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THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULINARY LITERATURE IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN 18th – EARLY 20th CENTURIES

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From the beginning of the 18th century until the great «culinary boom» during the reign of Tsar Alexander III, foreign cookbooks were sold on the territory of the Russian Empire, which described only royal cuisine. Their recipes contained expensive products, sophisticated techniques, and were not available for the common people. They were books written by French and German chefs in translation and in the original, which described dishes at court (Breitenbach, Grimod de la Reynière, Viar, Albert, Duval-Cordelli, Clementia J., Varg, Escoffier, Carême, Cremon, Savarin, etc.). According to these books, the development of cooking was accomplished only in the kitchens of a small wealthy segment of the population and only according to French model. For example, in St. Petersburg the nobles employed only French chefs, who cooked exclusively according to French books and recipes. The student assistants from local young servants were assigned to them at the expense of the noble, and therefore French cuisine spread rapidly among the masses. Folk cooking developed in a different way, in its own way. Thus, from the first half of the 18th century, the society was divided in culinary views into two extremes: folk cuisine and Royal European cuisine (namely, French and German).

Both the foreign authors and culinary writers who lived in the Russian Empire had some features in common – that is that their recipes did not have precise product and time measurements. They only enlisted the necessary ingredients and described processes and cooking techniques.

The first original culinary book published in the Empire was Sergei Drukovtsev's *Kukharskie Zametki (Cooking Notes)* (Moscow, 1779; 1783). He belonged to the nobility and was familiar with the variety of cuisines. The *Kukharskiye Zametki* contains evidence of the culinary arts of the peoples of the Empire. Drukovtsev's main interests included the national dishes of different peoples; his book also contains old recipes and cooking techniques. He was the Empire's first culinary ethnographer.

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The next author, who collected interesting information about the ways to reduce prices for dishes for the army and ordinary people, recipes and descriptions of dishes of French, German, Dutch, Spanish, and English cuisines, was the secretary of the «Russian Free Economic Society» Vasily Levshin. He followed the footsteps of Sergei Drukovtsev [3, p. 28] and popularized more broadly the folk cuisine and cooking technologies in his book *Nanodnaya Povarnya (The People's Cook)*, which was published in 1793. This book tells about cheap dishes for the military people and those of a low social class, and contains old Russian recipes, which are divided into two groups – lean and meat dishes.

Two years later, in 1795, Vasily Levshin published his second book named the *Slovar' Povarskoy (Cook's Dictionary)*. It contained information about dishes from different European countries (France, Holland, Germany, Spain, England), which included hot dishes, cold dishes, desserts, jams and preserves, salads, sugar waters, drinks. This cookbook was very popular and had two more editions: an abridged one in 1816 and a complete one in 1871.

In 1811, the *General Cookbook for All Classes, containing 2000 rules* was published. This book was from the «Economic Library» series, which contained 17 volumes. It introduced both foreign cuisine and national traditional dishes of the peoples of the Empire.

In 1829, Konstantin Nemov published a «potpourri» consisted of famous recipes of European cuisine in the book *Experienced Chef and Confectioner*.

In the years 1833-1860, various thematic books appeared which provided recipes for Moscow tavern cuisine, confectionery art and recipes for housewives (*An Experienced Cook*, 1833; *Full Kuhmister*, 1835; *Complete Manual Kuhmister Book*, 1837; *Encyclopedia for housewives*, 1838; *Family Open Kitchen*, 1857; *Kitchen, Confectionery and Household Book*, 1860). Their author was Kuhmister Gerasim Stepanov. These books were designed for chefs from families of above average income, so the recipes contained exotic ingredients and the dishes themselves were very expensive.

In 1841, the first culinary book of a Russian woman writer was published. It was Ekaterina Avdeeva. Her book *The Handbook of a Russian Experienced Housewife* continued the history of ancient folk dishes in the spirit of Drukovtsev. This collection of recipes was such a huge success that it was regularly reprinted within five years – from 1841 to 1846. The success of the project is explained by the fact that in the middle of the 19th century there were two extremes – exclusively French or English cuisine, or a complete neglect of them. Avdeeva respects foreign cuisine, but her main interest was folk cuisine. The book is written in a lively and imaginative language, designed for people of average income. «In the places where there are a cook and a butler, they do not need my book», said Ekaterina Alekseevna [3, p. 33].

In her book there were recipes that were close and familiar to the majority of the population of the Empire: a loaf with millet, lazy shchi (cabbage soup), a large number of recipes from various cereals. After the first book Avdeeva published the *New Handbook of a Practical Housewife* (1848), and *A Complete Cookbook of an Experienced Housewife* (1875).

In 1852, the *Grocery Store Almanac* was published in St. Petersburg and soon became a new bestseller. It was written by the nobleman Ignatius Radetsky who was a former head waiter of the court of His Imperial Highness Duke Maximilian of Lichtenberg. This book was about aristocratic court cuisine. The *Almanac* contains recipes for 30 dinners; noteworthy that it also presented price calculations and product quantities based on the expected number of guests. The author tried to bring the folk cuisine of the Empire closer to French standards, and saw its development only in line with the French gastronomy.

Elena Molokhovets was the next author, whose book became a «desktop» for many housewives and cooks for several following decades. Its publishing story is rather interesting. Molokhovets collected the recipes and wrote them down from the words of her friends. In 1861, her husband, a naval officer, secretly published the manuscript and presented the printed book on his wife's birthday. The collection was titled *A Gift to a Young Housewife* and went through dozens of reprints.

During the reign of Alexander III (last quarter of the 19th century), the Empire did not take part in wars. This led to the stabilization of finances and public funds, industrial growth, economic and cultural development. For twenty years, from 1880 to 1900, more than 100 culinary books by Russian authors were published in the Empire. It was a real breakthrough. The books by foreign authors were also in circulation, but their number was insignificant.

During those years, most authors devoted their books to aristocratic cuisine, the development of which did not stand still, but was constantly developing and, as a result, new themes and directions appeared. For example, the topic of vegetarianism and veganism became very popular, among them are *One Week of Vegetarian Meals* (1894) by A.P. Zelenkov; *Vegetarian Cuisine. 800 dishes* (1894); *The Most Complete Vegetarian Table* (1895) by P.F. Simonenko, and others. In addition to French cuisine and its recipes, culinary books of other nationalities began to appear: *Georgian dishes* (1898); *Cookbook for Jewish Women* (1889) by P.A. Weintraub; *Lithuanian Cooker* (1885) by V. Zavadskaya. The mainstream of cookery literature of that time was represented by the books for young housewives, which imitated the culinary books of Molokhovets and Avdeeva, as well as self-instruction manuals, for example *Boyarsky Kvass* (1899) by E.I. Frolov, or *Confectioner* (1899) by N.N. Maslov. This period was analyzed by the famous table chef

F.A. Zeest in his work *The Impact of French Culinary Art on the Empire's Cuisine* (1897).

At the end of the empire's existence, the country was dragged into a number of wars, and the people were overwhelmed with political ideas. Those factors denoted decline of the culinary literature editing and publishing. One of the few considerable works of the time was *Cook's Art* (1902) by P.M. Zelenko.

All in all, the role of the culinary collections of recipes can hardly be overestimated. They erased boundaries between nationalities, helped to align tastes and expanded the traditional borders of different cuisine areas. They contributed greatly to creation of new cuisine of the Russian Empire and embraced both folk and European elements.

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