

Glossary

for my translations of the two short Hungarian cookbooks from the end of the 16th century

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- arrange:** *megszerez* (rounded dialect version *megszöröz*) is modernly “to acquire, secure, procure”, but apparently it had an older sense of “arrange carefully, array.”
- bacon:** modern Hungarian *szalonna* is salted and smoked, and could technically be eaten straight, although it is often cooked or fried. The proportion of fat to meat is very much in favor of the fat. I have no information about 16th-17th century bacon, but these recipes and modern ones use it in similar ways.
- bake:** *süt* can refer to baking, roasting, or sometimes frying. Context is needed to determine which procedure is meant.
- batter:** *tészta* can mean “pastry, dough, batter, crust” or “noodles, pasta” (and in Transylvanian usage, “dessert”). Context is needed to determine which food is meant. Specifically for “batter”, Radvánszky’s transcription of the Transylvanian court cookbook uses *radócz*, which Király has as *kadoc*, and defines as a pancake batter or coating for frying, made of flour and eggs or flour and water. (Uppercase R can look very much like K or k, but there’s no reason for the word to be capitalized, so I suspect Király’s reading/transcription is more accurate than Radvánszky’s, but I cannot find either spelling in a dictionary.)
- bridge:** “according to a verse by Oroszhegyi Mihály (1656), at serving-time, cooks ‘put a little pine bridge on top of the bowl’; the roast capon, meat, etc. is placed on this plank.” (Király s.v. *híd*.)
- cake:** *torta* is modernly “cake, torte”, but it had a broader meaning in the 16th-17th centuries, encompassing also things that we would call “pie” and possibly “turnovers.” (I have used “turnovers” for a different word, *béles*.)
- caraway:** *kömény* can be either caraway or cumin, although *köménymag* ‘k. seed’ is modernly almost always caraway, and cumin is usually specified as *római kömény* ‘Roman k.’ Caraway is by far the more common spice in Hungary; it grows wild and readily naturalizes in the garden.
- chicken:** *tikfi* is literally ‘hen-son’, but the glossary/index to Bornemisza defines the modern form/spelling *tyúkfí* as “chicken, pullet.” I have decided not to worry about the gender of the bird and used “chicken” for *tikfi* and “hen” for *tik*.
- cloves:** modernly, *szegfű* (‘nail-grass’) is “carnation”, while “cloves” is *szegfűszeg* (‘nail-grass-nail’), but these cookbooks use the flower-name for the spice.
- comfit:** Radvánszky interprets *confreit* as “potted fruit”, i.e. a compote or fruit conserve. He also adds the French terms *Fruits confit*, *confiture*, which as far as I can tell mean “candied fruit” and “jam”, respectively. However, one of the recipes where this word occurs (A20) calls for half white and half yellow *confreit*, and all of them call for strewing or sprinkling it on top. In my experience, jams and compotes do not come in white and cannot readily be sprinkled. Comfits, on the other hand – small sugar-coated seeds or similar candies – can be white and can be sprinkled. I don’t know what the default type of comfit was, though.
- compost:** *trágya* is modernly “fertilizer, manure”, but this developed from the original but now archaic sense of “something strewn or spread evenly on top.” I have therefore translated it as “compost”, using the English word’s likewise archaic sense of “a composition, mixture” (of sugar and spice, per recipe A19).
- crayfish:** the word *rák* is normally translated as “crab”, but the culinary use is for a critter that’s called “crayfish” in English. It’s basically like a freshwater version of lobster.
- crust:** see **batter**.
- curdle:** *zsugorodik* (older spelling *sugorodik*) is “to shrink”, but these cookbooks use it for “curdle, clump up, get lumpy.”
- currants:** all of the sources I can find blithely translate *tengeri szőlő* (which is literally ‘sea grape’) as *ribizli* “red or black currant”, but it’s not that simple. Recipes from every season use this ingredient, so it was clearly a dried fruit. Red and black currants were not generally dried; they’re too sour. (With sugar or honey, they make excellent jelly, though.) Just like in English, if you search for dried currants (*szárított* or *aszalt ribizli*) in Hungarian, chances are that what you will get is small dried grapes: Zante currants. In

fact, I'm convinced that this ingredient-name is exactly analogous to the "raisins of Corinth" (and variations) found in old English recipes. Luckily for readability considerations, the word "currant" nicely covers this whole discursion.

dough: see **batter**.

fry-cakes: *fánk* is the name of many shapes and kinds of sweet fried dough, including doughnuts, fritters, and funnel-cakes. Since I have little to no information on the intended shape of the food, I came up with "fry-cake" as the most generic term available.

fry: see **bake**.

golden: *piros* is 'red', but in English we speak of baking or frying things until golden, not until red.

gravy: Most recipes from this era use a word for "sauce" based on *lé* "liquid, broth, juice." In contrast, Király says *sása* is probably derived from Italian *salsa*. She defines it as a thick sauce, which can serve as a side-dish if there's a lot of bread in it. The best English word I can come up with for a thickened sauce is "gravy."

greens: see **spinach**.

grits: *zsemlyedara* is literally something like 'rolls-grindings', i.e. my first instinct was "breadcrumbs?" However, Király's glossary has *zsemlyekása* defined as *búzadara* "semolina, farina" or *gríz* "grits", so clearly this is a variation on Cream of Wheat.

juniper berry: *fenyőmag* is literally 'pine-seed', but it meant juniper berry. (For the use of *fenyő* 'pine, fir' to mean "juniper", compare *fenyővíz* 'gin'.)

lime: Király's glossary has *lémonya* – (mala limonia, *Citrus aurantifolium*): [quoting K. Mátyus István: *Ó és új diaetetica...* Pozsony, 1787-1793.] "The lemon and the limonia are one species of fruit, except that the limonia is smaller than the lemon, less round, thinner-skinned, paler-yellow colored, juicier, sourer and more bitter... In other respects they are perfectly equivalent for both culinary and medicinal purposes." Based on cooking experience, I would amend this to say that for culinary purposes, the ripe fruits are interchangeable, but given that limes in American grocery stores are primarily distinct from lemons due to being picked completely unripe, cooks should proceed with caution.

mace: *szerecsendió virágja* is literally 'Saracen-nut's flower'. Print dictionaries often give *szerecsendió* for both nutmeg and mace; this may be because nutmeg and especially mace went out of fashion in the 18th-19th centuries, so the distinction became unimportant. Food blogs and other more current sources have revived the old terminology of *szerecsendió-virág* for mace.

meaty bones: *konc* (older spellings *koncz*, *kocz*) is defined primarily as a bone you throw to a dog, but it had an older meaning of a bone with meaty and fatty parts attached, cooked for human consumption.

melon: *dinnye* can be either cantaloupe (*sárgadinnye*: 'yellow melon') or watermelon (*görögdinnye*: 'Greek melon'). There isn't really a default for the bare/unmodified word.

olive oil: *fa olaj* 'tree oil' is the old name of olive oil.

parboil: "after the cooking water comes to a boil, they take out the meat, strain the liquid, and spice it; they put the meat back in, and cook it on low heat until done." (Király s.v. *abárol*.)

pastel: I have found references online to *pástély* as an old culinary term derived from Italian *pastello*, but none of them explain what the term meant. Based on context, it seems to be yet another word for "sauce", especially a distinctively-colored one.

pepper sauce: *tiszta bors* is literally 'clean pepper', but Király says it was the name of a specific spicy sauce, in which black pepper was just one component.

pie: see **cake**.

pinnata: Király's glossary: *pinnata*; *pinyáta* – (compare Italian *pignatta*, *pignata*) originally a wide-bellied iron pot (diagram can be seen in Scappi's cookbook; the name comes from medieval Latin *pigna* 'pinecone', inspired by analogy to the shape). In the Hungarian text, this is obviously not the type of pan in question, but instead something like Scappi's "navicella", or better, "tortera", in both shape and function: an iron pan or short pot, with a lid onto which hot coals can be placed. It is not currently clear why the meaning changed.

portions: *vevőkönként* 'per customer'.

pottage: I do not know what *szak* or *zak* means in these recipes. The closest I can find are the archaic words *zákány* 'dregs, goo, mucus' and *záklya* 'underbaked, under-risen bread', which imply that if this word is

related, it meant some type of gooey substance. I've already used "porridge" for *kása*, but "pottage" was also sometimes used for grain- or legume-based stews.

quarter (of lamb etc.): sources differ on the meaning of *címer* as a cut of meat. Some say it's just the leg, others say it's the entire quarter, or any large chunk. The question is further confused by the word's much more common meaning of "coat of arms." I chose "quarter" because there are other words available for "leg", and because the recipe for "venison pastel" (A41) calls for cutting the leg from the *címer*.

raisin-wine: *malozsa* is often encountered in these cookbooks as *malozsa-szóló* 'm.-grape', meaning "raisin, dried grape." Modernly, the internal consonants have switched places: the word for "raisin" is *mazsola*. However, here *malozsa* by itself refers to a type of Italian sweet wine named for the Greek region of Malvasia. In its definition of *malozsa-bor* 'm.-wine', Király's glossary uses the term *aszúbor*, but I can't find an actual translation of that; the concise print dictionary has a description: "wine made from grapes shrivelled by noble rot, e.g. Tokaj." I've therefore gone with the more-or-less literal "raisin wine."

roast: see **bake**.

sauerkraut: *savanyú káposzta* 'sour cabbage'; also sometimes *sós káposzta* 'salty cabbage'. This was made with whole heads or leaves, not shredded cabbage like modern sauerkraut. The basic recipe consists of cabbage and salt; it can have various spices added, but never any vinegar.

scatula: *satula* is probably a variant of *skatulya* 'small box', from *scatula*, an Italian loanword based ultimately on Latin *castulum* 'chest, small cabinet'. Perhaps Scappi has some indication of the sort of container meant, but the online facsimiles are not working for me.

season: from context, it appears that the verb *borsol* 'to pepper' had a more general sense of "to season, to add spices." The noun *bors* 'black pepper' meant the specific spice, though.

sharp: see **spicy**.

sops: the etymological dictionary points out that *leves kenyér* was a term for bread in liquid, i.e. sops. The phrase looks like 'soup bread', but it predates the use of *leves* as a noun meaning "soup", and is instead using the word in its original adjectival sense of "juicy, liquidy, brothy."

sour sauce: 19th century dictionaries define *zsufa* (older spelling *sufa*) as a dialectal term for a sour meat soup with tarragon; Király's glossary has it as "a spicy, sour thin sauce, with or without saffron."

spice: the old word for "spice" is *fűszerszám*: 'grass/plant + substance/apparatus + quantity/number'. Modernly, this has been shortened to *fűszer*, but these cookbooks often used the other end, *szerszám* – which is modernly "tool."

spicy: I have used "spicy" for *csípős* ('pinch-y: spicy-hot') and "sharp" for *éles* ('with an edge: sharp'), although both terms appear to have been used for the same sour-sharp flavors.

spinach: this has two names in modern Hungarian: *spenót* and *paraj*. Király says the latter was a collective term for green leafy vegetables, while the former was used specifically for spinach. The initial consonant cluster was sometimes resolved by adding i-: *ispinác*.

spirits: *fenyővíz* 'pine-water' is used in Transylvania for any type of brandy or strong spirits, not just gin. (For the use of *fenyő* 'pine, fir' to mean "juniper", compare *fenyőmag* 'juniper berry'.)

sugar: *nádméz* is literally 'cane honey', but it meant "cane sugar", which was imported in Hungary in the same solid forms as in the rest of Europe. The word *méz* "honey" is used in the compound word in its sense of "sweetener", and does not imply anything about the consistency. The modern word, *cukor*, is a borrowing via German (and cognate with the English word); while its first known occurrence is from the mid-1500s, none of the 16th-17th century cookbooks use it. (The medical treatise at the end of the Transylvanian court cookbook does have an instance of *czwker candia* "sugar candy.")

under: see **bridge**.

vinegar: this was probably most commonly white wine vinegar.

wilt: The dictionaries suggest "parch, wither" for *fonnyaszt*, but it's clear from various recipes (A28 "To make great sturgeon, sturgeon, catfish" and A35 "Cooking beef intestines") that some sort of parboiling in liquid is meant here, hence "wilt" as my choice of translation.

wine: Hungary had and has widespread vine-growing regions, with multiple native breeds of grape. As far as I can tell, most wine in the 16th-17th centuries was white, and the prevailing taste was (and largely still is) for the sweeter end of the spectrum.

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