game and *frumenty*. The connection is not as clear as in English recipes which often have venison in the name of the recipe itself and the menus or specify in the text that the dish should be served with this meat. Another significant difference is that there are no lent versions of *frumenty* and almond milk is never used to prepare it, be it for a fast or a feast day, although this ingredient is very prominent in English recipes.[193] Lastly, for Taillevent, *frumenty* is not a pottage, but an "entremets" served in between courses – its recipe is put into the "entremés" section of the treatise. So, most probably, it was not served with venison or porpoise like it was done in England, but rather on its own, almost as a delicacy to give guests a break from heavy roasts.

BN and VAT manuscripts have a relationship of being an earlier and a later version of the same book, probably made by Taillevent himself. His professional life spanned some sixty-five years between 1330 and 1395. It is not unimaginable that he re-edited his masterwork and reissued it once he became a celebrity chef under King Charles V.[194] The VAL manuscript, on the other hand, which was most probably not written by Taillevent but existed before him, gives an idea of what *frumenty* recipe looked like before this chef interpreted it. Lastly, the MAZ copy adds another temporal span as it was created already in the fifteenth century. Taken all together,

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[190] The BN copy frequently abbreviates this list of spices as "fines espices" as can be seen if we compare similar recipes from different copies of *Le Viandier*. See, for example, recipe №20 for *Boussac de lievres, connins* edited in Scully, ed., *The Viandier of Taillevent*, pp. 66-67. Although the term "fines espices" is recognized in all medieval cookery, there is no agreement on what exactly it means. So, for different cooks, it would be a different number of spices. Therefore, to interpret *frumenty* recipe from *Le Viandier* it was important to compare different copies of this work and not with other culinary treatises of the same time.

[191] For example, in Ashmole MS 1444: "<…> Tak goyd fresche brothe & mylk of almondes or of kyne & temper it withall <…>". Edited in Hieatt, ed., *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, pp. 39-44.

[192] A recipe in Rawlinson MS D 1222, for example, calls for the beef bones, other flesh and veal's kidneys in the same stage in preparation: "<…> Take þerto cowmylk & late boyle togeder, & þe bones of beef & oþere good fleshe. Yf þu have kyndners of feel & sewete do þerto <…>". Edited in Hieatt, ed., *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes*, p. 66.

[193] At the same time, almond milk was a staple ingredient in French medieval cookery and was preferred to animal mink. See Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p.58.

[194] Scully, ed., *The Viandier of Taillevent,* p. 7.

these versions of the same culinary book reflect changes in tastes and techniques fashionable at the French royal court at different points in time from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.

First of all, *frumenty* did not disappear from the culinary stage during this time. It continued to be an entremets dish and occupied the same place in the cookery books. Its core recipe remained the same – the techniques and ingredients did not change, and only some additional ingredients like sugar and saffron could be considered either necessary or strictly supplementary. The only difference is in how detailed the recipes were. The VAL version can be seen as a standard medieval recipe text-type that names ingredients and adds verbs in imperative form and adverbs to describe what to do with them and in what manner. BN version in that respect is more detailed: it is the only one that describes exactly how to prepare the grain before boiling and explains that the mixture should not be too hot before adding the eggs. Otherwise, it follows the same text-type principles. The VAT version, although it was created by Taillevent later in his career, does not follow the rule that later copies are more detailed.[195] It is more concise and closer to the earliest copy, but shares the common feature with the BN version which is the addition of the venison broth (maybe it is one of the details that Taillevent added himself by observing other peoples' techniques). Interestingly, the latest copy, the MAZ manuscript, is closer in wording to the earliest of them, the VAL roll, which may indicate that it was copied directly from it, while Taillevent made his proper treatises.

In conclusion, if an Englishman was present at a royal feast in France in the fourteenth century, he would recognize the dish of *frumenty* but be surprised to eat it at a different time and without his beloved venison. The latter may be explained by the fact that game meat was not easily available for the French nobility. The areas of wild land that could procure venison were ever shrinking and not in the vicinity of the centers of power, so its appearance on the dinner table was standard only for some noble localities.[196] And if an Englishman happened to dine on a fast day, he would be disappointed not to see *frumenty* at all.

Le Ménagier de Paris

Le Ménagier de Paris, or *Parisian Household Book*, was written in French in 1392-94 by an old wealthy Parisian bourgeois for his young wife to teach her proper conduct and give valuable

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[195] Scully, ed., *The Viandier of Taillevent*, p. 7.
[196] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages,* p. 54.

practical advice on how to run a household.[197] The second part of this book is devoted to house management and cookery and has over 380 recipes and numerous menus which are of great interest for this study. Apart from being another point of reference to compare English *frumenty* recipes with, this treatise allows us to analyze how dishes from the royal table were adapted by the bourgeois strata of French society. Even though the author of *Le Ménagier* was a very wealthy man – he had connections with the court of the Duke of Berry and possessed a country estate and a farm apart from the Parisian house, the analysis of this source gives another social dimension to my research.

Le Ménagier survived in three fifteenth-century manuscripts which are related but not exact copies of each other and one early-sixteenth-century handwritten copy on paper.[198] While some of them present *Le Ménagier* as a single-text manuscript (MS 2[199] and 3[200], and MS 3 seems to be a copy of MS 2), others are multiple-text manuscripts. MS 1 contains a work of Philippe de Mézières (1327-1405) who was a French soldier and author, in particular, his translation of the history of Griselda from Boccaccio's *Decameron* which he integrates into his narrative on marriage. There is also an allegorical poem by Jacques Bruyant, a French notary and a writer from the fourteenth century, entitled *Voie de Pauvreté ou de Richesse* (*A Way of Poverty and Riches*). Both texts, in my opinion, were copied into this manuscript to further develop such aspects of *Le Ménagier* as the importance of marriage and praise of certain virtues.[201] MS 4 has the same Jacques Bruyant's poem copied after *Le Ménagier* which seemed appropriate to the topic.[202] Unfortunately, there is no edition of *Le Ménagier* like that made by Terence Scully for

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[197] It is possible that the treatise was not compiled by a real man to his real wife but was rather a part of literary tradition, but this detail is not of importance to my research as I assume that either way it has its roots in real practice of that time. Greco and Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide*, pp. 1-2.

[198] MS 1: Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, 10310–10311 (fifteenth century); MS 2: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), fonds français 12477 (fifteenth century, slightly later than MS 1); MS 3: Paris, BnF, nouvelles acquisitions françaises 6739 (late fifteenth century); MS 4: Luxembourg, Bibliothèque nationale du Luxembourg MS I:95 (ancien numéro 19). MS 2 appears to be the closest to the common source of the first three MSS. MS 4 was discovered only in recent years.

[199] A relatively small (312 × 245 mm) parchment codex. See the description on BnF website: https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc43674d (accessed 29.04.2024).

[200] Also a medium-sized (285 × 195 mm) codex but made of paper: https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc413006 (accessed 29.04.2024).

[201] Both of them follow *Le Ménagier de Paris.* See the manuscript's description on the Brussel's Library webpage: https://portail.biblissima.fr/fr/ark:/43093/mdata8e704fc6a87e6af87d7808a7d8f0bb6bbaef883c (accessed 29.04.2024).

[202] See the manuscript's description on the Brussel's Library webpage: https://portail.biblissima.fr/ark:/43093/mdatabdb6fb84e5f1ac49f9fb9c0c38b27be8c6ef10f0 (accessed 29.04.2024).

Le Viandier which would take into consideration all the differences between the manuscripts, so in this study, I will analyze *Le Ménagier*'s *frumenty* recipes as a uniform phenomenon.

The basis of *frumenty* preparation as described in *Le Ménagier de Paris* seems to be the same as all previously analyzed recipes: one must hull the wheat, then cull and boil it in water. Then one must boil some milk, add wheat, and boil it once more together, then put egg yolks without letting them curdle. In the end, saffron may be added.[203] Apart from that, some details make this recipe differ from both *Le Viandier* and the English counterparts.

First, the text of the recipe itself is very nuanced. One is told not simply to hull the wheat but to do it as one would do with barley (*vous convient monder vostre froument ainsi comme l'en fait orge mondé*), therefore providing an additional point of reference on how to proceed with it. Then there are measurements: for ten bowls of *frumenty,* one needs a pound of hulled wheat (*pour dix escuelles[204] convient une livre[205] de froument mondé*), for each septier of milk one must add one hundred eggs (*pour chascun sextier[206] de lait un cent d'œufs*), and later, if needed, one can add half a piece of ginger (*demie cloche[207] de gingembre*).[208] Although the measurements are not consistent. The author can tell the reader to boil "some milk" (*boulez du lait*) or to add to it "a bit of wheat with it, hardly any" (*un petit de froument avec, mais qu'il n'y ait guères de froument*).

There are also explanations on why certain action is advised: boil some milk but do not stir it so that it does not curdle (*boulez du lait en une paelle et ne le mouvez point, car il tourneroit*); right after it boils, put it in a pot so that it does not pick up the taste of brass from the pan

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[203] Jérôme Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris, Traité de Morale et d'économie Domestique Composé Vers 1393 Par Un Bourgeois Parisien*, vol. 2 vols. (Paris: Crapelet & Lahure, for the Société des Bibliophiles français, 1846). (*frumenty* is in vol. 2), pp. 210-11.

[204] It is not completely clear whether here "escuelles" mean individual bowls to serve *frumenty* or a measurement for grains. The word "escuelle" can have both of these meanings. See DMF: http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/écuelle (accessed 29.04.2024).

[205] Depending on the region, "une livre" could mean a measurement from 380 to 552 grams. See DMF: http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/livre2 (accessed 29.04.2024).

[206] In Paris, "un sextier" was approximately half a liter. See DMF: http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/setier (accessed 29.04.2024).

[207] According to DMF, "cloche" does not have any measurement definition, it may be an allusion to the bell shape of the ginger used in the recipe. See DMF: http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/cloche1 (accessed 29.04.2024).

[208] Earlier in a menu for twenty plates there is an indication that one must take three hundred eggs to prepare enough *frumenty* for this number of guests: "Nota que pour la fromentée convendra trois cens œufs". Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris*, p. 121. This enormous number of eggs may surprise a modern reader, but it seems to have been normal for medieval diners. A royal cook Maistre Chiquart in his book *Du fait de cuisine* indicates that for a single-day banquet, the cook should prepare six thousand (sic!) eggs. See Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 58.

(*incontinent, sans attendre, le mettez en un pot qu'il ne sente l'arain*); once the milk cools down after boiling, take away the cream on top so that it does not cause the *frumenty* to curdle (*quant il est froit, si ostez la cresme de dessus afin que icelle cresme ne face tourner la fourmentée*). There is an additional advice that the hulled wheat should be boiled in the evening and left for the night in the tepid water near the fire (*esslisiez-le* [le froment] *et le cuisiez en eaue dès le soir, et le laissiez toute nuit couvert emprès le feu en eaue comme tiède*), I assume, so that one could continue the preparation in the morning with fresh milk. There are also indications of what kitchenware to use: a brass pan to boil the milk and a pot with a lid to prepare the wheat. The dish is made on an open fire.

Second, the *frumenty* recipe in *Le Ménagier* comprises both versions of this dish – for feast and fast season. Its author gives detailed instructions on how to boil the milk and add egg yolks so that nothing curdles and then simply adds: "On fish days, use milk; on meat days, use meat broth".[209] This is an obscure sentence as previously almond milk, which could be a standard alternative for animal milk on fast days, was not mentioned. Still, I assume that it is implied in this case, as it is in all other instances when variation for "fish days" exists. Besides, almond milk was a staple ingredient in French cookery in general and used much more often than animal milk.[210] As for the meat broth, maybe it could have been used together with cow's milk as it was done in some of the English recipes.[211] The saffron is called for only "if the eggs do not seem yellow enough" (*si les œufs ne jaunissent assez*) – a condition that one can see in English recipes too. But the author of *Le Ménagier* also proposes to add ginger to the dish which was one of the favorite spices in French cuisine of the fourteenth century – 27% of recipes in all culinary treatises from that century include it.[212]

Another detail that *Le Ménagier* gives is that the wheat grain for *frumenty* could be purchased at the market already hulled: the recipe says that sometimes one can find it at a spice merchant's shop for one blanc per pound.[213] This fact is mentioned again in another part of the treatise when its author explains at what shops certain ingredients could be purchased. At a spice

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[209] "À jour de poisson l'en prend lait à jour de char, du boullon de la char*".*
[210] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 58.
[211] See, for example, "potage de *frumenty"* in Arundel MS 334, edited in Warner, ed., *Antiquitates Culinariae*, p. 51.
[212] Laurioux, "De l'usage des épices dans l'alimentation médiévale": 18.
[213] *"*On treuve aucunes fois sur les espiciers tout mondé pour un blanc' la livre*".* One blanc was a small coin that could vary from three to thirteen deniers, most usually being equal to five deniers. See DMF: http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/blanc (accessed 29.04.2024).

merchant's shop, one could buy saffron for the *frumenty*.[214] Venison which is sometimes associated with *frumenty* in *Le Ménagier de Paris* could be purchased from a butcher (*au bouchier*) or a poultry man (au *poullaillier*).[215] It is clear that for the author of *Le Ménagier* "venison" means the meat of a red deer, the same as in the British Isles: there is a passage on how to salt this type of meat which is called "venoison de cerf".[216] Animal milk which was usually not kept at hand for cooking as it had a very short shelf life could be purchased at merchants on the street called *Pierre-au-Lait*, as the author of *Le Ménagier de Paris* instructs.[217] He adds a detail that here milk could be bought of good quality – not skimmed and without water (*non esburré et sans eaue*), although we know from the recipe that the cream will be taken away later during the preparation.

In another part of *Le Ménagier* we have an instruction on how to hull wheat grain for *frumenty*. Barley (*orge*) could be used as a main ingredient instead of wheat, and it was hulled in the same manner. The instruction is given in a section entitled "Other small various things that do not deserve a separate chapter" (*Autres menues choses diverses qui ne désirent point de chappitre*): one must put the grain in hot water and wash it, then drain the water and let the grain dry. After that one must pound it with a wooden pestle (a mortar is not mentioned) and winnow in the basin where it was washed previously.[218] This practical advice adds to our knowledge of what kitchenware was used to make *frumenty*: a basin to wash the grain (*bacin à laver*) and a wooden pestle (*pestail de bois*) to pound it.

The main difference between *Le Ménagier* recipe for *frumenty* from the English ones is the category in which it appears and what place it occupies during a meal. Here it is not as evident as in *Le Viandier* – the recipe itself is put in the chapter entitled "Entremès, fritures et dorures" – for entremets, fried and gilded dishes, so one can assume that it is an entremets since it is clearly neither fried nor gilded. At the same time earlier in the treatise, in a menu of dishes served for a wedding feast, it is listed as a dessert together with venison – separately, not as one

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[214] One could also buy sugar and almonds at a spice merchant's shop – the ingredients that are normally mentioned in *frumenty* recipes, but not in *Le Ménagier*.

[215] In the first case, probably, one could buy raw meat, and in the second – an already prepared roasted meat, since the poultry man is said to also sell the roasts (*les rots*). Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris*, pp. 121-2.

[216] Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris*, p. 129.

[217] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 57. *Pierre-au-Lait* was located in the sixth arrondissement of Paris but disappeared when in 1854 a boulevard de Sébastopol was opened in Paris. See note 3 on p. 113 in Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris*. The milk, it is said, can be purchased here exactly for *frumenty* preparation.

[218] "Monder orge ou fromment pour faire froumentée. froumentée. Il convient eaue très chaude, et mettre le fromment ou orge dedans icelle eaue chaude, et laver et paulmoïer très bien et longuement puis getter et purer toute l'eau, et laissier essuier le fourment ou orge et puis le piler à un pestail de bois, puis vanner à un bacin à laver", Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris*, p. 271.

dish.[219] In the same menu, there is a separate list of entremets. So, clearly, *frumenty* is not considered to be an entremets, like it was in *Le Viandier*.

In the twenty-four menus for both fish and flesh days at the beginning of the culinary section of *Le Ménagier*, *frumenty* appears fourteen times, three of which are lent versions of the dish.[220] It is featured in the menus both for "disner" and "souper", so for the midday and evening meals. Usually, it comes with the last course – either the third or the fourth which supports the notion that *frumenty* was a dessert, after which followed only wine and spices.[221] In the majority of menus for flesh days, *frumenty* is featured alongside venison and not as parts of the same dish.[222] Fast versions of this dish, just like their counterparts in England, call for porpoise instead of venison.[223] It is clear that porpoise goes together with *frumenty* because there is a syntactic connection between these words in menus: "*fromentée* au marsouin" or "*fromentée* au pourpois", and the preposition "au" serves as an indicator of that connection.[224]

In general, the recipes from *Le Ménagier* align with the culinary tradition established by *Le Viandier*. The practical aspect of this treatise becomes especially evident with all the advice on where to buy the ingredients for *frumenty* and how to hull the grain for it – these aspects are usually omitted in the cookbooks written by royal cooks. *Le Ménagier* shows that the culinary culture of the aristocracy was emulated by the lower strata of French society, notably, by the emerging bourgeoisie.[225]

Le Recueil de Riom

Le Recueil de Riom is another French recipe collection that has a *frumenty* recipe in it. It came down to us in a single manuscript on paper (Paris, BnF, Latin 6707) which was clearly reassembled as it contains texts from both the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. *Le Recueil* was

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[219] "Desserte*: froumentée* et venoison*".* Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris*, p. 108.
[220] Ibid., pp. 93-103.
[221] Some menus consist of more than four courses (for example, I and II in Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris,* pp. 91-92 both consist of six courses) but *frumenty* is not featured in them.
[222] The only exception – menu XVIII in Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris,* p. 101: "venoison à la *froumenté*".
[223] There are two terms used to designate a porpoise – *marsouin* and *pourpois* but they are the same thing. See the entry for *pourpois* in DMF: http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/porpois and for *marsouin:* *http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/marsouin* (accessed 30.04.2024).
[224] Menus XXIII and XXIV in Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris,* p. 103.
[225] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages,* p. 50.

dated from the fifteenth century, in particular the year 1466.[226] The text was copied by a scribe in Riom, hence the name of the manuscript, and it is assumed that initially, it belonged to a member of minor nobility or even to a representative of a growing bourgeoisie.[227] The folios where the recipe collection is situated include a treatise on farming and the grafting of plants, and information on medical preparations – a very typical combination for the late Middle Ages. This book could have been the only codex in a house that contained all the practical information to manage the household on a day-to-day basis hence it would be consulted regularly.[228]

Although this culinary collection is rather short and includes only forty-eight recipes, it looks like it contains the most commonplace dishes of the day.[229] There is no division into chapters but the whole book can be loosely divided into meat section, fish section, and sauces. *Frumenty* (*ffromentée*) which is the eleventh recipe would rather belong to the first section as the recipe for it is clearly meant for feast days – it has milk and eggs.[230]

The recipe itself is rather short and straightforward compared to the one from *Le Ménagier* and closer in syntaxis to those in *Le Viandier*. To make the dish, one must first cook (*cuire*) the wheat grain meaning to boil it in water. When it is done, one must take it from the fire and let it cool down so that "it drinks well its water" (*affin qu'il boive bien son eaue*), *id est* absorbs it. Then one is told to set some milk to boil, and when it starts simmering, put in the cooked wheat grain. When it is boiled, one must beat the eggs and add them to the mixture but be careful that the milky wheat is not too hot, otherwise, the eggs will burn (*ardroient*). There is an advice if the mixture is too hot, one can pour in a small pan of cold water.

At first sight, the recipe seems to be very similar to what I have analyzed before, but some details look odd. For example, the recipe tells to add, presumably, whole eggs and not just egg yolks as all other recipes do. The latter would be a better option because they would provide the yellow color – an integral part of this dish. In the absence of any mention of saffron, egg yolks would be an indispensable ingredient to achieve that effect. Then, the recipe says that

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[226] See the description on the website of BnF: https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc65823z (accessed 30.04.2024). On the dating see Carole Lambert, ed., *Le recueil de Riom et La maniere de henter soutillement: un livre de cuisine et un réceptaire sur les greffes du XVe siécle*, Le Moyen français 20 (Montréal: CERES, 1987), p. 21. There is a more recent edition with a translation: Jean-François Kosta-Théfaine, ed., *Le recueil de Riom recettes de cuisine du XVe siècle: manuscrit Bibliothèque nationale de France, latin 6707* (Clermont-Ferrand: Paleo, 2009).
[227] Carole Lambert, ed. *Le recueil de Riom,* p. 34.
[228] Lambert, ed., *Le recueil de Riom,* p. 35.
[229] Scully, ed., *The Viandier of Taillevent*, pp. 27-28.
[230] The recipes in the manuscript are not numbered, the numbering is done by a transcriber Carole Lambert.

eggs will burn (*ardroient*) if the mixture is too hot. Other French instructions (*Le Ménagier* and *Livre fort excellent de cuysine*), if they explain this stage of preparation, mention that the eggs will curdle (*tourner*).[231] The last piece of advice seems to be way off: one is told that if the porridge is too hot, one must put a small pan of cold water *into* it (*s'il est tropt chaud, mectez le dedans une pleine pouelle de eaue froide*) which does not sound like a good idea since it will destroy the texture of the dish.

I assume that these points are a misinterpretation of the recipe by the scribe who was not a professional cook. The case of eggs instead of egg yolks could be just an omission of a word, the use of the verb "burn" instead of "curdle" may be a misunderstanding of the cooking process, and the instruction to put a pan of water inside an already cooked dish must have been a misreading. In the latter case, there is a passage from *Le Ménagier de Paris* that can serve as a point of reference. The Parisian bourgeois has a similar sentence where he explains: if one sees that the porridge with egg yolks in a pot is about to curdle (*se l'en veoit qu'il se voulsist tourner*), one must put the pot into a pan of water (*mettre le pot en plaine paelle d'eaue*) to cool it down.[232]

In general, this recipe seems to be the simplest of all – no version for fast days, no mention of venison or porpoise to go along with it (although these foodstuffs are used in other recipes of this collection), no spices or sugar, no extensive explication on how to hull the wheat grain at the beginning of the preparation. It looks like the Auvergne nobleman who commissioned this recipe collection was aware of the food culture of the aristocrats but not in detail. This *frumenty* recipe seems to be an echo that came down to his social stratum as a symbol of fine dining without a real understanding of how to prepare it and play around with its variations.

Livre fort excellent de cuysine tres-utile et profitable

Livre fort excellent de cuysine tres-utile et profitable, or *Livre fort excellent de cuisine* for short*,* is already not a medieval culinary treatise – it was printed in Lyon in 1555. But it also has a *frumenty* recipe in it, and, although it marks a new chapter in French culinary history, it clearly drew its inspiration from *Le Ménagier de Paris* and other medieval texts – this is why I have

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[231] The recipes from *Livre fort excellent de cuisine* will be discussed later in this chapter.
[232] Pichon, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris*, p. 211.

decided to include it as an additional point of reference to see whether the recipe underwent any significant change in the following century.[233]

According to this book, to make *frumenty* one must take wheat and let it cook over slow fire until the grains burst (the author does not specify that it should be cooked in water, but I believe this was the case). Then one must take cow's milk (*laict de vache*), mix it with the grain in a pot, and put it on coals away from the flames. When it starts to boil, one must add sugar with a bit of powdered ginger and pounded saffron, and salt to taste (*gousteras de sel*). Then one must take egg yolks and strain them through a cloth with some milk, then add to *frumenty* to thicken it. The thicker it will be – the better.[234]

As can be seen, the dish itself does not differ much from its medieval predecessors. It has all the same ingredients that one can see in other culinary collections: wheat grain, cow's milk, sugar, ginger, saffron, salt, and egg yolks. The preparation is also pretty much the same: first, one cooks the whole-wheat berries in water, then in milk, adds egg yolks and spices. Some of the advice is the same as well: one must be watchful that the porridge is not too hot when adding the egg yolks, otherwise, they may curdle and burn (*tourner les oeufz & brusler*). As in many other French recipes for *frumenty*, there are no explanations on how to prepare and hull the grain before boiling. I assume it was either well understood or the pre-hulled grain could be bought at a market like it was indicated in *Le Ménagier de Paris.*

The main difference in how the dish is prepared lies in sugar. No other French recipe calls for it as a mandatory ingredient.[235] On the other hand, many English recipes use sugar to make *frumenty*. But I would not argue that it was an English influence. In fourteenth-century France sugar was not widely employed in aristocratic cookery, not as much as in Italy or England in the same period.[236] But the French slowly developed the taste for this sweetener, so that almost half of the recipes in Maistre Chiquart's culinary treatise from the fifteenth century called for it.[237] Other differences are concerned with how the recipe is written. Here the author of the recipe gives the cook the power to decide certain aspects of the dish: the latter is told to add salt

[233] Jérôme Pichon argued that all sixteenth century cookbooks in France were reprints of medieval sources. See Jérôme Pichon's introduction to the *Ménagier de Paris* (1846), vol. 1, pp. xxxiii-xxxv. The editors of *Livre fort excellent de Cuisine* rather argue that this treatise drew inspiration and sources material from medieval cookbooks but was not a direct reprint of them. See Timothy J. Tomasik and Ken Albala, eds., *The Most Excellent Book of Cookery =: Livre Fort Excellent de Cuysine (1555)* (Totnes, Devon [England]: Prospect Books, 2014), p. 7.
[234] Tomasik and Albala, eds., *The Most Excellent Book of Cookery*, p. 78.
[235] Sugar is mentioned in *Le Viandier* but as an additional element, not strictly necessary.
[236] Flandrin, "Le sucré dans les livres de cuisine français, du XIVe au XVIIIe siècle": 215–32.
[237] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 59.

and spices to his taste (*bien assaisonnee a ton goust*). There are no instructions to take three hundred eggs like it was in *Le Ménagier* but rather to take as many as needed for the amount of *frumenty* itself (*selon la quantite que tu verras que tu auras de formentee*) which can differ according to the number of eaters. The relationship between a writer and a cook becomes more informal: the text is written using "tu" forms instead of "vous" or "il faut" forms like it was before.[238]

Apart from this recipe, *Livre fort excellent de cuisine* has two more: *frumenty* with venison (*fromentee de venayson*) and with kid (*fromentee de chevreau*) which seem to be copied from different sources without acknowledging that they share a lot of similarities. Namely, the recipe for *frumenty* with venison starts with the phrase "prenes ung chevreau ou aigneau", so it is (or could be) made of kid (or lamb) as well as the second recipe.[239] Moreover, kid or lamb were not considered to be "venison" as the latter usually signified some kind of game meat.[240] The fact that the recipe was copied from another source is also clear from the language which changes to "vous" again.

It seems that the copyist was either distracted or did not have any knowledge of cooking because this recipe is very unclear in the preparation of the dish. It starts with the meat while normally *frumenty* recipes open with wheat preparation. One must roast a kid or a lamb, cut it into small pieces, and mix it with cream and already cooked wheat. When this "boullon" is cold (there was no mention of boiling or any heating of it before), one must add venison, eggs, "pouldre blanche" (a spice mix), marjoram, and "throw" (*jectes*) all this into the *frumenty* which is confusing as it seems that the steps before that were made to the same mixture.[241]

Even though this recipe is unclear and inconsistent, it is apparent that it is also very different from any other *frumenty* recipe – even from the one that was written in the same cookery book earlier. Two stages of meat preparation (first roasting then boiling), mixing meat and wheat

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[238] *Le Viandier de Taillevent* and *Le Ménagier de Paris* use "vous" forms and *Le Recueil de Riom* uses "il faut" forms.

[239] The recipe for *Fromentee de venayson* is in Timothy J. Tomasik and Ken Albala, eds., *The Most Excellent Book of Cookery =: Livre Fort Excellent de Cuysine (1555)* (Totnes, Devon [England]: Prospect Books, 2014), p. 240. The editors and translators also notice how difficult it is to interpret this unclear recipe. See note 135 on p. 241.

[240] Melitta Weiss Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, Garland Reference Library of the Humanities, v. 1744 (New York: Garland Pub, 1995), p. 54.

[241] The roasted meat as an accompaniment for *frumenty* sounds even more odd when one remembers that in English recipes it (just like porpoise) was always boiled. *Le Ménagier de Paris* indicates that "pouldre blanche" could be bought pre-made by a spicer. Greco and Rose, eds., *The Good Wife's Guide*, p. 270. What spices went into this mix cannot be said exactly as it could vary from region to region and from a spicer to spicer, but probably it included ginger, sugar, and other "white" spices.

together, adding cream, whole eggs instead of egg yolks, spicing it with marjoram and "pouldre blanche" – all these novelties seem to create not a version of *frumenty* but a completely different dish which was neither yellow nor thick as it should be. The type of meat is also novel – kid and lamb. They were not widely used in French medieval cookery but rather reserved for the aristocrats, especially mutton. Young, suckling animals were a staple in aristocratic cookery as they stood in the way of getting milk from the mature goats and sheep.[242]

The last recipe, "*fromentee* de chevreau", although also differs from the "standard" version, acknowledges that it exists and refers to it when saying: "ayes vostre froment cuict en laict comme se faisies une fromentee".[243] So, the wheat grain in this recipe is prepared as usual – first boiled in water, then in milk with the addition of "pouldre blanche", cinnamon, and sugar. At the same time, the cook should prepare the meat – cut the lamb into chunks and then boil it with herbs in a bouillon. These two parts of the dish are cooked separately, and it is not clear how they relate each other on a plate. So, even though this recipe shares certain aspects with "normal" frumenty preparation, it has several alterations. Here cinnamon appears for the first time, herbs are used for flavoring which could be an Italian influence – there they were used in cooking much more extensively already during the Middle Ages, and the meat is again cut into pieces.[244] No eggs or saffron were mentioned so it cannot be said with certainty that this dish was as yellow and thick as it should be.

Frumenty also appears in several menus of the *Livre fort excellent de cuisine*. For example, as a "potaige" during supper for a winter day which comes after the entrée and before the roasts.[245] In another menu, it is included in the "issue de table" together with artichokes and a porpoise.[246] Whatever course it was included in, *frumenty* was definitely a staple dish for any formal meal. It is featured in the "Memoire quant tu vouldras faire ung banquet" among those preparations that should be made "premierement".[247]

In conclusion, one can see that sixteenth-century culinary culture in France still enjoys *frumenty* among its staple dishes. At the same time, it starts to experiment by changing the meat that goes

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[242] Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages,* pp. 55-56.
[243] "Have your wheat cooked in milk like you would do a *frumenty*". Tomasik and Albala, eds., *The Most Excellent Book of Cookery,* p. 242.
[244] On the use of herbs in Italian cooking during the Middle Ages see Adamson, ed., *Food in the Middle Ages*, p. 61.
[245] Tomasik and Albala, eds., *The Most Excellent Book of Cookery,* pp. 224-246.
[246] Ibid., p. 240.
[247] Ibid., p. 248.

alongside the porridge, by adding new spices like cinnamon and marjoram. Another aspect that differs from the medieval tradition is that the fast version is not mentioned at all – neither in menus nor in recipes. These changes reflect the evolution of French culinary tradition during the Renaissance – the increasing presence of sugar and the Italian influence become apparent in this dish.

Overall, the French recipes for *frumenty* from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries have a lot in common with the English ones from the period. The core preparation and ingredients were the same. It is clear that the French version was supposed to have the same characteristics: the dish should have been thick and yellow. Saffron and sugar played an even smaller role than in English instructions. One novelty is that other spices appear, like ginger. The biggest difference is the absence of explicit recipes for fast versions, even though they existed as they are mentioned on menus. Another peculiarity is the appearance of mutton and kid as a side dish for *frumenty* in the recipes from the sixteenth century when in England mutton was mentioned only in the fourteenth century and then disappeared from the recipes. The place of *frumenty* during a meal in France was also different. Although it could be served as a porridge-like dish, more often it was as an entremets, a dish served in between courses. Even though on menus venison is frequently mentioned next to the *frumenty*, they seem to be separate dishes. So, there is no tight connection between the two like it is in the English context.

The two culinary traditions seem to have interacted and exchanged ideas but interpreted and evaluated them in different ways. I argue that the taste itself was a major factor that influenced the recipes. For example, the French preference for ginger may well explain the presence of this spice in some *frumenty* recipes. The access to certain foodstuffs varied in these geographical areas and it also contributed to the variations in its preparation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis has achieved the following goals as they were formulated in the Introduction:

1. It was established that *frumenty* was an easily recognizable dish with consistent ingredients and modes of preparation that did not change significantly from the first appearance of this recipe in the cookery books to the sixteenth century.

2. *Frumenty* was not a uniquely English dish, it was enjoyed by the French nobility and bourgeoisie as well. Moreover, the French recipes are very similar to the English ones.

3. There was a "standard" version of this dish made with animal milk and eggs which in the English context was frequently accompanied by venison, while in French recipes it appeared rather by itself. The alternative version with almond milk and porpoise (which was considered to be a fish) instead of meat was prepared during fast days. It is featured much more prominent in English cookbooks and menus while in French context it seems to have played a lesser role. In any case, the Church's dietary regulations were one of the main factors for creating an alternative recipe.

4. Another factor was the social rank and wealth of consumers. If they could afford luxury ingredients like venison, porpoise, white sugar, and saffron, they would certainly add them. *Frumenty* was certainly served during kings' coronations and high prelates' feasts. At the same time, the emerging bourgeoisie who was eager to imitate the aristocratic lifestyle also included this dish on their menu as a token of *haut cuisine*.

5. In most cases, *frumenty* was served (with venison or porpoise, depending on the day) during the first or the second course of a meal which consisted of at least two but more often three courses in total. In the French context, there is a tendency to view this dish as an entremets rather than belonging to the main course and serve it without an accompaniment, be that meat or fish.

6. In the culinary books, *frumenty* was classified as a "porridge-like" dish or an entremets following how it was served on the table. The recipes themselves as a text type changed from one manuscript to another. Some of them adjusted the description to the audience's needs and, for example, included measurements if the reader was supposed to be inexperienced in cooking (as was the case in *Le Ménagier de Paris*), or, on the contrary, excluded luxury ingredients if the recipe was written for a nobleman of modest rank.

After having answered all the questions posed at the outset, there is still room for further research. Numerous Italian, Catalan, German, and other medieval culinary books can be analyzed to see if they also share this culinary tradition of eating *frumenty*. The question of under whose influence this dish appeared in the cookbooks in the first place and where it originates also remains open. Apart from that, other medieval recipes can be studied in the same manner to see to what extent the European culinary tradition was homogenous. In the end, this thesis laid a solid foundation for future research aiming to inspire other studies in this field.

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Appendix 1. *Frumenty* in English culinary books (14th–15th centuries)

	Douce MS 257	Ashmole MS 1444	The Forme of Cury	Arundel MS 334	Harleian MS 1735 (John Crophill's Commonplace Book)	Harleian MS 279	Ashmole MS 1439	Harleian MS 4016	Douce MS 55	Additional MS 5467	Rawlinson D 1222	Beinecke MS 163 (the Wagstaff Miscellany)	Sloane MS 442 (ffor þe knyghtys tabylle and ffor þe kynggys tabille)	Trinity College Cambridge MS 0.1.13	Holkham 674 (A Noble Boke off Cookry)	Sloane MS 1986 (Liber Cure Cocorum)
Library	Bodleian Library	Bodleian Library	9 manuscripts in different libraries, see Chapter 1	British Library	British Library	British Library	British Library	British Library	Bodleian Library	British Library		Yale University		British Library	Oxford Library	British Library
Date	1381	1390	4/4 14th century	1425 or later	1/2 15th century	1430–1440	1430–1440	ab. 1450	ab. 1450	ab. 1450	1450	1460	mid-15th century	1465	1468	1470
Recipes	92 recipes	30+33 recipes (MS III and MS IV)	205 recipes	69 recipes	258 recipes	182 recipes	277 recipes	184 recipes	181 recipes			189 recipes		102 recipes		

The table includes only those manuscripts that have frumenty recipes in them. It was created by Alena Minko, (1)MA student at Central European University, Vienna (Austria) for the Master's Thesis in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies "Frumenty: A European Recipe in Medieval Culinary Tradition"

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Appendix 2. *Frumenty* in French culinary books (13th-16th centuries)

Le Viandier de Guillaume Tirel, dit Taillevent				Le Ménagier de Paris	Le Recuil de Riom	Livre fort excellent de cuysine
VAL	BN	VAT	MAZ			
2/2 13th century	14th century	1/2 14th century	15th century	1393	1466	1555
Edition: Taillevent, and Terence Scully. *The Viandier of Taillevent: An Edition of All Extant Manuscripts* . Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988.				Edition: Pichon, Jérôme, ed., *Le Ménagier de Paris, traité de morale et d'économie domestique composé vers 1393 par un bourgeois parisien* . Paris: Crapelet, 1846; Paris: Crapelet & Lahure, for the Societe des Bibliophiles frangais, 1847. 2 vols.	Edition: Lambert, Carole, ed. *Le recueil de Riom et la Manière de henter soutillement: Deux réceptaires inedits du XVe siècle.* Montréal: Ceres, 1988.	Edition: Tomasik, Timothy J., and Ken Albala, eds. *The Most Excellent Book of Cookery =: Livre Fort Excellent de Cuysine (1555*). Totnes, Devon [England]: Prospect Books, 2014.
Formentee. Prenez forment apparelié, lavez bien et metez cuire en yaue; quant il sera cuit cil l'esprenez; et prenez lait boullu, puis metez dedens vostre formentee, faites boullir, remuez souvant; quant il sera ung pou reffroidy, fillez moiaux d'eufs ou collez dedens It forment du saffren bien pou; du succre assez soil mis dedens le pot; acuns y metent espices; doit estrejaunet.	Formentee. Prennés forment bien esleu, puis le mouilliés de eaue tiede et le liés en un drapel, puis batés du petail dessus bien fort atant qu'il soit tout espouillié et lavé tresbien en eaue; et quant il sera tresbien cuit si le purés; et prennés lait de vache boulli une onde, puis metés cuire dedens vostre forment, et tirés arriere du feu, et remués souvant, et fillés dedans moyeux d'uefs grant foison, et qu'il ne soit pas trop chaut quant l'en les filera dedans, et remués dedans puis fines espices et saffran un pou; et doit estre un liant et jaunet; et aucuns y metent de l'eaue de la venoisson.	Fromentee. Prenez fourment e t l'appareillez et lavez tres bien, puis le mettez le cuire en euae; et quant il sera cuit si le purez; puis prenez lait de vache boully une onde et mettez le froment dedans et faictes boullir une onde et tirez arriere du feu, et remuez souvent, et fille/ dedans moyeulx d'oeufz grant foison; et aucuns y mettent espices et saffren et de l'eaue de la venoison; et doit estre jaunette et bien liante.	Fromentee. Prener froument, espailliez et lavez tresbien, puis le mecter cuire et le purer; puis bouler lait de vaiche une onde et mecter vostre froument dedans et mecter boulir et remuer souvent; puis quant ilz sera bien reffroidiez, fillex dedans moyeuf d'euf bien batus et ung poul de saffrain et succre asses par dessus le pout; et aulcuns y mectent espices; et doit estre bien janet et lyant.	Froumentée. Premièrement, vous convient monder vostre froument ainsi comme l'en fait orge mondé, puis sachiez que pour dix escuelles convient une livre de froument mondé, lequel on treuve aucunes fois sur les espiciers tout mondé pour un blanc' la livre. Esliziez-le et le cuisiez en eaue dès le soir, et le laissiez toute nuit couvert emprès le feu en eaue comme tiède, puis le trayez et eslisez. Puis boulez du lait en une paelle et ne le mouvez point, car il tourneroit et incontinent, sans attendre, le mettez en un pot qu'il ne sente l'arain; et aussi, quant il est froit, si ostez la cresme de dessus afin que icelle cresme ne face tourner la tourmentée, et de rechief faites boulir le lait et un petit de froument avec, mais qu'il n'y ait guères de froument; puis prenez moyeux d'œufs et les coulez, c'est assavoir pour chascun sextier de lait un cent d'œufs, puis prenez le lait boulant, et batre les œufs avec le lait, puis reculer le pot et getter les œufs, et reculer; et se l'en veoit qu'il se voulsist tourner, mettre le pot en plaine paelle d'eaue. A jour de poisson l'en prend lait à jour de char, du boullon de la char; et convient mettre saffran se les œufs ne jaunissent assez item, demie cloche de gingembre. (pp. 210-11)	Fromentee. Y fault cuire le froment premierment et, quant le froment et bien cuyt et essuyé, il fault mectre hors du feu pour le laisser refroidir, affin qu'il boive bien son eaue. Et puis fault mectre le lait boullir et puis, quant le lait commencera boullir, mectre le froment dedans. Et, quant on verra qu'il aura boully, que on aye dez eufz entregetéz tres bien batus pour le lyer et que on ne le lye pas tropt chaud que lez eufz ardroient. Et, s'il est tropt chaud, mectez le dedans une pleine pouelle de eaue froide.	Fromentee. Pour faire fromentee prenes votre fromentee & le faictes cuyre de longue main a petit feu jusques a ce qu'elle soit creve & bien cuict ce fait auras laict de vache & paseras ledict forment avec ledict laict & quant sera passe el boutteras sur les charbons en ung pot loing de la flambe, & quant commencera a boullir tu boutteras dedans sucre et ung peu de pouldre de gingembre ensemble du safran batu & gousteras de sel puis quant verras qu'elle sera cuyte et bien assaisonnee a ton goust tu prendras des moyeufz d'oeulx selon la quantite que tu verras que tu auras de formentee & les pas[seras] par l'estamine ensemble ung petit de laict de Vache et le jecteras dedans ton froment pour la trousser et la plus troussee est la plus belle et meilleure & garde quant jecteras les oeufz dedans [fol. 10r] qu'elle ne soit trop chaulde. Car elle feroit tourner les oeufz & brusler. (p. 78)
						Fromentee de venayson. Fromentee de venayson prenes ung chevreau ou aigneau c'est tout ung rotisses el et haches fort menu Ayes de la cresme & froment cuyct apres que vostredict boullon sera froict vous jecteres vostre venayson dedans avec oeufz pouldre blanche marjolaine & le tout jectes dedans ladicte fromentee. (p. 240)
						Fromentee de chevreau. Vous prendres ledict chevreau & le bouteres par morceaulx, puis le feres cuyre en bonnes herbes & bon boullon, puis ayes vostre froment cuict en laict comme se faisies une fromentee avec ung petit de pouldre blanche canelle & sucre. (p. 242)
		CHEU eTD Collection				The table includes only these manuscripts that have frumenty in them. It was created by Alena Minko, 1YMA student at Central European University, Vienna (Austria) for the Master's Thesis in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies "Frumenty: A European Recipe in Medieval Culinary Tradition"