

CHAPTER 13

AAM COPY: CUISINE AND CONQUEST: INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON FOOD, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN 11TH-CENTURY ENGLAND AND BEYOND

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Multiple strands of evidence are combined to determine the impact of the Norman Conquest on food culture. Diet is reconstructed from the analysis of zooarchaeological, archaeobotanical and ceramic evidence, as well as through an analysis of the 12th-century text Urbanus magnus. This text is then examined alongside the study of artefacts to reconstruct practices surrounding cooking and dining. The chapter concludes that the Norman Conquest did not have a clear and consistent impact on food culture. Whilst some changes, particularly to elite cuisine, can be related to Norman influences, others, such as an increase in fish consumption, are in fact indicative of longer term trends. It is considered that the continuities and changes observed caused different experiences of the Conquest to be mediated through food, for some allowing new forms of elite, Norman, identity to emerge, whilst for others the consumption of familiar foods provided stability in a changing world.

Food is a central component of culture and identity. The study of continuity and change in food practices should, therefore, offer fruitful avenues for understanding these processes in all

periods, and across the social spectrum. The Norman Conquest was one such period of change, yet one which is characterised by an unusually slight signature in the material record. Changes in artefact styles cannot be conclusively linked to the impact of conquest (see Weetch, this volume), and, whilst some subtle changes are apparent, it did not directly lead to dramatic change in the composition of diet either. However, by focussing on cuisine – the practices and culture of cooking and eating – rather than the characterisation of foodstuffs and material culture of food, it is possible to begin to consider the socio-cultural impact of the Norman Conquest through the study of food-related evidence. This chapter uses the concept of cuisine to explore the relationship between food, identity and cultural change between the 10th and 12th centuries through the integrated analysis of food remains (botanical and faunal evidence), material culture and documentary evidence.

CUISINE AND MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Much academic writing about food in the medieval period is limited to discussions of diet; however, this is different from cuisine, the culture of food (there are, however, exceptions: for example, Woolgar 2010 is an example of work which does discuss the cultural importance of food in the later Middle Ages). Drawing on the definition provided by Jack Goody (1982), Gautier (2012) considers cuisine to be distinct from cooking. Whereas cooking is a functional task, for Goody cuisine is a highly elaborated and culturally important form of cooking. The question of whether such a form of cuisine existed in Anglo-Saxon England is a matter of debate. Utilising written sources, largely from literary contexts, Magennis (1999, 37–39) argues that Anglo-Saxon culture was chiefly concerned with drinking, rather than eating. Robin Fleming (2003), however, argues that the late Anglo-Saxon period did see food gain significance as a marker of social distinction, in relation to increasing social stratification, and, therefore, that a form of cuisine may have developed. Gautier (2012) has traced the linguistic development of terms for specialist cooks, the archaeological evidence for cooking and trends in food to argue that certainly by the late Anglo-Saxon period food became an actor in the social arena, but maintains that within the Anglo-Saxon mindset cuisine and cooking were more of a craft than an art form.

Such a distinction between functional cooking and culturally significant ‘cuisine’ is, however, arguably unhelpful. Anthropological and archaeological studies of technology show that even the most functional technological choices cannot be divorced from the cultural context in which they were made. Furthermore, such practices have been shown to play a role in developing or sustaining cultural contexts. Whilst Gautier’s use of ‘cuisine’ is useful for considering the importance of food to Anglo-Saxon culture, by seeing cuisine as the culture of food in more general terms we can begin to untangle the various narratives in which engagements with food were social interactions, contributing to identities and culture even if the use of food in this way was not necessarily a conscious or explicit part of a society. This re-definition moves cuisine from being a tool for understanding elite cooking and consumption, to considering even mundane cooking as an activity that contributed to a community’s social reality.

Within medieval archaeology, several investigations of the cultural and social importance of food exist. For example, drawing upon archaeological and historical evidence, Bonnie Effros (2002) demonstrated the importance of food in the mediation of gendered and religious identities in Merovingian Gaul. Analyses of Anglo-Saxon literature and the material culture of burials have also revealed the role of consumption (particularly of drink) in mediating social relationships of power and status in the period (Magennis 1999). In a similar vein, Kristopher Poole (2013) has demonstrated that relationships with animals, including their consumption as food, contributed to the establishment of gendered and status based identities in Anglo-Saxon England. Archaeological research examining cuisine in later periods has demonstrated there to be a changing relationship between animal exploitation and status in the medieval period, which can be linked to a range of social and economic factors, such as the need for secondary products and the rituals associated with hunting (Albarella 2005; Sykes 2006a; Thomas 2006), whilst the exploitation of spices and exotic plant foodstuffs has been shown to relate to urbanisation and social stratification across north-western Europe (Groenman-van Waateringe 1994; Karg 2007; Livarda 2011; Livarda and Van der Veen 2008).

Archaeological analyses of food and cuisine focussing on the period around the Norman Conquest have begun to show the value of such approaches. For example, Naomi Sykes (2007) has demonstrated that social change is manifest in the zooarchaeological record for the Norman Conquest,

and that this relates to the identities of consumers and the changing socio-economic landscape of England. Examining pottery, Jervis (2013) considers cooking to have not simply reflected identities, but have been a means through which experiences of continuity and change were mediated around the Norman Conquest. Differences in the consumption or processing of foodstuffs, no matter how mundane, simultaneously played a role in the constitution of individual or group identities (Jervis 2013). Indeed, the consumption of food is one arena in which social relationships can be negotiated, and understanding this activity is central to comprehending the social role of food. Contrasts between Anglo-Saxon and Norman practices can also be seen in two dining scenes from the Bayeux tapestry. Members of Harold's court are depicted drinking communally from horns, whilst William's are sat at a table, perhaps covered in a cloth, with a kneeling servant and foodstuffs, including fish, laid out on the table. Whilst not necessarily reflecting reality, the designer of the tapestry may have been contrasting the eating practices of these two groups – with, furthermore, the piety of William of Normandy being demonstrated through the clear similarity between the Norman dining scene and images of the last supper (Sykes 2007, 86–87) – to make a specific point about the role of food in establishing the contrasting identities of these two groups.

Although advancing our knowledge, these studies are limited by their focus upon a single form of evidence, be it pottery, faunal, or botanical remains. They focus on interpreting patterns of similarity and difference between and within assemblages on either side of the Conquest and relating these to a wider context. Such an approach to the material record has been shown to be highly successful in identifying how it may have been shaped by the effect of periods of considerable social change. This is ably shown, for instance, by Joanita Vroom's (2003) analysis of medieval pottery assemblages from southern Greece, which shows eating habits to have been transformed in accordance with changing Byzantine, Frankish and Ottoman influences. However, Vroom's study benefits from the presence within her study area of distinct groups with deep-rooted, and differing, food practices, relating in part to religious beliefs. In contrast, a key difficulty with exploring the impact of the Norman Conquest in the archaeological record is the close relationship between England and Normandy prior to 1066 (Gardiner 1999; Thomas 2003), meaning that any differences are likely to be more subtle and harder to trace than was the case in medieval southern Greece.

Following critiques in the 1980s of the culture-historical nature of medieval archaeology and the subservience of the discipline to history, it became unfashionable to seek historical events in the archaeological record (see, for example, Austin 1990). However, to relegate the role of the historical record to supporting archaeological narratives of continuity and change is equally unhelpful. The strength of archaeological data is the possibility to trace multiple narratives of a single historical event. We can, therefore, question why the well-documented Norman Conquest does not appear as a clear horizon in the material record (see Ten Harkel, this volume; and Weetch, this volume), and, through close analysis, consider what this means for our understanding of how the Conquest was experienced and the impact that it had on social and cultural life in England. Rather than using sources in parallel to explore the same stories (a multi-disciplinary approach; following Wicker 1999), or utilising sources to corroborate or make up for the deficiencies of others (a cross-disciplinary approach), the concept of cuisine as a technology or culture of food forces us to take an interdisciplinary approach, which focuses upon the relationships between different sources of data and what these can tell us about how the overarching historical narrative relates to the varied social experiences of early medieval people.

RECONSTRUCTING DIET

Diet is perhaps the most fundamental element of cuisine. A variety of sources are available to investigate changes in diet before and after the Conquest. Archaeological excavations have recovered large faunal assemblages (see Sykes 2007) and archaeobotanical assemblages are increasingly becoming available (Livarda and Van der Veen 2008; Livarda 2011; Van der Veen *et al* 2013). The application of new scientific techniques, particularly organic residue analysis, can provide further insights into the foodstuffs consumed. Finally, historical documents can also provide important information. As Gautier (2012) has shown, such documents are scarce. However, one document, *Urbanus magnus*, upon which we focus here due to the fact that it has been the subject of extensive recent study (Whelan 2015), provides a great deal of information about both the range of foodstuffs consumed and the practices of cooking and eating.

Urbanus magnus is a Latin text ascribed to Daniel of Beccles (Smyly 1939), who is believed to have been a cleric active in Suffolk at the end of the 12th century, and is conventionally dated to around 1180. There is no published translation of the text, and consequently it has been overlooked as a source for dietary consumption in post-Conquest England. *Urbanus magnus* is an early version of a courtesy text, a document which lays out rules of etiquette in the context of court life (Nicholls 1985). It is composed of four sections, the final one of which is the most relevant to the study of cuisine, as it specifically relates to diet and table manners, enumerating various foodstuffs in relation to food preparation and the dietary effects of different foods. It is, therefore, a valuable source for providing evidence of foodstuffs which may not survive in the archaeological record, whilst also providing a broader context for our understanding of diet, which is otherwise derived largely from archaeological evidence. Although doubts have been expressed over the exact date of this latter section, and some parts may be later additions, or derived from other documents mistakenly attributed later to Daniel of Beccles (Bartlett 2000; Nicholls 1985), it remains an important early documentary source in relation to food practices.

We will return to the question of why such documents may have developed in the 12th century, but, first, it is worth exploring some of the contents of *Urbanus magnus* within their archaeological contexts. The choice of a 12th-century text requires explanation. The Anglo-Saxon period, as Magennis (1999) has shown, was lacking in written sources related to the consumption of food. The 12th century witnessed the emergence of a new genre of literature on table manners (Glixelli 1921), and *Urbanus magnus* combines this genre with specific details on the consumption of food. It represents one of the earliest attempts to survey and critique dining and consumption in England. In this respect, it represents the earliest written codification of continuity and change in dietary practices before and after the Conquest.

Continuity and change in the exploitation of animals and their products have been extensively discussed elsewhere (Sykes 2007), and, therefore, these shall only be summarised here. Sykes' study suggests that, with the exception of dramatic shifts in the exploitation of wild animals (eg see Sykes 2006b), the Norman Conquest did not have a substantial impact upon what was eaten in 11th- and 12th-century England. Nonetheless, its effect may be seen in the subtleties of faunal assemblages, for

example in form of evidence for the proportions of foodstuff and the age at death of the animals consumed. The biggest differences between pre- and post-Conquest faunal assemblages from England are identifiable in relation to the consumption of chicken and pigs.¹ Fowl constitute around 17% of the French assemblages analysed by Sykes, but less than 10% of pre-Conquest English assemblages by number of individuals (Sykes 2007, 27–28). The Conquest appears to relate to an increase in chicken consumption at elite sites, from 6% in the late Anglo-Saxon period to 18% in the post-Conquest period (Sykes 2007, 27–28). Sykes (2007, 28) suggests that this could relate to an increase in the demand for eggs. Sykes (2007, 20) argues that elites in France consumed chickens in greater quantities than did village populations, and it is possible that an elite taste for chickens developed in England following the Conquest. This hypothesis is supported by linguistic evidence, as the word capon appears in England around the time of the Conquest, which Burnley (1992, 429) has suggested reflects the preferences of the conquering aristocracy. Furthermore, following the Conquest the proportion of duck within domestic fowl assemblages decreases, and, given that the French dataset suggests that duck was avoided in France (Sykes 2007, 20), this decrease can perhaps be seen as the adoption, by some members of society, of this practice in post-Conquest England too (Sykes 2007, 28). The fowl evidence, therefore, suggests both a shift in diet, with the French aristocratic taste for fowl, and also in attitudes towards different types of fowl, indicated by the decrease in the consumption of duck. *Urbanus magnus* also demonstrates that a variety of fowl, including chickens, geese, cockerels and peacocks were consumed after the Conquest (although interestingly ducks do not feature), showing a reasonable correlation with archaeological data.

More complex patterns of continuity and change have been identified in relation to cattle, caprines and pigs (Sykes 2007, 28–37). Regional divides in husbandry have been identified for the 9th to 11th centuries, with cattle being dominant in the east and north and pigs being better represented in the south and west of England. Such distributions relate both to the varying natural landscape, as well as regional cultural and economic factors. Such changes need to be seen in the context of broader agricultural regimes, with intensification of arable farming in the south and midlands in the later Anglo-Saxon period leading to a decrease in the amount of land available for pasture, and possibly leading to an increase in sheep husbandry due to the fertilising properties of their manure (Sykes

2007, 34). This patterning is, therefore, likely to be due to a variety of natural and cultural reasons.

This regional diversity is important, as it allows us to better contextualise the overall picture.

Generally, there is a contrast between the French early medieval evidence and that from Anglo-Saxon England, which persists into the post-Conquest period.

It was during the Norman period that the frequency of pigs reached its highest level, greater than at any time before or after. Pigs were frequently the best-represented animal in French assemblages and, therefore, it is tempting to suggest that the increase reflects Norman dietary preferences. An important change is a shift in the cull patterns of pigs, with them being killed younger in the post-Conquest period. In the Norman period 13% of pigs from elite sites were killed at less than 6 months of age, compared to just 4% in the late Anglo-Saxon period. This accords with the pattern of consumption in northern France; potentially, this could indicate the importation of a French preference for eating younger animals (Sykes 2007, 55).

A different pattern can be observed for the cull patterns of cattle and sheep. Ageing data for the late Anglo-Saxon period indicate that large numbers of juvenile animals were killed, most probably as a by-product of dairying (the young killed in order to release milk for human consumption). According to the *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum*, a text about estate management, probably produced for Bath abbey in the early 11th century (Lemanski 2005, 36–37), cattle, sheep and goats were all milked. In Aelfric of Eynsham's *Colloquy*, which was a guide to occupations intended to assist in the learning of Latin, the shepherd states that 'I lead them [the flock] back to their fold and milk them twice a day, I make cheese and butter' (Swanton 1975, 109). Dairying is also referred to in the *Leechdoms*, a collection of Anglo-Saxon documents relating to medicine (Cockayne 1851) and the *Exeter Riddle Book* which most likely dates to the 10th century (Crossley-Holland 1993), while French and Frisian documents suggest that cheese was one of Anglo-Saxon England's main exports (Loyn 1970, 100). In contrast, the ageing data for the Norman period animals suggest that few animals were slaughtered young. If juveniles were raised to adulthood, milk yields would have been reduced, allowing little dairy production beyond the domestic scale. Whilst a temporal pattern, it is likely that such a change relates to agricultural intensification and the increased demand for traction animals, which can be linked to a rising population and an increase in

urbanisation. Therefore this pattern might be considered to be independent of the Norman Conquest, but, rather, reflects a long term economic trend throughout the period under investigation.

These changes are not only evident in the faunal evidence. Analysis of organic residues of pottery from pre- and post-Conquest deposits at Raunds and West Cotton in Northamptonshire, for example, shows changes in the animal fats that were absorbed into the walls of ceramic vessels (Evershed *et al* 2002). This area is fortunate in having a particularly well understood Anglo-Saxon ceramic sequence, with the presence of distinctive regional imports and forms, making dating more confident than elsewhere (Blinkhorn 2010, 327). In the late Anglo-Saxon period, dairy fats are present, consistent with the ageing data provided by the faunal remains, however into the post-Conquest period these signatures disappear. By the 12th century, porcine fats are present, corresponding with the pig peak identified in the zooarchaeological evidence. In isolation, these data are only supplementary to the faunal remains, however this technique has great potential for deepening our understanding of consumption in this period, offering the possibility not only to identify what was eaten, but to begin to understand the dishes prepared through the identification of food mixing in particular containers (see, for example, Baetens *et al* 2013).

Documentary evidence suggests that fish was an important component of medieval diet. The recording of fisheries in Domesday Book demonstrates their economic importance. Inland fishing is documented in relation to renders, but also references interpreted as relating to the fixed infrastructure of fishing, such as weirs and fishtraps. Weirs, for example, are referred to Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Middlesex, whilst a 'new fishery' at Monkton (Kent) is also likely to indicate the presence of a fixed structure (Darby 1977, 280–281). Fishing was clearly an important economic activity for communities living on major rivers and around the coast, for example around the Fens, Somerset Levels and the Severn estuary (Darby 1977, 283). References to fishing boats are rarer, but are mentioned in relation to Peterborough, Ramsey and Thorney abbeys (all Huntingdonshire), and a toll of 6s was placed on fishing nets at Swaffham (Cambridgeshire) (Darby 1977, 282). Eels are the most commonly mentioned species, and there are a few references to salmon and renders of herring from the east coast (Darby 1977, 283, 285). However, whilst giving some insight into the organisation of fishing, Domesday Book provides an incomplete picture, particularly in relation to diet. Although a

later document, a wider range of fish and seafood – herring, red mullet, salmon, eel, roach, pike, perch, turbot and dace, as well as whale and seal – are recorded in *Urbanus magnus*, and Daniel of Beccles also specifies appropriate accompaniments for these fish.

Archaeological evidence is more difficult to interpret, partly due to issues of sampling and recovery, as fish bone is only likely to be recovered in quantity where sieving is utilised. Sykes (2007, 60) suggested that according to the available archaeological evidence, a drop in elite fish consumption could be observed, although sampling biases may have influenced the observed pattern. The development of the fish trade has been the subject of relatively recent archaeological study, which has identified a ‘fish event horizon’ around the year 1000 (Barrett *et al* 2004, 621). At this point there appears to be a switch from the exploitation of freshwater fish to the greater consumption of marine fish, however, as Domesday Book demonstrates, freshwater fishing seems to have continued alongside this intensification of marine fishing. As a component of archaeological assemblages, herring, for example, increases in importance four-fold in the 11th and 12th centuries, whilst cod, virtually absent from assemblages dating to before 1000, appears to be a significant component of the catch after 1000 (Barrett *et al* 2004, 622). This increase in fish consumption pre-dated the Norman Conquest, and, at present, does not appear to have occurred in France until the 13th century (Sykes 2007, 24). Isotopic analysis demonstrates that in the 11th and 12th centuries the southern North Sea fisheries provided the bulk of fish, with a smaller component being derived from Arctic Norway. This suggests that the ‘Fish Event Horizon’ was the result of local changes to fishing practices, rather than the development of new or existing trade links with more distant northern or Baltic fisheries, which do not become major providers until the later medieval period (Barrett *et al* 2011, 1521). Barrett *et al* (2004) put forward a number of demand and supply-led hypotheses for this change. New technologies and environmental change may have made marine fish more accessible, whilst the supply of freshwater fish could have declined due to habitat change, although it still contributed significantly to diet. The formalisation of Christian fasting practices may have increased demand, but these are generally poorly understood. They conclude that the most convincing argument is the increased level of urbanisation in the 10th to 12th centuries, with the demand from towns outstripping the produce that could be supplied by freshwater fisheries alone (Barrett *et al* 2004, 628-30). Detailed analysis of

fish bones from London (Orton *et al* 2014) suggests that this demand was initially met through increased consumption of fresh marine fish (inferred from the presence of cranial bones, generally removed when fish are preserved as stock-fish), with the increased diversity of sources from the 13th century, which is coupled with a relative decrease in the occurrence of cranial bones, indicating greater supply and consumption of stockfish, perhaps again to meet the demands of a growing population.

A further source for interpreting the consumption of marine fish in the Middle Ages is stable isotope analysis of human remains. There are few published studies of cemetery populations dating to the pivotal 11th/12th centuries, and targeted research on the burials of this period would undoubtedly yield highly beneficial results (see Craig-Atkins, this volume), however analysis of 14th-century individuals shows that the elite were consuming large quantities of fish in this period (Müldner and Richards 2006). Fish consumption did change during the medieval period, with the rise of marine fishing and the growth of the trade in stockfish by the 13th century. However, these were long-term processes, linked principally to economic developments and, particularly, to the growth of towns, and, importantly, they appear to bear little relationship to the Norman Conquest. This, however, may have acted as a catalyst for the growth of urban demand in some areas, and, as Sykes (2007, 61) suggests, may have impacted on the ways in which fish were consumed by different social strata, although on current evidence this is difficult to ascertain.

Some longer-term continuity may be delineated archaeologically in the use of the food plants mentioned in *Urbanus magnus*, including leek, fig, fennel and apple/pear, with the main difference being their spatial distribution and access. Some of these, such as apples, were already quite well established in the local foodways prior to the Conquest, as they were also in northern France. Others, however, were by no means ‘staples’, such as fig or fennel, and had a more restricted availability both before and after the Conquest (Livarda 2008). The new elites could also maintain large orchards and, thus, a supply of fruit, many of them in or near towns. Therefore, through growing common fruits, and acquiring rarer types through the urban markets, elite diet may have been considerably more nutritious than that of the lower social classes, and than has previously been thought.

Archaeobotanical work on condiments and spices in north-western Europe suggests that after a decline in their visibility during the early medieval period, an increase in their variability within the northern European diet, including that of England, is witnessed, which can be pinpointed to the beginning of the 12th century onwards. However, taphonomic parameters may have partly influenced this picture,² and thus this evidence should be treated with caution. The available data indicate that cultivation of many condiments became established, while, at the same time, new imported spices, among other food plants, appear in the culinary arena and are disseminated across the study area (Livarda 2008). Analysis of the distribution of condiments and spices in the medieval period (Livarda and Van der Veen 2008; Livarda 2011) suggests that import quantities expanded in the 12th century, and their distribution, on current evidence, is focussed on towns, as demonstrated by data from centres such as London, and was linked to high-status consumption. Further work on rural settlements with waterlogged deposits, which are currently limited (Van der Veen *et al* 2013), can help to broaden insights into their social distribution. The preliminary results of a new study on the trade in food plants (other than cereals/staples) in medieval Britain (Livarda and Orengo in prep) further suggest that prior to the Norman Conquest imports of condiments, spices and certain fruits were largely limited to a few sites in eastern Britain, whereas only after the 12th century did trade expand to include a much wider distribution network inland. The increased occurrence of stone and ceramic mortars in the archaeological record from the 12th century (Dunning 1977) may relate to the increased consumption of ground spices, which may have had the effect of masking the consumption of spices such as cumin, mentioned in *Urbanus magnus* but absent archaeobotanically. However, at this stage, it is not possible to determine whether, as with fish, these changes relate to a long term economic trend, or can be more directly linked to the events of the Norman Conquest.

On the basis of textual evidence, Gautier (2012, 395) considers it is likely that herbs were used in Anglo-Saxon cooking, but that spices were not utilised as abundantly as on the continent. Some, such as pepper, were used, but were limited to the upper classes. Gautier considers that herbs ‘cannot have been socially significant’ (Gautier 2012, 395), principally on the basis of a lack of a complex vocabulary related to these resources and the general absence of documentary references to specific species. However, within the context of the Conquest and the clear socio-economic change

that this brought, it can surely be considered that continuity in the use of herbs and the distinctive character that they gave to dishes would have served to make food comforting in what were times of uncertainty and change. *Urbanus magnus* mentions eleven condiments/aromatics, namely sage, thyme, parsley, dittany, rue, fennel, cumin, celery, mustard, pepper and garlic. As far as we know, sage, thyme, dittany and cumin have never been recorded archaeobotanically in medieval Britain, which may be the result of identification and taphonomic biases. Sage, dittany and thyme, for instance, are used for their leaves, rather than seeds, which are soft tissues and they do not preserve well even in waterlogged environments, the typical preservation mode for herbs (eg Livarda and van der Veen 2008). Most importantly, even if the preservation conditions are excellent, the identification of leaves and stems is very difficult and requires expertise and experimentation that is currently largely lacking in archaeobotanical research (Livarda 2011). Yet, other herbs, such as dill and summer savory, as well as several other native plants used for their leaves, *have* been attested archaeobotanically, which may point towards the rare use/availability of the aforementioned aromatics. Could it be then that condiments such as sage, thyme and cumin were not really common ingredients in the local cuisine but they were employed as flavourings in certain dishes for the food ‘connoisseurs’, at least in the Norman world as attested in *Urbanus magnus*, but also later on, as their occasional mention in recipes referring mostly to elite dining of the later medieval period (eg Black 2012) shows?

All other food plants mentioned in *Urbanus magnus* have left their archaeological footprint in medieval contexts. Prior to the Norman Conquest, in archaeological contexts dated to the 10th/11th centuries, the only one of these items not recorded is black pepper, while for parsley there is no record specific for this period, with the available contexts having only a rough dating of 11th/12th century or later. Their use overall seems to continue after the Conquest and during the 12th century, with garlic and rue being now replaced by black pepper in the archaeobotanical list of condiments/flavourings. These differences may be coincidental as rue is exceptionally rare archaeobotanically, found to-date only in one 10th-century site in London, at Watling Court (Jones *et al* 1991), and its later absence may simply stress its rarity. Interestingly, to our knowledge this is the earliest rue find in north-western Europe in the medieval period, while from the 12th century onwards it is also attested in

contexts of modern-day Germany and Denmark. Similarly, the absence of black pepper in the pre-Conquest period may also be coincidental, as although not widely available across the social spectrum, its use was known, for example being mentioned in the possession of Bede in the early 8th century (Nightingale 1995, 6). Taphonomic reasons also seem to operate in the case of garlic, which is a rare archaeobotanical find, due to its easily perishable nature (see Livarda 2011 for a more detailed discussion). Mustard has also been attested archaeobotanically both prior to and after the Conquest. Notably, however, its occurrences prior to the Conquest are mostly on rural sites in northern France but only in urban centres, and particularly London, in Britain, which may indicate that mustard was mostly being imported (rather than widely cultivated) there, possibly little used in Anglo-Saxon foodways (Livarda 2008). In the 12th century, mustard in Britain becomes more widely available (Livarda 2008) and it seems that its cultivation and distribution reaches a wider social spectrum to include the peasantry, probably being a favoured condiment as an alternative to more expensive, imported spices (Dyer 2006, 36). Therefore, whereas the continued use of common herbs would have brought comfort, the use of rarer herbs and spices can hint at a possible change in diet, and one which perhaps allowed spicing and flavouring to contribute towards the creation of a distinctive elite diet. With time, however, flavourings such as mustard became a more common feature of cuisine, suggesting perhaps that the elite taste for spiced and flavoured foods was trickling into society more widely.

All of this evidence suggests that some continuity, but also change, may be identified in relation to high-status diet, as the Norman elite brought new tastes with them and the expansion of Norman influence to the Mediterranean expanded access to exotic accompaniments. Therefore, whilst the Conquest did not result in major dietary change, it did potentially act as a catalyst in eventually making a wider range of flavouring agents accessible to a wider cross-section of medieval society.

Changes in diet can be observed in both town and country. Some, such as the increased consumption of younger pigs and changes in the consumption of fowl can be argued to relate in a quite direct way to the Norman Conquest. Other changes were, in contrast, evidently part of much longer-term processes, for example changes in the culling age of dairy animals, and, most obviously, changes in the supply and consumption of fish. Developments in the consumption of plant-based

foodstuffs are more ambiguous. Some changes to trading and consumption patterns most likely relate to more general economic trends, although we can tentatively argue for an increase in the consumption of spices. It does appear that changes are the most definite amongst the diet of elites, with increasingly exotic plant-based foodstuffs, as well as changes in the consumption of pig and fowl, being most apparent in towns and at elite sites, such as castles.

FOOD PRACTICES: COOKING AND EATING

Whilst foodstuffs are the building blocks of cuisine, it is through the practices of cooking and eating that they gain cultural or social significance, becoming agents for the mediation of continuity and change (eg Jervis 2013) or markers of social identity (eg Vroom 2003).

Cooking

No pre-Conquest recipe books are known, although the *Leechdoms* provide some insights into cooking methods and combinations. *Urbanus magnus*, although not a recipe book, does also give instructions regarding the correct preparation of meat and fish. Pork and beef required garlic, whilst lamb required a pepper sauce, a spice which, as we have seen, seems to have become more common following the Conquest. Game birds were roasted and had to be served with sauce (*UM* 11.2636–40), whilst inferior wildfowl could be boiled or roasted with salt, and served with a cumin sauce. In all cases the fowl was to be eaten with salt, an instruction that is also common in pre-Conquest *Leechdoms* (Hagen 2006, 126). The use of flavourings created particular dishes, through which staple foodstuffs could become re-interpreted and develop new meanings. This can perhaps be best illustrated through the example of fish. Fish is commonly perceived as pious foodstuff with specific connotations relating to abstinence, through its association with fasting. However, in *Urbanus magnus* fish is consumed alongside pepper sauces, elevating the fish from simple, pious food to a dish worthy of the elite table. Recipes are, therefore, more than simple sets of instructions, they detail transformative processes whereby foodstuffs can gain new meanings and significance, as through

combining particular sets of ingredients they develop characteristics through which they can become enrolled in patterns of social distinction, alongside which a concept of elite cuisine can be considered to have developed. Although organic residue analysis can provide information on food mixing, it is of limited potential in identifying the use of specific herbs and spices. Rather, in order to understand taste combinations it is necessary to correlate the presence of these flavouring agents in the archaeological record with contemporary textual references. From the limited distribution of imported condiments it is clear that the dishes detailed in *Urbanus magnus* were largely limited to elite households, and, to some extent urban communities, demonstrating that different senses of taste developed through which social difference could be mediated.

Two methods appear to have been favoured for the cooking of meals: roasting and boiling. The information relating to cooking in *Urbanus magnus* refers chiefly to roasting. It is stated that it is important to baste meat regularly to keep it moist, a practice which can be related to humeral theory which governed food theory; keeping meat moist meant that it could be cooked over a fire, a cooking process which could balance this moisture against dryness. Archaeological evidence for roasting is not as limited as might first be thought. Organic residue analysis of pottery from Causeway Lane in Leicester provides direct evidence of roasting, with analysis showing that fats from dripping pans derived from the roasting of pork (Mottram *et al* 1999). However, roasting meat, in the style depicted on the Bayeux tapestry as the fleet prepare to invade, is relatively wasteful, and is likely to have only been suitable for the upper echelons of society. This suggestion is supported by Sykes' (2007, 88) pilot survey of the presence of charred and burnt bone in medieval assemblages, which suggests that the quantities of burnt material increased on elite sites in the Norman period in comparison with pre-Conquest deposits from sites of similar status. Whilst roasting may have become increasingly common within elite households, the majority are likely to have continued to boil meat and consume stews of meat and/or vegetables. This is perhaps evidenced by the level of continuity in the form of ceramic cooking pots throughout the pre- and post-Conquest periods and the general absence of roasting equipment from the archaeological record, although further data must be gathered on this, for example through the application of organic residue analysis to large ceramic assemblages.

Whilst boiling is a relatively simple technique, archaeological evidence demonstrates there to have been varying approaches to the best way to practice this method. At both Raunds and West Cotton organic residue analysis shows vessels to have been used in a variety of ways, based upon the distribution of fatty deposits up the vessel walls (Charters *et al* 1993). The distribution and type of sooty deposits on pots can also demonstrate variability in the ways in which foodstuffs were brought to the boil. In Southampton, Jervis (2013) has observed that pottery from pre-Conquest deposits principally exhibits thick sooty deposits, which develop when a vessel is placed in or close to the fire, in order to bring the contents to a relatively quick boil. In post-Conquest contexts pottery more commonly exhibits thinner and glossier deposits, suggestive of vessels being located further away from the heat source, probably suspended over the fire. This approach lends itself to slower cooking, potentially resulting in more tender meat. This change is most apparent in the French Quarter of Southampton, the waterfront area of the town which is believed to have housed the French settlers referred to in Domesday and which certainly was the focus of mercantile activity in the town (see Platt 1973), and therefore it is tempting to relate this change to the presence of a new population in this area. In other areas of Southampton this new technique was adopted more slowly, perhaps suggesting that ‘English’ households continued to cook in the pre-Conquest manner, potentially offering a form of domestic resistance, either consciously or sub-consciously, in the form of conservatism, in the face of the higher level change brought about by the Conquest. This interpretation is further fuelled by the fact that a greater quantity of late Anglo-Saxon vessels from this waterfront area exhibit the glossier sooting, suggesting that in this, the most cosmopolitan part of late Anglo-Saxon Southampton, different practices were being undertaken to elsewhere even before the Conquest. Circumstantial evidence for vessel suspension can be found in a depiction of a (probably metal) vessel on the beach-head scene of the Bayeux tapestry and the presence of suspension holes or loops on pottery from northern France in greater quantity than in Wessex.

The ceramic evidence from Southampton seems to reflect a change in population and also in domestic practice. However, in reality, the picture is more subtle. French cooks may have experienced a shock as they tried to replicate dishes in the coarser and less heat efficient Flint-tempered and Scratch-marked Wares available on the market in Southampton, whilst English cooks and kitchen

hands may have had to learn to use these vessels in new ways, as they learnt the new dishes required by their French or cosmopolitan employers. For the French consumers the results may have been indistinguishable from dishes consumed in France, whilst for wealthy English town dwellers this new mode of cooking may have led to new taste or texture sensations. Cooking practice, therefore, mediated several different processes of continuity and change, causing people to experience the displacement resulting from the Conquest in different ways through domestic practice, with the cooks and kitchen hands and aspirational English consumers perhaps feeling the greatest change, as French consumers continued to enjoy familiar foodstuffs in a different physical setting. Therefore, although a simple cooking technique, by considering cuisine as a social technology of food, it becomes clear that there are social implications relating to even the simplest domestic activities.

Dining

The ceremony and etiquette surrounding consumption and dining was a further way in which status, morality and identity could be demonstrated and negotiated, and it is in illuminating this that the historical evidence must take the lead. *Urbanus magnus* provides detailed insights into the rules, rituals and practices of consumption at the elite table. These begin with the setting of the table in which the tablecloth is of paramount importance; Daniel of Beccles states that whilst one could conceivably have a meal without a table, it would be impossible to have one without a tablecloth, which should be white and clean. The accoutrements should then be laid out: clean bowls and cups, knives and spoons and bread for eating and use as a trencher. Daniel indicates that utensils are the responsibility of the host, and guests must restrain from stealing them. An interesting observation has been made by Kelly Sealy (pers. comm.), who has shown that the relative frequencies of knives and spoons in archaeological assemblages change between the Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods. This may indicate a shift in the perception of these items, from the Anglo-Saxon period when knives were ubiquitous tools, to the Norman period, where they came to be perceived more specifically as cutlery. The guests must then prepare themselves by washing their hands, according to rank. At all times, Daniel stresses the need for order within the social hierarchy, especially where service is concerned.

Therefore, during the meal the lord would always be served first, followed by clerics and knights, and then the rest of the guests. The washing of hands is the exception to this rule. Daniel states that the priest went first, and the water in which he cleansed his hands should be removed and refilled for the remaining guests. Hands are washed in a bowl and then dried with a clean napkin. Furthermore, guests should purge their bowels before dining, since overloading the body could lead to ill-humours. Finally, guests could loosen their belt before eating. In the 11th century, vessels associated with hand washing were exceptionally rare, and can be considered to relate specifically to elite contexts (Verhaege 1991, 42; Redknapp 2010, 155). This refinement, which can be considered to echo hand washing in ecclesiastical contexts, can, therefore, be conceptualised as an expression of refinement and morality through which the elite could be differentiated from the less refined lower classes. Hand washing could also serve as a means of re-emphasising the social and moral order as the bowl was passed around the table in accordance with social hierarchy.

The over-arching emphasis in *Urbanus magnus*, and other contemporary texts on table manners, is that of moderation and restraint; where *Urbanus magnus* goes further – and distinguishes itself from texts solely on table manners – is the inclusion of practical details regarding food consumption and food production, rendering it the only courtesy text to provide information about dietary practices. Magennis (1999) has shown that Anglo-Saxon homiletic writing was concerned with over-indulgence in drinking, which is continued into the 12th century in *Urbanus magnus*. Where *Urbanus magnus* goes further is to discuss moderation and restraint in relation to eating, gesture, speech, and general manners. Therefore, one must remain silent during the meal (unless spoken to), and ensure that one does not laugh too loudly, act too boisterously, or is perceived to be fidgety. In addition, one should try to avoid bodily emissions, but if unavoidable then they should be as discreet as possible. The text was intended for use within an elite setting, but perhaps not by the elite. Bartlett (2000) argues that the person who would make use of such a text looked two ways on the social scale: perhaps in charge of a small household with servants, but also subject to a lord himself. Consequently, instructional texts such as this acted as a guide for correct and appropriate behaviour for those looking up the social scale. Crouch (2009) used Pierre Bourdieu's theory of *social habitus* to show that these rules of courtesy or etiquette – and therefore the genesis and growth of

courtesy literature itself – may be the result of rules being broken more and more. Succinctly, so long as people were following the rules, there was little need to record them. It was only when the rules were repeatedly flouted that the desire to document them became prevalent. The creation of didactic texts such as *Urbanus magnus* ensured that elite standards of behaviour were both maintained and disseminated, such that any faux-pas at the dining table would lead to calls of rusticity.

CULTURE AND CUISINE

A focus on diet alone suggests that the Norman Conquest had some impact on what was eaten, but principally in relation to elites. The introduction of new spices and possibly new combinations of tastes, changes in cull patterns and the consumption of increased quantities of fowl and pig also suggest that the Conquest brought in a new high-status cuisine. Cuisine is more than diet, however, and by exploring the technologies of food, particularly cooking and dining it becomes apparent that experiences of food mediated multiple narratives of continuity and change in relation to the Conquest. In Southampton, Jervis (2013) has demonstrated, for example, that the simple act of boiling changed, and that this had varying effects on cooks and consumers from different backgrounds. Furthermore, the expansion of Norman rule into Italy also had an effect, facilitating the spread of medical knowledge which is present in *Urbanus magnus* through the discussion of humeral theory, changing the ways that people thought about food, potentially introducing the concept of cuisine as defined by Gautier (2012), but also introducing/reinforcing the use of new foodstuffs in the form of game and spices, which played a role in marking social distinction.

Perhaps the most crucial question surrounds the relationship between food and identity. To what extent did patterns of continuity and change in cooking and eating lead to a process of Normanisation, or to increased social differentiation along lines of class or social status? In addressing this question, we can consider why it became necessary to document rules surrounding cooking and eating at the end of the 12th century in texts such as *Urbanus magnus*. Writing is a form of re-enforcement, which suggests that rules were regularly broken and needed to be taught and enforced. While the later 12th century represents an Anglo-Norman culture, the need to codify behaviour

suggests that there were lapses in correct etiquette. The instability of the civil war mid-century may be the likely cause for a lack of concern with manners and etiquette, while the relative stability of the court of Henry II provided the context for a renewed emphasis on social behaviour, which related back to the court of Henry I. Contemporary descriptions of Anglo-Saxon consumption contrast with the restraint stressed in *Urbanus magnus*. For example, William of Malmesbury makes an explicit contrast between the practices of the English and the French (in his *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, 1125). Such contrasts can also be seen in the fact that English cooks were sent to France, by high-status individuals, such as Herbert Losinga and Edward the Confessor, to learn to cook in the French manner (Lewis 1994; Matthew 2005, 38), as well as in the scenes from the Bayeux Tapestry discussed above. Taken together these various strands of evidence suggest that the Conquest heralded the emergence of a new elite cuisine, which functioned to highlight contrasts between the Anglo-Saxon and Norman elites, through the stressing of ‘correctness’ and ‘piety’, through the establishment of complex etiquette and the consumption of exclusive foodstuffs, such as young pigs, wild animals and possibly in new combinations with imported spices, which allowed difference to be explicitly marked. The rituals of hunting and dining offered opportunities for elements of social identity relating to social position and piety to be negotiated. As such, changes in the technologies of food, or cuisine, were part of a process of elite change, which we might characterise as Normanisation. This change was not immediate, however. The unrest that characterised the first 100 years of Norman rule, including the civil war of the Anarchy, meant that these changes took time.

It is less simple to understand processes of continuity and change at the lower levels of society. For everyone, food served to mediate particular narratives of continuity and change; the Conquest did not have a uniform effect and the changes which it brought about would vary not only in character, but also in terms of pace. The incoming nobility were concerned with both re-making their households in the new colony of England and also cementing their position in the social hierarchy, making a conscious effort to bring about continuity, for instance, by acquiring foodstuffs, such as spices, birds and young pigs. The impact of this on the English elite seeking to maintain positions of power may have been to mediate a narrative of change and disruption, whilst the effects also trickled down to the experiences of husbandry, food acquisition, production and consumption of the lower

classes. The rituals of hunting and eating changed and did more than reflect the changing hierarchy. These rituals were the processes through which social relationships underpinning social distinction were negotiated and enforced. Hunting, cooking and eating all became ways for the new elite to bring about continuity and temper broader disruption and change associated with the Conquest, disruption which may have been keenly felt by the English elite as they sought to hold onto their position through changing behaviour and the ways that they experienced and interacted with food.

For the lower-status town dwellers and the peasantry, however, change appears to have been less marked, with external economic pressures being the main driver behind changes in consumption. It is unclear, for example, the extent to which the emphasis on morality in *Urbanus magnus*, a document relating to high-status households, transferred to lower-status households. The limited distribution of material culture related to hand washing may suggest certain activities were limited to the elite table, although it is impossible to exclude the possibility that mundane vessels found utility as ewers and basins. Further analysis of domestic material culture from this period of transition is required to understand the specific narratives of continuity and change that were mediated through experiences of domestic practice through the 10th to 12th centuries. The evidence from Southampton does, however, suggest that cooking practices were one way in which households could resist the administrative and economic changes brought about by the Conquest at the domestic scale. The absence of dramatic changes in food related material culture suggests that these practices were adjusted to the items which were to hand, although detailed comparison of assemblages from France and England may highlight further patterning which is not currently apparent.

CONCLUSIONS

Cuisine is more than diet, it is the social relationship between people and food, and as such provides a vehicle through which we can explore multiple narratives of continuity and change through the 10th to 12th centuries. Whilst some changes, particularly those relating to elite diet, might be argued to relate directly to the Conquest, others, relating to the consumption of fish, for example, relate more closely to longer term patterns of change which started before the Conquest and continued

after it. Although change is apparent archaeologically, comparison with French assemblages suggests that for some people this may have allowed food practices to relate to continuity in the face of broader upheaval. Drawing together ceramic, historical, iconographic, zooarchaeological and archaeobotanical data has allowed us to move beyond a consideration purely of diet, to explore the relationship between food practices and continuity and change in greater depth, to show that it is possible to address these issues, but that we must adopt a subtle and long term approach, in which cuisine is but one set of processes through which competing rhythms of continuity and change were played out.

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¹ It should be noted that faunal assemblages cannot be closely dated in such absolute historical terms, and there is likely to be some chronological overlap in accordance with variances in site phasing. However, following Sykes (2007) some general trends can be observed which can potentially be related to the Conquest, if Sykes' arguments are followed.

² Visibility is a key concern when discussing archaeobotanical evidence, as absence from the archaeological or historical record need not mean that spices and other botanical foodstuffs were not consumed. Simply, in archaeobotanical terms, restricted numbers are present from the end of the Roman period and until the 12th century and this does not appear contradicted by the historical record, indeed documents demonstrate the existence of the same variability and high numbers after the 12th century. Naturally, archaeologically this is influenced by taphonomy and historically by the availability of many more texts for the later medieval period – hence the use of the term 'visibility'.