

# Presentation of Traditional Cuisine in Austrian Cookbooks

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## 1. Introduction

A book about traditional cuisine is a nice souvenir. For a tourist as well as for a local it might represent the essence of a culture, or even something which is “authentic” or “original”. This paper describes how traditional cuisine is presented in the photographs of Austrian cuisine literature<sup>1</sup>. I approach national cookbooks as a viewer from outside. I have applied the same method before to another kind of material<sup>2</sup>.

Earlier the concept has been approached from administrative and marketing angles<sup>3</sup>. These studies aim to accurate the definition of the concept “traditional foods”. Interpreting photographs is a new and fertile approach to the discussion about “ / to discussing traditional foods”.

A diverse collection of cookbooks presenting “traditional” national cuisine has been published / is being published in Austria<sup>4</sup>. The dishes presented in the books studied here are from all over Austria. The publishing time range, which spans from the 1970's up to today , is due to the fact that traditional cuisine lost importance in Austria after the Second World War and was rediscovered in the middle of the 1970's<sup>5</sup>. The first Austrian cookbook presenting *traditional* recipes is thus *Klassische Österreichische Küche*, by Franz Maier-Bruck, that was published under the title *Das Große Sacher Kochbuch* in 1975.

The historical and cultural approach to the discussion of / to discussing “the traditional” / traditional cuisine in this paper is adapted from the British historian Eric Hobsbawm (1990, 1993a, 1993b), the Finnish folklorist Pertti Anttonen (2005) and the American anthropologists Richard Handler and Jocelyn Linnekin (1984).

The study provides a preliminary overview and basis for further investigations of how traditional food is presented and what meanings are they carry.

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<sup>1</sup> By *a cuisine* or *cookbook* I mean a book that consists of recipes. There can be other texts in these books, too, but they are not novels, historical reviews or other literature.

<sup>2</sup> Lahdelma 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Guerrero et al. 2009; Weichselbaum et al. 2009.

<sup>4</sup> From digital catalogues of Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (National Library of Austria. <http://www.onb.ac.at>. Visited 27.4.2009) I learned that during the last ten years hundreds of cookbooks were published in Austria. In 2008–2009 alone about 50 books about cuisine were published.

<sup>5</sup> Reinartz 2003, 18.

## 2. Visual Content Analyses Applied to the Cookbooks

The five illustrated books of Austrian recipes, which contain colour photographs presenting “traditional”, “classical” and “normal”<sup>6</sup> Austrian cuisine<sup>7</sup> studied here, are

- *Der Geschmack der Heimat. Die traditionellsten Familienrezepte Österreichs* (2008),
- *So kocht Österreich. 150 Köche präsentieren ihre Lieblingsrezepte aus den österreichischen Genussregionen* (2006),
- *Die 100 klassischen Gerichte Österreichs* (2003),
- *Klassische Österreichische Küche* (2003/1975) and
- *Vom Essen auf dem Lande. Klassische Bauernküche und Hausmannskost* (2006/1981).

These cookbooks aim to constitute both a homogenous and an extensive group of research material. When selecting the material, illustration was an essential criterion. One criterion is that books should contain colour photographs. Another criterion was the content of the book. In order to make it homogenous, general cuisine books which consider the whole of Austria / Austria as a whole and are written in German were chosen. In addition, in order to gain extensiveness and also make “traditional elements” more visible by means of comparison various books presenting “traditional”, “classical” and “normal” Austrian cuisine were added to the selection. The selected books were published between 1975 and 2008<sup>8</sup>. Books about, for example, beans or cheese, or books about certain Austrian regions as well as different diet-books<sup>9</sup> were excluded.

In order to interpret photographs in the Austrian cookbooks I apply content analysis. Content analysis is used for examining qualitative material. The method combines interpretation and quantitative analysis. The quantitative phase helps to interpret the material. The material is calculated and categorised according to the quantitative methods in order to emerge salient elements and to see the whole picture of the Earlier the concept has been approached from administrative and marketing angles<sup>10</sup>. These studies aim to accurate the definition of the concept “traditional foods”. Interpreting

<sup>6</sup> „Normal“ used in context of time refers to Eric Hobsbawm’s (1990, 1993a, 1993b) thoughts about traditional being a temporal other.

<sup>7</sup> The books are *Der Geschmack der Heimat. Die traditionellsten Familienrezepte Österreichs* by Severin Corti and Ulli Köb (2008), *So kocht Österreich. 150 Köche präsentieren ihre Lieblingsrezepte aus den österreichischen Genussregionen* by Ulrike Köb (2006), *Die 100 klassischen Gerichte Österreichs* by Ewald Plachutta (2003), *Klassische Österreichische Küche* by Franz Maier-Bruck (2003/1975) and *Vom Essen auf dem Lande. Klassische Bauernküche und Hausmannskost* also by Franz Maier-Bruck (2006/1981).

<sup>8</sup> The research material is chosen from the library of the Department of Nutrition and Quality Assurance. It should be noticed that these books were already selected to be part of the library before selected to be part of this study. The books are in the library for three reasons. First, some of them are gifts from visitors, some are made with co-operation with the Department and some were bought to get the information about cuisine (Höbaus 2009). In future examination it ought to be pondered how this *double selection* effects the interpretation of the illustrations.

<sup>9</sup> About beans see Sluga 2007, about cheese see Biber & Enzmüller 2007, about regional see for example Karrer & Ellert 2005, about diets see for example Dölleler 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Guerrero et al. 2009; Weichselbaum et al. 2009.

photographs is a new and fertile approach to the discussion about “ / to discussing traditional foods”.

I used an inductive approach of content analysis, which means reading the research material, writing an exact, detailed description of the elements in each photograph and then creating the categories based on this preliminary study (Tables 1 and 2).

**Table 1. An example of the methods.**

Description of *Photograph 1 (Klassische Österreichische Küche (Maier-Bruck 2003/1975, 128a). Photographer Ernest Richter).*

“The photograph illustrates Heringssalat. It was taken by Ernest Richter. In the photograph there is a white glass bowl with a stand on a blue cotton or linen tablecloth. The background of the photo is black. To me the photograph connotes festive eating in the 1970’s.”

The benefit of this inductive approach is that it reduces the risk of the predetermined results that might occur from the researcher’s unacknowledged preconceptions. A deductive approach would have forced the material into predetermined categories.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 2. An example of the methods.**

Categorising the elements in the photographs.

Tangibles		Intangibles	
<i>Objects</i>	<i>Attributes</i>	<i>Level of festiveness</i>	<i>Time</i>
Bowl	Cotton or linen	Festive	1960–1980
Tablecloth	Glass		Old fashioned way to represent past
	White		
	Black		
	Blue		

For purposes of analysis I used the qualitative analysis software called Weft QDA<sup>12</sup>. I collected the qualitative data from Weft QDA into an Excel-table in order to calculate in how many pictures each element is shown (Table 3). Due to the fact that the amount of photographs that I analysed varies from book to book I converted the Excel-table’s numbers to percentages, so that the data of different books would be comparable to

<sup>11</sup> Corbin & Strauss 2008; Seppänen 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Weft QDA is a software application to assist in the analysis of textual data. <http://www.pressure.to/qda/> Last visited 22.6.2009.

each other. I read the tables both horizontal and vertical. That means that I analyse differences between the cookbooks by comparing the amounts of the elements.

**Table 3**

Excerpt from the Excel-table.

Cookbooks	Klassische Österreichische Küche	Vom Essen auf dem Lande	Die 100 klassischen Gerichte Österreichs	So kocht Österreich	Der Geschmack der Heimat
<i>Amount of photos studied</i>	24	16	12	16	20
<b>Tangibles</b>					
<i>Utensils</i>					
Plate	33,3%	18,8%	58,3%	62,5%	25,0%
Serving dish	54,2%	6,3%	0,0%	25,0%	0,0%
Bowl	33,3%	37,5%	33,3%	0,0%	20,0%
<i>Furniture</i>					
Table	45,8%	56,3%	0,0%	6,3%	65,0%
<i>Material</i>					
Porcelain	79,2%	18,8%	91,7%	81,3%	60,0%
Cotton or linen	20,8%	25,0%	91,7%	31,3%	50,0%
Wood	0,0%	50,0%	8,3%	6,3%	60,0%
Glass	12,5%	0,0%	0,0%	31,3%	10,0%
<i>Colour</i>					
White	83,3%	25,0%	91,7%	100,0%	80,0%
Black	54,2%	25,0%	8,3%	0,0%	15,0%
Blue	4,2%	0,0%	0,0%	6,3%	5,0%
Red	37,5%	0,0%	0,0%	12,5%	0,0%

### Intangibles

#### *Level of*

#### *festiveness*

Festive	33,3%	12,5%	16,7%	0,0%	10,0%
Sunday	8,3%	0,0%	33,3%	0,0%	5,0%
Everyday	4,2%	6,3%	0,0%	6,3%	30,0%

#### *Time*

Contemporary	0,0%	0,0%	25,0%	75,0%	5,0%
1960 - 1980	29,2%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	10,0%

#### Old fashioned

#### way to present

the past	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
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### 3. Results

A closer look at the cookbooks reveals some differences between presenting „traditional“ and „classical“ dishes. In *Der Geschmack der Heimat. Die traditionellsten Familienrezepte Österreichs* (2008) the title contains the word “traditional” and the utensils are robust and simple. *Die 100 klassischen Gerichte Österreichs* (2003) and *Klassische Österreichische Küche* (2003/1975), whose titles refer to “classic” cuisine, contain great amount of photographs of fine, decorated porcelain. Utensils are modest and fabrics simple in *Vom Essen auf dem Lande. Klassische Bauernküche und Hausmannskost* (2006/1975) even though the word “classical” is used in the title. In *So kocht Österreich - 150 Köche präsentieren ihre Lieblingsrezepte aus den österreichischen Genussregionen* (2006) refers neither to „classical“ nor „traditional“ in the title. In this book the utensils are plain and white.

In this sub-chapter I explain about the background of these publications and tell more about the what I noticed when studying the photographs.

### 3.1 Traditional Cuisine Literature Today

#### 3.1.1 Dirty Spoons and Striped Towels

*Der Geschmack der Heimat. Die traditionellsten Familienrezepte Österreichs* (2008) is published by an association protecting the gastronomic heritage of Austria, the Kuratorium Kulinarisches Erbe Österreichs.<sup>13</sup> The book is illustrated with photographs taken by Ulrike

<sup>13</sup> Kuratorium Kulinarisches Erbe Österreichs is an association that works in co-ordination with AMA Marketing GmbH. AMA Marketing GmbH is an organisation that promotes Austrian agricultural products. It is also in charge of several different quality assurance programs. (AMA 13.5.2009; Pröll 2003; Schimetschek 2003; KKEÖ 8.5.2009).

Köb. She is a Viennese photographer specialised in cuisine photography.<sup>14</sup> Köb has also gathered the properties for the photographs.<sup>15</sup>

In the forewords it is stated that the Kuratorium Kulinarisches Erbe Österreichs has published *Der Geschmack der Heimat* (2008) to protect the local family recipes and encourage everybody to try these recipes at home. This book aims to be a collection of both simple and special Austrian dishes. The content is supposed to originate from Austrian grandmothers' recipe-books. Also the looks / make-up of the book underlines this interpretation.

The recipes were collected from people around Austria.<sup>16</sup> The names and the hometowns of the contributors of each recipe are mentioned after the respective recipes. The book contains also a list of the markets where the food products used in the recipes for the book were collected, while it lacks explanations about the origin or history of the dishes. *Der Geschmack der Heimat* (2008) is organised by the kind of dish: there are, for instance, appetisers, soups etc.

*Der Geschmack der Heimat* (2008) has a unconventional, fairy-tale-old make-up. The paper used is thick and matt and it has a yellowish and stained look as if the pages were scanned from old, used cookbooks. The lay-outs also imitate old books. Every page with a recipe is designed differently. So are the fronts, the graphics and the lay-outs of different eras. The front colours vary from soft green and brown tones to purplish grey chapter by chapter, which increases the "old" feeling.

The atmosphere is emphasised in everyday, lower class eating in the first half of the 20th century or indefinable "old". The places where the photographs seem to be situated are the countryside, the kitchen or a family's home.

The photographs in *Der Geschmack der Heimat* (2008) contain a plethora of different materials. There is porcelain, wood, textile and steel, and even paper and stone, which cannot be found in any other books. Notable is that the amount of steel is higher than in other books. This phenomenon is due to the fact that this book contains more tableware (spoons, forks and knives) than other books.

They also contain a wide assortment of different utensils and other objects. The emphasis is laid on utensils used for eating or preparing the dish, for example plates, tableware, meat

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<sup>14</sup> Köb 12.5.2009.

<sup>15</sup> Sedlnitzky 2008, 224.

<sup>16</sup> Sedlnitzky 2008, 224.

mincers and strainers. Other objects are, for example, lace, bread, fruit, drinks, bunches of herbs, ribbons and paper wrapping.

The surface the utensils are placed on is often covered with a tablecloth. The fact that many photographs show towels differentiates the book from others studied. Towels are one of the reasons why the atmosphere of *Der Geschmack der Heimat* is "everyday" rather than festive. This book is also special for its varying usage of furniture and other props in the arrangements. Tables are seen in most of the photographs but there are also a couple of photographs containing a shelf or a drawer. Other books show only tables if any furniture at all.

In addition to items and materials, also the colours and decoration patterns vary. Though white is present in most of the photographs, it is often combined with blue or red, or sometimes with green, yellow, orange or black. Brown is to be seen remarkably often in photographs. There are also some unpainted objects. The coloured objects are most often decorated with stripes or squares. Typically such an object is a white cotton tablecloth / napkin decorated with blue or red stripes or squares.

I noticed also that in *Der Geschmack der Heimat* (2008) some of the utensils were worn-out and some even dirty. Dirtiness is presented in a well arranged way. For example the photograph on the page 70 <picture> depicts a wooden spoon partly soiled with sauce. It looks as if somebody had recently stirred the soup. However, the dirty part of the spoon is too small to be brought about by stirring. Assumably the arranger has deliberately soiled part of the spoon in order to create a certain effect.

### 3.1.2 Clean, White Dishes

*So kocht Österreich. 150 Köche präsentieren ihre Lieblingsrezepte aus den österreichischen Genussregionen* (2006) is edited by „Beste Österreichische Gastlichkeit“ (BÖG). BÖG is an association that promotes and connects Austrian restaurants which serve traditional cuisine made of local products. In the recipes of *So kocht Österreich* they use Genuss Region -products<sup>17,18</sup>. All the photographs of the dishes are taken by the Viennese photographer Ulrike Köb. *So kocht Österreich* (2006) contains three illustrated forewords, which is a high number for cookbooks.

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<sup>17</sup> "Genuss Region" is a national quality label for food products in Austria. It operates under the Austrian Ministry of Agriculture (Genuss Region 13.5.2009).

The name „Kulinarisches Österreich" is also mentioned besides the „BÖG" in *So kocht Österreich* (2006). That is because the BÖG tried to change its name to „Kulinarisches Österreich" at the time of publication of *So kocht Österreich*. As well, the BÖG started a co-operation with the Lebensministerium's „Genuss Region". That is why the products recommended in the recipes are Genuss Region -products. (Flöcklmüller 13.5.2009.)

<sup>18</sup> BÖG 13.5.2009; Flöcklmüller 13.5.2009.

Toni Mörwald (2006) directs the attention of the reader to the products of which the dishes are made. He also calls the book "Reise- und Genuss-Atlas", "Atlas of Travel and Endulging". Christian Bayr (2006) mentions the importance of local recipes and restaurants and that the recipes origin from different local enterprisers.

The recipes in *So kocht Österreich* (2006) are organized geographically. Each chapter begins with an illustrated introduction to the respective geographical area. The recipes follow the introduction. Each recipe-page contains a short description and a small portrait of the key person of a local enterprise. The book ends with several colourful whole-page advertisements.

The title reveals that *So kocht Österreich* (2006) describes the quality of the recipes with the term "favourite" (germ.: *Lieblings*-). According to the forewords the book is aimed towards everybody, which means a non-professional use.<sup>19</sup>

The colourful advertisements and several forewords with portraits of their writers capture the readers' attention. These sponsor-emphasising elements give *So kocht Österreich* (2006) an inexpensive look. It seems that *So kocht Österreich* promotes Genuss Region products as well as regional enterprises.

In the photographs of *So kocht Österreich* (2006) the atmosphere is fine, contemporary and restaurant-like. This atmosphere consists of using plates, glasses and tablecloths as well as napkins, and as materials porcelain, cotton, and glass. The colours used are limited to white with just a few exceptions. The arrangements are plain and decoration patterns or additional items are rarely used in these photographs. They lack atmosphere and give a cool, though professional, impression.

### 3.2 Grandmother's Kitchen Meets the Imperial Palace

*Die 100 klassischen Gerichte Österreichs* (2003) was published by the Austrian gastronomic heritage preserving association, the Kuratorium Kulinarisches Erbe Österreichs. The book was published also in English under the title *The 100 classic dishes of Austria* (2003). The first editor, Ewald Plachutta, is a well-known Austrian cook, restaurant-owner and a cookbook author.<sup>20</sup> The other editor, Christoph Wagner, is an Austrian journalist and also a cook-

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<sup>19</sup> Bayr 2006; Mörwald 2006.

<sup>20</sup> *Wikipedia* 8.5.2009a.

books author.<sup>21</sup> The illustration is made by reward-winning art- and commercial-photographer Claudio Alessandri.<sup>22</sup>

According to their own words the editors Plachutta and Wagner aimed at creating a representative documentation of basic Austrian recipes from different provinces of the country.<sup>23</sup> They achieved representativeness by benefiting from the help of a jury from all around the provinces of Austria when choosing recipes for the book. In the texts of the book both "grandmothers'" cuisine and the Austrian-Hungarian Empire is mentioned, and thus binds both upper class tradition and everyday gastronomy together. Via this regional approach to Austrian cuisine the book claims to strengthen Austrian identity.<sup>24</sup>

In the book the term "traditional" is connected with modern times. The connection to the idea of the "modern" is seen in the illustrations as well as in the texts of the book and in this quotation from the foreword: "The eating and drinking traditions of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire were adapted to present tastes and needs"<sup>25</sup>. This means that the Kuratorium does not only preserve recipes but also converts them to suit the taste of modern people. This can be seen as an effective way to keep the recipes alive.

The recipes are organized according to their category. There are, for example, cold starters, soups etc. Many recipe-pages, but not all, contain a short, introducing text that is attached at the margins. These texts describe the regionality of the recipe or traditional ways of preparing it. The positioning and the length of the margin texts give the feeling that the introducing texts are not as essential as the recipes.

The photographs are sunny and bright both atmospherically and technically. The atmosphere can be described as a contemporary Sunday family fest for a middle class family in a restaurant or at home on the countryside.

The photographs vary little from each other. The photographs are tightly cropped / narrowly cut and almost every arrangement includes white porcelain on a white cotton or linen tablecloth. The utensils used in the photographs are meant for eating, serving and preparing the dish: there are plates, bowls, kettles and other cooking items. The tableware is missing, which causes a still atmosphere. The arrangements are simple and there are rarely extra items or colours in the photographs. Some white and red or brown striped

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<sup>21</sup> *Wikipedia* 8.5.2009b.

<sup>22</sup> Alessandri 8.5.2009.

<sup>23</sup> Plachutta and Wagner 2003, 17.

<sup>24</sup> Reinartz 2003, 18.

<sup>25</sup> Reinartz 2003, 18.

napkins soften the atmosphere in a couple of photographs. In addition to the striped textiles the scene is decorated by square shaped plates, for example.

### 3.3 A Gaze towards the Traditional Through the Fashion of the 1970s

#### 3.3.2 Stoneware and Wood Signify a Rural Tradition

Practices are usually handed down from aristocracy to the bourgeoisie to the working class.<sup>26</sup> The direction can also be the other way round, though. The basis of the Austrian aristocratic cuisine lies in traditional cooking on the country side.<sup>27</sup>

*Vom Essen auf dem Lande. Klassische Bauernküche und Hausmannskost* (2006/1981) is also written by Franz Maier-Bruck, an award-winning cookbook author who published several books in the 1970s and 1980s. The book was first published under the title *Vom Essen auf dem Lande. Das große Buch der österreichische Bauernküche und Hausmannskost* in 1981. Later the title of Maier-Bruck's previous publication *Das Große Sacher Kochbuch* (1975) was adopted. Later editions were published under the title *Klassische Österreichische Küche*. The photographs were taken by Georg Fronius.

The book is thick and square-shaped. The colour photographs of the dishes are shown on appendix-pages that are not numbered. In addition, the book contains black-and-white graphics from old cookbooks.

*Vom Essen auf dem Lande* (2006/1981) does, however, show differences in the disposition compared to *Klassische Österreichische Küche* (2003/1975). *Vom Essen auf dem Lande* is organised in chapters according to the Austrian states. Each of these geographical chapters is organised according to kinds of dishes, for example soups, vegetables and "Strudels". Historical information about the cuisine is given in the chapters connected to the recipes. In *Klassische Österreichische Küche* the information chapters are separated from the recipes.

*Vom Essen auf dem Lande* (2006/1981) is designed to be an overview of countryside cooking describing traditional recipes as well as kitchen utensils used in "former times". According to Franz Maier-Bruck (2006, 7) himself he wrote *Vom Essen auf dem Lande* because he had noticed that the origin of classical, bourgeois Austrian dishes lies in rural cuisine while writing his earlier work *Klassische Österreichische Küche / Großen Sacher Kochbuch* (2003/1975).

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<sup>26</sup> Hobsbawm 1993b, 306.

<sup>27</sup> Maier-Bruck 2006/1981, 7.

The photographs are labelled with the dates in the 1980's when they were taken. At the same time the elements in the photographs refer to even older days. In many photographs the temporal atmosphere refers to indefinable "oldness", from the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century and sometimes hints towards "ancient" times.

Photographs in *Vom Essen auf dem Lande* have a strong rural touch. The level of festiveness reaches from very festive to "everyday". This old and rural atmosphere is created by using worn-out objects, usually worn eaten wooden tables or old stoneware bowls. Cotton or linen tablecloths are typical, as well. Wood and stoneware are the two most common materials used. The objects are mainly unpainted and undecorated. The decorated ones are usually brown, black, white or beige. The background of the photographs is always dark, which makes the pictures look gloomy. Also the combination of white and blue can be seen in the book. Other properties in the photographs are occasional pieces of bread, fruit, flowers, beer, nuts, ribbons or herbs.

### 3.3.2 Every Plate Has a Golden Lining

Both *Klassische Österreichische Küche* (2003/1975) and *Vom Essen auf dem Lande* (2006/1981) are thorough information packages of Austrian cuisine and can be used as a source of historic information as well as a recipe book.

*Klassische Österreichische Küche* (2003/1975) is also written by Franz Maier-Bruck. *Klassische Österreichische Küche* was originally published under the title *Das Große Sacher Kochbuch* by the German publishing house Schuler in 1975. The photographs were taken by Ernest Richter, who had also prepared the dishes and served as a consultant. Like in *Vom Essen auf dem Lande* (2006/1981) the colour photographs of the dishes are gathered in appendix-pages here and there, but there are also black-and-white illustrations.

The book begins with an introduction to the history of Austrian cuisine followed by a short introduction to the art of cooking in general and some information about the Hotel Sacher<sup>28</sup>. The chapter about the Hotel Sacher is logical keeping in mind the original title. After these chapters the dishes, like in the books discussed above, are presented in thematic groups.

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<sup>28</sup> Hotel Sacher is a famous hotel in Vienna. It was opened 1876 as "Hotel de l'Opera". Hotel Sacher is known for its Sachertorte and famous visitors. (Wikipedia 20.5.2009.)

According to the blurb, the book is meant for everybody who likes Austrian cuisine. It is supposed to be a general handbook of cooking tips, recipes and information about the history of Austrian cuisine.

The photographs of *Klassische österreichische Küche* (2003/1975) contain time levels that cross each other. The pictures look as if they were designed in a 1970's style, but obviously the arrangement is supposed to hint to even older years. The atmosphere is mostly festive and upper class. This twisted temporal atmosphere is created by using utensils that must be several hundred years old and contemporary colours and arrangements. There are also tablecloths and tables in the photographs.

The variation of different utensils is most extensive in this book compared to other studied books. The utensils are mostly fine serving utensils like serving dishes, bowls, saucers and servers. The material used is mostly porcelain but there is also a notable amount of silver used. This particular use of silver distinguishes this book from the others.

The colour white is present in almost every picture, but also the colours black, gold, red, yellow and green. The background of the photographs is dark. The colour gold is common among the decorations. Golden fringe is the most typical gold decoration pattern in *Klassische österreichische Küche* (2003/1975) and also in other books. Apart from the golden fringes the different decoration patterns are conspicuously present in the photographs of this book. Especially painted flowers flourish there.

Worth noticing are the two special decoration patterns seen only in *Klassische österreichische Küche* (2003/1975). These patterns are the logo of the Hotel Sacher and an eagle crest.

Both of these symbols refer to the upper classes and high society, because Hotel Sacher has been – and still is - a place of the wealthy; the crest refers to the Austrian-Hungary monarchy.

#### 4 What Is Traditional?

The concept of the "traditional" has emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it became necessary to distinguish the "modern" from the "not-modern".<sup>29</sup> The term is complex and should be approached cautiously. Phrases like "traditional food", "traditional speciality", "traditional ingredients" or "traditional methods" are used, but still consumers find the idea

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<sup>29</sup> Anttonen 2005, 33.

of the “traditional” ambiguous and confusing. The concept is not much clearer to administrations or researches either.<sup>30</sup>

The definitions of the concept of the “traditional” or “traditional foods” can be divided into three categories. First there is a sociological and cultural, secondly a legislative and administrative and thirdly a consumer based definition. The cultural and historical studies consider traditions discursively and culturally constructed. For instance the folklorist Pertti Anttonen states that the word “traditional” is a metaphor for cultural continuity and historical patterning.<sup>31</sup> A tradition is placed on a unilinear continuum in which modernity succeeds and chronologically replaces what is traditional.<sup>32</sup>

Anttonen states that representations of tradition are in fact modern even if they refer to past times.<sup>33</sup> In relation to the “modern”, the “traditional” is a temporal and cultural other.<sup>34</sup> The term “traditional” has a connotation of being not-modern and not-western. Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century the word “modern” meant only present. In the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century the term developed a connotation of recent development or improval in relation to older times.<sup>35</sup>

The sociological approach sees the concept of traditions also as a part of culture, but it emphasises operations of societies and understands culture as an implication of the cooperation of people operating in a certain area. Sociologists consider traditional food a representation that belongs to a certain space and culture and has temporal continuity.<sup>36</sup>

The second category contains the legislative and administrative definitions. In the context of food quality, the approach of the European Union connects the “traditional” with locality and the continuity of time. In addition to that, the EU emphasises the status of generations in the transmission of tradition and the verifiability of traditional means. The EU definition argues that “traditional” can only be a generation or a time span of at least 25 years.<sup>37</sup> Another example of European administrative definitions is the one of the European Food Information Resource Network (EuroFIR<sup>38</sup>), accepted also by the Food and

<sup>30</sup> Fact sheet 2007, 7; Guerrero et al. 2009, 347.

<sup>31</sup> Anttonen 2005, 13.

<sup>32</sup> Anttonen 2005, 33.

<sup>33</sup> Anttonen 2005, 13.

<sup>34</sup> Anttonen 2005, 31.

<sup>35</sup> Anttonen 2005, 30.

<sup>36</sup> Guerrero et al. 2009, 345.

<sup>37</sup> Guerrero et al. 2009, 346.

<sup>38</sup> The European Food Information Resource Network (EuroFIR 17.6.2009) is one of the few organisations that provide research about traditional food among other food related information. EuroFIR is an international cooperation of universities and other research organisations co-ordinated by the Institute of Food Research (IFR) based in Norwich, UK.

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2008.<sup>39</sup> Also EuroFIR connects concepts of time, generation, continuity, locality and verifiability to the term “traditional food”.<sup>40</sup>

It is common to all these administrative definitions to tend to distinguish some products from others that are “not traditional”. They draw lines concerning production and food stuff regulations as well as geographical limits. An exception to the rule is the definition of the European Commission funded project Traditional United Europe Food (TRUEFOOD). It differs from the others because it uses also concepts of the “authentic, commercial availability in the past” and *gastronomic heritage*. Problematic is that they have not defined the concept of the “authentic”.<sup>41</sup>

The third category, customer perception of “traditional food”, associates the concept of traditional food to a frequently consumed everyday or seasonal product that is “normally” transmitted from one generation to another and made with care and little processing in a specific way. “Traditional food products” smell, taste and looks should be easily distinguished and associated to a certain region. Consumers often have a very positive idea of traditional food in Europe.<sup>42</sup>

In their study about the consumer-driven definition of traditional food and innovation in culinary tradition Luis Guerraro et al. argue that European consumers when thinking of traditional food products have in mind certain habits and naturalness, origin and locality, processing and elaboration as well as sensory properties.<sup>43</sup> Their further conclusion is that whether innovations are accepted to be applied to traditional food products or not depends on the product and the type of innovation.

The approaches described above emphasise different themes according to the purpose they are created for. Mutual themes are temporality and locality. The reason why different organisations have developed definitions for the concept of the “traditional” arose from

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<sup>39</sup> EuroFIR declares that being traditional means conforming to established practice or specifications prior to the Second World War, and that traditional food is food with specific features, which distinguish it from other similar products. Traditional foods must qualify the sub-definitions that EuroFIR has written for traditional ingredients, a traditional composition and a traditional type of production and processing. Like the previously mentioned administrative definitions, also EuroFIR connects concepts of time, generation, continuity, locality and verifiability to the term traditional food. (Weichselbaum et al. 2009, 4)

<sup>40</sup> Weichselbaum et al. 2009, 4.

<sup>41</sup> According to the definition by TRUEFOOD, the product must have been for sale since at least 50 years. It is noteworthy that an unbreakable continuity is not demanded but only evidence of public availability in the past. A traditional food product cannot be part of a single private family tradition but it has to be publicly known. The place of production should be in the region the tradition is connected to and not in any other country. The product should have an “authentic” recipe, origin of raw materials or production process. TRUEFOOD-definition claims also that the product must have a story which can be written down in 2–3 pages. This they call gastronomic heritage. (Weichselbaum et al. 2009, Annex 1)

<sup>42</sup> Weichselbaum et al. 2009, Annex 1, citates Vanhonacker et al. 2008.

<sup>43</sup> Guerraro et al. 2009, 353.

the concern that traditional food and recipes might vanish. They are also used for marketing purposes, because distinguishing certain products helps selling them.<sup>44</sup>

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Analysing Traditional Elements

The method of visual content analysis was applied here to find and interpret the traditional elements. There are several concrete objects, like kitchen tools and devices and serving tools of certain materials and colours to be found in the photographs. In order to interpret these visual elements there are also other hints that can be found in the cookbooks. The words that are used in the book texts lead the readers towards a certain time period or social class. All these elements together create different atmospheres around the photographs and the whole publications.

The material for this study is small and selected in a certain way. Thus the materials presented here are rather examples, and in order to understand the phenomena as a whole a comparative material is required. It should also be noticed that the researcher's position affects the interpretations. The photographs in Austrian cookbooks are connoted differently for Austrians than for me. For example the imperial symbols could raise personal emotions among Austrians, whereas I consider them as references to a certain time period and social class. On the other hand some atmospherical connotations mentioned here, such as light summer nights and sauna, are probably strange to those who live outside Scandinavia.

The term "traditional" has a connection to locality when talking about food qualities in Europe.<sup>45</sup> Albeit the term "traditional" is regularly used both in legislation and in everyday use (and thus seems to carry a certain meaningfulness in today's society) there is no congruent definition for the term<sup>46,47</sup> However, challenging the concept of tradition is important for an accurate use in legislative texts and, like the British historian Eric

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<sup>44</sup> Weichselbaum et al. 2009, 2.

<sup>45</sup> "Traditional" is an essential term, for example, in documents of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and is a criterion for granting Traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG) –designation. The EU schemes that promote and protect names and quality of agricultural products and foodstuffs are called PDO (protected designation of origin), PGI (protected geographical indication) and TSG (traditional speciality guaranteed). In Austria there is also an equivalent national scheme called Genuss Region run by the Ministry of Agriculture. (Genuss Region 13.5.2009; EU 17.6.2009.)

<sup>46</sup> The definition of food varies from administrative or association to another. Elisabeth Weichselbaum et al. (2009, 2) define "foods" as the use of food products and food preparation methods in a EuroFIR consortium research. Again Luis Guerrero et al. (2009, 345) talk about food products in a TRUEFOOD research. Here I understand food as dishes or food products.

<sup>47</sup> Fact sheet 2007, 7; Höbaus 2006, 26; Weichselbaum et al. 2009, 4.

Hobsbawm states, because challenging traditions uncovers something about phenomena in society and culture.<sup>48</sup>

The question of how the “traditional” is represented in Austrian cookbooks can be approached from both the publishers’ and photographers’ angles. Each of the cookbooks discussed in this paper announces in its title and/or forewords if it is presenting “traditional”, “countryside”, “classical” or “modern” cuisine. This is the categorization agreed on by publishing staff. On the other hand the photographs in these books can be interpreted and it can be asked which impressions they give and which feelings they convey.

The interpretations of the photographs are more complex to describe than the publishers’ outspoken visions. Photographs carry meanings that the reader does not even notice on a conscious level, and besides, send different messages to each reader. The publisher’s vision and the interpretation of the photographs are however connected to each other. In the books the publisher’s reflections on the illustrations and the texts in the books have an effect on the interpretation of the photographs.

The elements in the photographs examined in this paper can be divided into tangibles and intangibles. The tangible ones are utensils, textiles, furniture and other properties and qualities such as colour, decoration patterns and material. In order to interpret the tangibles it is vital to recognise different utensils, materials and colours, which is an elementary level in visual analysis.

The intangibles that I examined in the photographs were:

1. atmosphere
2. the level of festiveness
3. feeling of action
4. time
5. place
6. social class and
7. the quality of the objects

These categories might need some explanation. Some of the photographs gave me, for example, a sense of summertime or sterility. This I call *atmosphere* of the photograph. *Level of festiveness* refers to an occasion, for instance a festive meal like in a wedding or everyday dining. There is seldom any *feeling of action* in the photographs examined, but some look as if they were taken in the middle of eating or preparing the dish. *Time* refers to

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<sup>48</sup> Hobsbawm 1993a, 12.

the era that scene in the photograph takes place in, for example “contemporary”, “1960–1980” or “grandmother’s time”. *Place* indicates where the dish is supposed to be, for instance, in the kitchen, in the garden, on the countryside, in town or in a restaurant, and social *class* indicates if the dish in the picture is prepared for lower, middle or upper class. *Quality* describes how new or fine the tangible objects are.

## 5.2 “Traditional” Cookbooks

It can be stated that every time a traditional dish is prepared, it is a unique happening. Thus it is not easy to say which traditional dish would be the “right one”. To do something because it is traditional is already to interpret, and hence to change it.<sup>49</sup>

Both the British historian Eric Hobsbawm (1993) and the Finnish folklorist Pertti Anttonen (2005) consider traditions modern constructions. Hobsbawm writes that the object and characteristic of “traditions” in general is invariance.<sup>50</sup> “The past, real or invented, to which they refer imposes fixed (normally formalized) practices, such as repetition”, he states.<sup>51</sup> He also remarks that this concept is “socially, historically and locally rooted and must be explained in terms of these realities”.<sup>52</sup> He remarks that “tradition” that appears to be old can sometimes be of quite recent origin, or even invented. Traditions can be invented for various needs. National identity, for example, can be raised with the help of traditions. Actions of today are legitimated by history, states Eric Hobsbawm.<sup>53</sup>

The organisations behind the cookbooks studied here tend to maintain and add knowledge of traditional cuisine. Traditional cuisine is considered as one aspect of cultural heritage. For instance the publisher of *Die 100 klassischen Gerichte Österreichs* (2003), Kuratorium Kulinarisches Erbe Österreichs, considers remembering old recipes important. The editors use the term *denkmalgeschützten Rezepte* (Engl. “recipes under preservation”).<sup>54</sup>

As it is typical for cultural heritage it is typical also for the cookbooks that tradition and history are generated at the same time as they are presented. For example, a question that ought to be studied more closely is what the striped, white and red, blue or green coloured textiles connote and what their history is. The publishers, authors and photographers respectively create practices to consider and present the “traditional”. According to the material, it seems that when a publisher wants to transfer traditional

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<sup>49</sup> Handler & Linnekin 1984, 281.

<sup>50</sup> Hobsbawm 1993a, 1.

<sup>51</sup> Hobsbawm 1993a, 1.

<sup>52</sup> Hobsbawm 1990, 9; 1993, 1; 1993b, 263.

<sup>53</sup> Hobsbawm 1993a, 12.

<sup>54</sup> Reinartz 2003, 18.

recipes for a contemporary use they use contemporary elements in illustrations. Illustrations are not the only way to present publishers' visions. Also the contents of the texts describe publishers' aims, as well as the make-up of the publications (paper, colours, fonts etc.). A salient question is who is responsible for the photograph and other arrangements and thus decides how the "traditional" element should be presented.

Some photograph arrangements are more disconnected to the real world than others. Some, for example, connote childhood fairy tales or modern fairy tales like magazine illustrations or advertisements. In *Der Geschmack der Heimat* (2008) the idea of the "old" is presented as it is in fairy tale illustrations or in films. Nevertheless, the photographs of this book create a pleasant and cosy atmosphere that connotes childhood memories, which can partly be created by media, though. Thus it would be essential to research how media affects perceptions and presentations of the concept of the "traditional".

In the photographs in the Austrian cookbooks, in addition to the tangible elements like wooden plates and striped towels, the term "traditional" relates also to certain intangibilities. Especially *time* is often related to the idea of the "traditional". Other intangibilities are the feeling of being at home, on the countryside or safe (like a child with its mother or grandmother). Respectively, the term "classical" is expressed through fine porcelain of the upper classes in the cookbooks. Golden linings are often used in a "classical" setting. Simple white porcelain plates without decorations and a neutral, sterile or even absent atmosphere connotes a normal day in the present or "modern times".

The time the photographs were taken is sometimes shown in the photographs despite the publishers' intentions. For example in *Klassische Österreichische Küche* (2003/1975) and *Vom Essen auf dem Lande* (2006/1981) the photographs have dark colouring, which distinguishes the books from the newer ones. When the books are compared it becomes visible that the looks of the photographs in *Klassische Österreichische Küche* and *Vom Essen auf dem Lande* are old fashioned, which has nothing to do with the fact that they represent traditional cuisine. The newer books represent traditional dishes as well, but in today's fashionable way. This phenomenon of indicating the time in illustrations creates a triple-layer-time-zone of publications: the reader's time, the photographer's time and represented time.

Presenting old recipes in cookbooks has changed during the decades. In the 1970's they presented upper class "classic" dishes, in the 1980's "countryside" dishes and 2000's "grandmothers" recipes. Respectively the terms for old, everyday recipes have changed from "traditional" in the 1980's to "classic" or "favourite", although the word "traditional" is

not yet totally forgotten. Studying the cookbooks it can be noticed that in the 2000's the term "classical" does not necessarily refer to upper class cuisine anymore.

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