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the self, the other, ritual, kinship and gifting. It's an academic pursuit that remains ambiguous to many, yet its foundations are clear. On the one hand, anthropology is, at its most basic, interested in people and the everyday activities and occurrences that make up our days. On the other, food is an important part of our lives regardless of the amount of money, time, energy or interest one has – after all we all have to eat. For this reason, food has been part of the anthropological inquiry from the start, and continues to be an important matter of study within this discipline.

Klein and Watson, the two editors of *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology*, understand that anthropologists use food as a lens to investigate just about everything. They have anthologized significant earlier texts and articles into a giant portmanteau that may give the neophyte the necessary clothing and equipment to navigate the broader topic. The book is organized in three chapters: food, self and other. Each chapter is filled with articles that complement each other by means of a series of points of juncture – overlapping areas that make the transition from one article to the other seamless and show the range of topics that fit into this broad academic field: Food security, nutrition and food safety and finally, food as craft, industry and ethics.

Like many academic books, however, some of the articles contained in this collection read as if they were written with other academics in mind – an audience skilled at deciphering jargon-laced sentences. The best articles remain those grounded in the classic research methods of the discipline; richly detailed accounts of a specific group, in a specific place at a specific point of time. Those by Andrea Wiley, James L. Watson, David Sutton and Melissa L. Caldwell are true to the field and represent, perhaps, some of the canon of the anthropology of food.

Books like *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology* exist to prove that anthropologists continue to be intrigued by daily activities of humans around the world, and most importantly, around food. Overall, the book is well worth the space on your shelf. It makes for a good reference or foundational text, and it can easily become the new go-to textbook for courses in anthropology and other areas of social science.

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Carolyn A. Nadeau: *Food Matters: Alonso Quijano's Diet and the Discourse of Food in Early Modern Spain*: University of Toronto Press, 2016: 336 pp., hardback, $65.00.
Monika Linton: *Brindisa: The True Food of Spain*: Fourth Estate, 2016: 544 pp., hardback, £29.95.

In 1979 Elizabeth David made a tantalizing observation in a personal letter written to Anne Willan. Commenting on French and English recipes published in the seventeenth century, in particular those of Robert May, author of *The*

Accomplisht Cook (1660), she commented, 'I do think much more came from Spain than is usually believed.' She went on to say that she would need to study the matter at some length before offering further thoughts, then closed with the reflection, 'heavens knows of recipe books there are millions too many, but so very few serious studies of the historical aspects of our cooking.' (*Petit Propos Culinaires*, 82, January 2007).

Today, historical writing about food flourishes, but relatively little work is yet published about Spanish food culture in past centuries. This means Carolyn Nadeau's look at early modern cookery in Spain, as viewed through a literary prism, is very welcome. Readers can approach her book in one of two ways, treating it either as a compendium of extracts from kitchen manuals, fiction, drama and poetry – the Spanish originals and English translations sit together as parallel texts – or as a text that argues for a closer look at food in literature since it can be interpreted as authors' discourse on social relations.

To this end Nadeau has shaped her material around well-known debates in food history. Her opening topic is the consumption of meat, sometimes conspicuous, as exemplified by Robert May's recipe for 'Olla Podrida' (not included in this book), but more often meagre, as revealed by writers who used dietary details to pen-sketch their characters' social level and income. She goes on to examine the contrasting ways in which Spaniards took New World foods, like chocolate or the tomato, into their kitchens; next, she looks at the legacy of Spain's overlapping Muslim and Jewish culinary cultures in Christian kitchens (often, but not always, oppositional); then she summarizes early modern ideas about nutrition or medicinal eating, as the subject was framed at the time; and, finally, she explores the parallel elements of spectacle in theatre and banqueting. This gives five central chapters, sequenced around a famous sentence at the opening of *Don Quixote*. They are bookended by an opening overview of early modern cookery manuals and a final appendix of recipes drawn from them.

The book's strongest sections are those in which literary evidence is best suited to the subject matter: for example, Nadeau gives a good resumé of Spanish humoral theory, digresses with style about lettuce as an anti-aphrodisiac and is fascinating on banqueting. However, when her themes lead her into popular cookery and eating, she runs up against a mass of historical, agricultural and economic evidence that suggest some of her conclusions need qualifying. For example, she argues that lentils and pulses were not 'valued in and of themselves, but rather in function with long-established Christian dietary proscriptions'. Yet throughout the modern period most of the Spanish population, and not only its Christian communities, have valued lentils and pulses for down-to-earth reasons: they are easily resown dryland crops, they give essential protein throughout the year, they are cheap and simple to cook, and, most basic of all, they fill the stomach. Nadeau's analysis of kitchen

manuals could be similarly fine-tuned by adding in other perspectives: for example, one might query how far Diego Granado's 1614 cookbook introduced Bartolomeo Scappi's ideas from Italy to Spain, as she suggests, given that the Italian original was already held by influential cookery libraries, like that of Madrid's Royal Palace. This may help explain why Granado dropped out of favour so quickly. Nadeau's literary translation is good although the culinary vocabulary gives a few problems given the shifting regional names for foods of that time. Among those for salt-cod, for example, *bacalao* and *abadejo* survive; literature reveals these names could sometimes indicate distinct salting methods, but not different fish.

Nonetheless, all these and other details still leave a book that offers an excellent synthesis of sources. They include Cervantes, Quevedo and Lope de Vega, three of the greatest figures of Spain's Golden Age. The insistent focus on literary rather than contextualized historical analysis is polemical, running up against what we know from other cultures – for example, Shakespeare's reliability as a historical source – but it enlivens old debates.

There were few Spanish cookbooks at the time Elizabeth David wrote to Anne Willan. It was another three years before Penelope Casas, the American food writer, published *The Foods and Wines of Spain*, which became a benchmark for authors trying to pack the diversity of Spanish cookery into one book. Today the emphasis has shifted from home to restaurant cooking. *Brindisa*, a book by Monika Linton, is a hybrid offering an English interpretation of Spanish cooking by a professional food importer who is also a home cook. Linton built up her thriving business, the eponymous Brindisa, around the idea of a personal search for authentic and often artisanal Spanish foods, which she imported to London and sold to chefs and foodies able to pay top-whack price. More recently she has extended the business into a successful small chain of bars and restaurants. Her book reflects her product-led approach. Each section is opened by a chunk of general text on one ingredient or another, often imported by Brindisa – *pimentón*, *chorizo* and so on – although these are interleaved with fresh produce like lemons, chicken and garlic. The general texts vary in length; two pages are given to *pimentón*, seven to *jamón*, none to fish or seafood. Then, in each case, there follows a themed cluster of recipes.

This is a book you may enjoy for its London take on Spanish cooking and Brindisa's chefs' knack for tossing delicatessen products into modern cooking: they have contributed over a quarter of the 200 or so recipes. We do not meet them, nor, indeed, do we visit many of the food producers on home ground, which is perhaps a reflection of the way the company is developing now towards an emphasis on own-brand foods.

What the book does not offer, as claimed by its subtitle, is *The True Food of Spain*. Here are two examples. The first: San Lúcar's famous *tortillitas*, or southern chickpea-flour and shrimp street-fritters fried to wafer-thin crispness

in very hot olive oil, are ousted by a northern Cantabrian hotel recipe, *tortilletas*, in which the original liquid batter, baby shrimp in shell and frying in very hot olive oil just disappear. A second example falls a few pages earlier: *menestra*, the Navarrese market-garden dish of spring or winter vegetables, sublime at its best when cooked in olive oil, with a little liquid added if needed – simple and highly nutritional – becomes a Madrid panaché of individually blanched vegetables in a lightly flour-thickened sauce of vegetable stock decoratively finished with roasted red peppers and mint. The originals of both dishes, built around techniques for cooking in olive oil, simply go unmentioned. Cultural snippets covering the origin of tapas and the ingredients of Spanish sauces are often similarly anecdotal.

Does such rewriting of a food culture matter? Last year's Spanish twitter storm set off by Jamie Oliver's version of paella with chorizo – worth a browse for its wit, culinary points, strength of feeling and variety of voices – suggests it can do when viewed from the food culture in which a transplanted dish was born and is still alive and well. London restaurant critics may argue that such ideas about authenticity are overly protective, bogus, even nationalist and they may be right when talking about an ephemeral menu, even a tweet, but it is unnerving if not downright misinformation when rewritten versions of dishes are put in print without any reference to the original and sold as 'The True Food of Spain', especially so soon after Claudia Roden's book *The Food of Spain* showed that traditional, modern and avant-garde versions of Spanish dishes can all be held together and enjoyed with respect and understanding.

Ironically, the narrowing of knowledge that accompanies this whittling down of a repertoire to what suits tastes elsewhere is at least as unhelpful to avant-garde as more old-fashioned cooks. For if food matters, so, too, does food memory and its extraordinary potential for enriching tomorrow's dishes and menus.

Vicky Hayward

Wendy Wall: *Recipes for Thought: Knowledge and Taste in the Early Modern English Kitchen*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016: xii–312pp., hardback, £60.00.

This book uses early modern recipe books, printed and manuscript, in order to examine how the texts engaged with the intellectual and cultural preoccupations of the time. The sub-title is misleading: there is not much about the kitchen, unless we take the widest possible meaning of the term, to include the stillroom. This is not an examination of culinary history: as Wall says, her interest is not in the history of 'diet *[sic]*', but in the nature of the recipes themselves. She suggests that the interface of reading, writing and cooking produced a form of domestic activity which was not confined to practical work, but extended to an engagement with such questions as the construction