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Culinary and Other Pairs: Lexical Borrowing and Conceptual Differentiation in Early English Food Terminology

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1. Contextualizing the 'culinary pairs': Sociolinguistic setting and linguistic effects

> Als die Normannen im Jahre 1066 (sage ich mal so) die Engländer kolonisierten [...], war Normannisch bald *in* bzw. *dans le vent*, und Angelsächsisch war out bzw. *out*, weshalb bis heute die Faustregel gilt: Alles, was Arbeit macht, heißt germanisch, also *cow*; alles, was Spaß macht, heißt romanisch, also *beef*.
>
> [When the Normans had colonized the English in 1066 (or so) ..., Norman English was soon an *in* language, *dans le vent*, if you like, and Anglo-Saxon was *out* (or *out*, as modern German has it) – which is why, as a rule of thumb, what's work-related still goes by a Germanic term, i.e. *cow*, what's leisure-related by a Romance term, i.e. *beef*.]

With this flippant remark, Harry Rowohlt (2009, 220-1) provides his own narrative version of what has become a commonplace of textbooks on the history of English, i.e. to contrast some meat terms borrowed from French with the correspondent native English animal names. Commenting on "the famous word pairs", Crystal (2003, 49) states that "no account of Middle English vocabulary would be complete without a reference to the famous culinary lexical pairs (often attributed to Sir Walter Scott) which resulted from the influx of Romance words"; as a more or less full inventory, he lists the pairs *ox*[1] *– beef*, *sheep – mutton*, *calf – veal*, *deer – venison* and *pig/swine – pork*.

In the passage from Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* which Crystal refers to, Wamba the Jester and Gurth the Swineherd enter into a question-and-answer exchange on the sociolinguistics of naming; the slow-witted Gurth has just asked Wamba to explain what he meant by the swine being "converted into Normans before morning" (Scott [1820] 1998, 21):

> "Why, how call you those grunting brutes running about on their four legs?", demanded Wamba. "Swine, fool, swine", said the herd, "every fool knows that". "And swine is good Saxon", said the Jester; "but how call you the sow when she is flayed, and drawn, and quartered, and hung up by the heels, like a traitor?" "Pork", answered the swine-herd. "I am very

1 *Ox* is here apparently used as a generic term for *cow/bull*. For the lack of a lexical equivalent to PDG *Rind* and the possible consequences of this lexical gap for the configuration under discussion here, see below, section 4.4.

> glad every fool knows that too", said Wamba, "and pork, I think, is good Norman-French; and so when the brute lives, and is in the charge of a Saxon slave, she goes by her Saxon name; but becomes a Norman, and is called pork, when she is carried to the Castle-hall to feast among the nobles; what dost thou think of this, friend Gurth, ha?" "It is but too true doctrine, friend Wamba, however it got into thy fool's pate." "Nay, I can tell you more", said Wamba, in the same tone; "there is old Alderman Ox continues to hold his Saxon epithet, while he is under the charge of serfs and bondsmen such as thou, but becomes Beef, a fiery French gallant, when he arrives before the worshipful jaws that are destined to consume him. Mynheer Calf, too, becomes Monsieur de Veau in the like manner; he is Saxon when he requires tendance, and takes a Norman name when he becomes matter of enjoyment."

Scott's printer, James Ballantyne, commented on this passage: "I have read this thrice over, without understanding it". The novelist's firm reply: "It is possible!!!!" came along with an explanation that is worth citing, because it epitomizes the argument that has shaped common notions of the sociolinguistic conditioning of lexical change within this section of English food terminology in post-Conquest England up to the present day:

> Surely the strongest possible badge of the Norman conquest exists in the very curious fact that while an animal remaind alive under the charge of the Saxon slaves it retaind the Saxon name *Sow Ox* or *calf* – when it was killd & became flesh which was only eaten by the Normans the Sow became Porc the ox *boeuf* or beef the calf *veau* or veal. So that we still have the peculiarity of having two words one to denominate the animal alive another his flesh when dead and served up to table. The circumstance shows that the Saxon bondsmen kept the herds & flock, the Norman baron eat the flesh. A thousand volumes cannot speak the condition of the country more strongly. (Scott, *Ivanhoe*, Proofs, I.50-1; cited in Scott [1820] 1998, 427; 511-2)

In accordance with this line of argumentation, textbook explanations for the etymologically mixed character of the 'culinary pairs' frequently propagate the idea of a specific 'cultural appeal' of French, mirroring the refinement of post-Conquest Anglo-Norman cuisine (see, e.g., Baugh/Cable 2002, 172; Scheler 1977, 55; 56). More recently, however, the Scottonian idea that, in the wake of 1066, this differentiation more particularly reflects the hierarchical distribution of social roles along ethnic lines has been echoed in quite a number of linguistic publications (e.g. Hughes 2000, 117; Lutz 2008, 147).

Lutz in particular stresses the aspect of a "superstratum" effect and characterizes the linguistic situation in post-Conquest England as a scenario

> with French as the language of the upper classes who decided on the menu and gave their orders in French, and English as the language of the lower classes who raised the animals which were then ordered, prepared and served by members of the bilingual or trilingual middle classes. (Lutz 2008, 147)

Denison/Hogg (2006, 16), however, cast some doubt on accounts like these: "The initial reaction is to believe that; it is only when we recall terms such as *lamb* (alongside *mutton*) or Anglo-Norman *cattle* alongside English *cow* that its plausibility diminishes." And indeed, while there can be no doubt that, as concerns the semantic distinction between an animal and its meat for food, Modern English in some (!) cases adheres to an etymologically split terminology in a rather strict way, there are also quite a number of counterexamples such as *chicken – chicken*, *duck – duck*, the above-mentioned *lamb – lamb* (alongside *mutton*), *horse – horse meat*, etc. Some linguists accordingly regard the 'master/servant talk' argument as not verified and as somewhat too simplistic. Burchfield (2002, 18), for example, calls the assertion that the Normans introduced the terms for the flesh of animals eaten as food into English "an enduring myth", mainly on the grounds that the French terms were used for the living animals as well and continued in this usage well into Early Modern English.

This shows that the process of borrowing and integration of these French words into the English lexicon is worth considering in some more detail. While the result of this process – i.e. the lexico-semantic differentiation into 'culinary pairs' in Present-day English – is a commonplace, there has as yet been little or no diachronic research into the situation from Old to Early Modern English.[2] The present paper is thus designed as a first attempt towards a diachronic onomasiological study into the designations of 'flesh of animal x for food' in Old and Middle English, with occasional outlooks on the further development. For this preliminary study, the focus rests on the terms for the flesh of swine/pig and ox/cow/calf, i.e. the 'culinary pairs' which show a rather clear-cut semantic differentiation in Present-day English. This choice is also supported by extralinguistic evidence: recent archaeological and historical research has shown that beef was the meat most commonly consumed during the Middle Ages and that – at least in the early medieval period – "pork was likely to have been second" (Albarella 2006, 73; see also the surveys in Adamson 2004; Albarella 2006; Sykes 2006; Woolgar 2006).

The following research questions posited by the 'culinary pairs' will be addressed within the limited scope of this paper:

1) Which terms were used to refer to the 'flesh of swine/cattle used for food' in Old English times? The broad-brush accounts of the textbooks do either not discuss this issue at all or suggest – in different degrees of explicitness – that the Anglo-Saxons did not differentiate between the animal and the flesh of the re-

2 See, however, the studies by Hagen (1992; 1995), focussing on documentary sources, and a recent study on English food terminology of the 14th century by Bator (2011).

spective animal used for food, insinuating that the differentiation itself was a product of French refined cultures.

2) What can be said about the meanings and usages of the relevant French terms in Middle English times? How likely is the scenario of a decisive 'master/servant talk' effect on borrowing and usage if we look at the attested meanings of the words in question during the Middle English period?

3) What was the situation in the recipient language, early Middle English? Which factors guided the semantic and pragmatic integration of the borrowed items into the English lexicon during the period under inspection?

2. The 'culinary pairs' and lexical typology: A brief outline

From a system-oriented, structuralist point of view, the 'culinary pairs' exemplify the 'dissociation' of the Modern English vocabulary – a term introduced by Leisi (1955, 51)[3] to describe the frequent lack of a morphologically transparent relation between semantically related words, usually due to their different etymological origin. In German – a language with a consociated vocabulary – the relation between an animal and the meat it provides for food is transparent: the meat terms are determinative compounds with the name of the animal modifying the head PDG *Fleisch* 'meat; flesh' – see *Schwein* 'pig' and *Schweinefleisch* 'pork', *Rind* 'ox/cow' and *Rindfleisch* 'beef', or *Kalb* 'calf' and *Kalbfleisch* 'veal'. Yet, in certain colloquial contexts, German speakers also use the term for the animal to refer to its meat, as in PDG "Heute gibt's Schwein". This means that speakers of German do not in all cases differentiate between the (living) animals and their meats.

By contrast, this distinction is fully lexicalized and consistently employed in Present-day Standard English:[4] the 'culinary pairs' exhibit no obvious formal relation between the living animal and the food it supplies, and speakers do not have the option to use the animal term to refer to the meat. English also shows far greater restrictions as regards the possibility of referring to the animal raised and butchered for human consumption. Recently, the 'culinary pairs' have become a topic for a more general audience in exactly this context: supported by bestsellers like *Eating Animals* (in German: *Tiere essen*) by Jonathan Safran Foer, vegetarian circles argue that the French-derived terms serve as euphemisms and speculations are raised that "it's a means for people to distance themselves, mentally, from the meat they eat".[5]

This leads us into the field of Cognitive Linguistics and to the question how speakers of different periods and different languages package semantic material into words. One of the first attempts at a "lexical typology from a cognitive and linguistic point of view" was undertaken by Koch (2001), despite the fact that "the lexicon seems to be too full of interlingual diversity and of idiosyncracies to lend itself to systematic typological studies" (Koch 2001, 1142). On the paradigmatic level, Koch bases his analyses on different "types of conceptual hierarchies", mainly on (i) taxonomic and (ii) engynomic hierarchies and relations. The engynomic hierarchies and relations (cf. Gk ἐγγύς 'near, close'), which are particularly relevant for the present study, comprise

> (a) contiguity relations between a conceptual/perceptual frame and its elements (e.g. between TREE on the one hand and FRUIT, WOOD, or TO FELL on the other); (b) contiguity relations between elements of the same frame (e.g. between FRUIT and WOOD, WOOD and TO FELL etc.); (Koch 2001, 1145)

Engynomic relations thus encompass more than 'partonomies', i.e. TOTUM-PARS and PARS-PARS relations (see Koch 2001, 1144). The culinary pairs are a typical example of such an engynomic relation which is not a partonomy in the strict sense. One of Koch's distinctive typological patterns, namely ENGYδ (i.e. engynomic, category δ), is based on the absence vs. presence of polysemy involving different hierarchical levels. The lexemes under investigation here are used to illustrate this pattern:

> A particularly relevant example [...] is the treatment of 1 = ANIMAL concepts (= frame) and the corresponding 2 = MEAT concepts (= element) in different languages. For several, though not all, animals, English behaves according to type A (1: *cow, pig, sheep, calf* / 2: *beef, pork, mutton, veal*), whereas French and Italian, e.g., belong to the polysemy type B (Fr. 1 + 2: *bœuf* etc., Ital. 1 + 2: *manzo* etc.). (Koch 2001, 1153)

With respect to the present paper, it is particularly interesting to see that – in the typological structure suggested by Koch (2001) – English and French belong to different types. Since French has not undergone a typological change during its history with respect to the categorization proposed by Koch, this formal and semantic divergence seems to contradict the contention that the Present-day English distinctions can be explained by Anglo-Norman or French influence. This again suggests that the material has to be analysed in some more detail. We will start with the findings for Old English.

3 See now Leisi/Mair (2008, 51). For the history and the currency of this term and its counterpart 'consociation', see Sanchez (2008, 17-36). Sanchez's (2008, 280) conclusion that "English is not a dissociated but rather a consociated language, just like German" has to be seen against the backdrop of her corpus that comprises "the 2,500 most frequent English and German lemmas" (backcover). On the comparatively low numbers of occurrences of some of the terms – in particular *veal* and *venison* – in the *BNC*, see below, footnote 12.

4 Yet, in addition to *pork*, we find complex, transparent lexemes such as *pig meat* 'the flesh, offal, etc., of a pig as food; pork' (see *OED*, s.v. *pigmeat* 1.) even in today's English. Cf. also formations like *ox flesh* (*OED*, s.v. *ox*, compounds).

5 See the discussion on <http://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/2008/why-do-we-eat-beef-and-pork-rather-than-cow-and-pig> (accessed October 2010).

3. Old English

In view of more general patterns of language contact and borrowing discussed below – in particular the rejection of the idea of a 'lexical gap' which was filled by the French borrowings (section 4.1.) –, it is interesting to see that Old English had a rich nomenclature both for the various types of livestock animals and their flesh for consumption. The labelling, though, was not merely restricted to the lexical field, but extended into the phrasal and syntactic domains. This chapter will present the major findings for the Old English terms used for the animals and their meats (section 3.1.) and discuss issues of word formation and conceptualization (section 3.2.).

3.1. The animals and their meats: Lexical inventory and textual representation

As concerns the domesticated members of the bovine species, Old English provided quite a number of terms and expressions[6] that served a generic or collective function, e.g. *hriþer*, *neat*, *nieten* 'cattle', or which denoted a specific type of bovine animal, differentiated e.g. by age (*cealf* 'calf', *eald hriþer* 'an old ox'), sex (*cu* 'cow', *bula*, *fearr*, *fearhryþer* 'bull'), or function and use (*mylenoxa* 'an ox at mill', *weorcnyten* 'working cattle', *metecu* 'cow for slaughter', *sleghryþer* 'cattle for slaughter'). That there is a considerable conceptual overlap between these categories, especially as regards age and sex/fecundity/reproductive capacity, is for instance demonstrated by terms like *heahfore* 'heifer', *cucealf* 'female calf, young cow',[7] *bulloc* 'bull-calf' and *oxancealf* 'ox calf'. Even if it has to be admitted that the *TOE* material for the 'cattle' category contains quite a number of hapaxes (marked "o" = single recorded example) and terms restricted to glossaries ("g") or poetry ("p"), such rare or specialized terms still prove that – quite in accordance with general linguistic practices in Old English – word formation served as a major means of semantic extension and differentiation.

More importantly for the present subject, the wide range of inherited terms and new formations also reflects the difference between the functions and treatments of various domesticated animals, in particular cattle and swine, in Anglo-Saxon England. On the basis of the same material, the *TOE* (02.06.02.01.07) lists far fewer terms for 'pig, swine'. The generic and most common term is *swin* (*for* is restricted to glosses and *pecg* is a hapax). As with the terms for cattle, we find specialized terms differentiating sex (female *sw/sugu* or *gilte*, male *bar*, *gealt*, *bearg*, *hogg*) or age (*gilte* 'young sow', *fearh* 'young pig' – both in glosses –, and the hapaxes *picga* 'young pig' and *healfeald (swin)* 'half-grown (pig)'). As concerns function and use, however, the surviving Old

6 The following examples are taken from *TOE*, 02.06.02.01.03 (Cattle) and 02.06.02.01.07 (Pig, swine). Though the *Thesaurus of Old English* is a very helpful tool for the historical lexicologist, it has to be taken into account that – quite inevitably so – it is based on older lexicographical sources that predate the Toronto *Dictionary of Old English* (*DOE*) currently in the making. Besides, the onomasiological approach of a thesaurus provides us with conceptual distinctions rather than lexical definitions.

7 This definition is taken from the *DOE*, s.v. *cu-cealf*. The *TOE* lists the term somewhat less specifically under the category 'young of cattle, calf'.

English terms reflect the fact that pigs were almost exclusively kept for their meat – in contrast to cattle and sheep, which provide important other products such as milk or wool, or were important as draught animals. This 'restricted' function of pigs as suppliers of food is reflected in terms such as *fedelsswin*, *sliehtswyn* 'swine (fattened) for killing' or *mæstelberg* 'a fattened hog'. Indeed, pigs were one of the most important sources of meat and fat in medieval Europe: they are omnivores which can be reared even on poor-quality land, and they are thus relatively easy to raise. Most importantly, however, their flesh is – in contrast to other kinds of meat – comparatively easy to preserve in its cured form, bacon. Preserving the protein-rich meat was a crucial task for the medieval population, warranting their survival in winter (see Hagen 1995, 102-13; Arbarella 2006). This is also reflected in the Old English data: OE *flicce*, the term for the preserved, cured part of the pig slaughtered for meat is, just like PDE *bacon*,[8] more frequent than the terms for pork discussed below in section 3.2.

OE *flicce* (see *DOE*, s.v. *flicce*; *OED*, s.v. *flitch* n.[1], 1.a. 'the side of an animal, now only of a hog, salted and cured; a 'side' of bacon') is attested about twenty times in the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus* (*DOEC*), mainly in charters, but also in glossaries (glossing Lat. *perna* 'salted leg of pork'). This distribution among text types is telling, since charters tend to record terms related to everyday life to a much larger extent than most of the other text types surviving from Anglo-Saxon England. The great value and importance of these cured parts of the pigs is borne out in almost all of the attestations. As in the following examples (1 and 2), which illustrate the use of *flicce* in charters in general, the flitches of bacon[9] are listed in one series with livestock (*scep* 'sheep', *slægryðer/feldhryðera* 'cattle'), grain (products) (*mealtes*, *hwæte*, *hlafe* 'malt, wheat, bread') and other victuals (e.g. *cesen* 'cheese'). The most interesting combination in this respect is documented in (2), where the product for consumption, i.e. the bacon (*flicce*), immediately precedes the living animal, the pig (*swin*).

(1) her stent ða forwarde ðe Æþeric worhte wið ðan abbode on Niwentune, þæt is III sceppe mealtes & healf sceppe hwæte, an slægryðer, V scep, X **fliccen** & X hund hlafe þæt sceal beon gære *on pridie nonas Septembris*. (Rec 5.4 1)[10]

[here is stated the agreement that Æþeric has made with the abbot at Newton, namely 3 bushels of malt and half a bushel of wheat, one ox for slaughtering, 5 sheep, 10 flitches of bacon, and 1000 loaves to be ready on September 4. (trans. Robertson 1956, 193)]

(2) Her onstent gewriten hwæt man funde æt Eggemere syððan Cole hit let [...] ðæt is VII oxen & VIII cy & IIII feldhryþera & II stottas & V scora

8 See below, footnote 12.

9 The Old English dictionaries only give the meaning 'flitch of a bacon' for Old English (see *BT* and *DOE*, s.v. *flicce*). In Middle English, *bacon* at least may also refer to the 'whole carcass of a pig' (see *MED*, s.v. *baco(u)n* 2.) so that such a meaning could also be taken into consideration for Old English.

10 If not stated otherwise, all Old English quotations in this article are taken from the *DOEC*.

> scæp & XV scæp under ealde & iunge & VIII score æcere gesawen & **I flicce & I swin** & XXIIII cesen. (Rec 5.4 60)
>
> [Here is recorded what was found at Egmere after Cole left it, namely 7 oxen and 8 cows and 4 grazing bullocks and 2 inferior kinds of horse and 115 sheep – both full-grown and young ones – and 116 acres sown and 1 flitch of bacon and 1 pig and 24 cheeses. (trans. Robertson 1956, 197)]

The prominence and number of instances of *flicce* in contracts and their contexts show that the conceptualizations within the semantic area of animals and their flesh used for consumption are not as unambiguously binary as their dichotomous presentation as 'word pairs' in Modern English insinuates.[11] For the Anglo-Saxons, at least, *flicce* 'bacon' was likely to have been the more important product of the flesh of a pig than pork.

In general, terms designating the 'flesh of an ox/cow/calf/pig for food' are extremely rare in the Old English period. As concerns the expressions for 'pig meat', for example, there are altogether only eight instances in the 3.5 million words of the complete corpus of Old English (*DOEC*). Even if we accept that cured meat, primarily bacon, was more important to the Anglo-Saxons than fresh pork or beef, and even if cows/oxen/calves were more important for dairy farming or as draught-animals, the paucity of attestations of terms denoting the flesh of pigs and bovine animals used for food merits some further discussion.[12] Attestations of terms designating the 'flesh of an animal as food' are almost exclusively found in religious and medicinal texts. In view of the later history of the words in focus, this does only partly come as a surprise. Recipe collections and cookery books, the text types in which terms for 'pork', 'beef', etc. are likely to occur (for details, see below, 4.3.2.), are not extant from Anglo-Saxon England. In the closest Old English relatives of the later cookery books – medicinal recipes – we indeed find a comparatively larger number of attestations (thus, for example, five of the eight Old English instances referring to 'pork'). The lack of material from Old English is, however, also due to a special characteristic of Old English, or rather Germanic, poetry. In his comprehensive study on food and drink and their consumption in Old English literature, Magennis (1999) shows that Old English poetry completely ignores food – although it is rich in reference to feasting and although we find references to food as well as illustrations (depicting knives and cutlery) which

11 See also the *OED*, s.v. *pig* 3., commenting on the use of *pig* for *pork*: "The more usual words for the meat are *pork* and (for particular types) *bacon* and *ham*".

12 In Present-day English, the terms are of rather varying frequency. A search of the 300 million words of the *British National Corpus* (*BNC*) yielded not only low numbers for *mutton* (181) – as was to be expected, since it competes with *lamb* as a term for the food of this animal – but also for *veal* (140) and *venison* (139). The most frequent of the food terms of the culinary pairs in question are *beef* (1495) and *pork* (568).The frequencies for the terms designating the animals are: *cattle* (2548), *bull* (1851), *cow* (1351), *calf/calves* (1062), *ox* (189) – *pig* (1320), *swine* (238) – *sheep* (2983), *lamb* (1635). Since the terms can also be used figuratively, these frequencies can only serve as a rough guide. Reflecting their importance as food products made from swine discussed above, PDE *bacon* (1402) and *ham* (1425) are much more frequent than *pork*.

indicate the presence of food at feasts in documentary sources. In contrast to the classical epic, where feast descriptions usually comprise praises of the kind and quality of the food served, food is not of "symbolic significance" for the traditional Germanic culture in the language of poetry (Magennis 1999, 46).[13] One important and comparatively well-represented text type which might have informed us about terms of food in Anglo-Saxon England is thus of no evidential value. Similarly, religious sources predominantly reflect "Christian monitory and renunciatory precepts concerning food" (Magennis 1999, 36) rather than presenting details on the preparation and consumption of refined food (cf. Frantzen in the second volume of this *Festschrift*). In sum, it can be stated that – apart from medicinal recipes relating to medical lore rather than cooking for one's own sake – neither food nor types of food nor cooking were a particular subject of interest to Anglo-Saxon writers.

3.2. The 'flesh of animal x used for food': The spectrum of expressive options

Scarce as it is, the available evidence does, however, clearly show that Old English made a formal distinction between the domesticated animals and their flesh used for food. In line with the consociated character of the Old English vocabulary, the pertinent formations rely on word formation (compounding) and syntagms such as genitive formations and nouns modified by an adjective. These will be examined in more detail in section 3.2.2.

3.2.1. The Old English animal terms in extended reference

In addition to the compounds and syntagms analyzed below, the Old English texts contain a few sporadic instances where the animal terms discussed in section 3.1. show a contextually determined 'meat' meaning. The contiguity relation (engynomy) between the 'animal' and the corresponding 'meat' concept is in fact so close that in certain pragmatic contexts a conceptual shift from the body of the 'living creature' to the dead body, i.e. the 'carcass', and to the 'animal killed for food' sense – or an oscillation between them – seems quite natural.[14] Such oscillations are, for instance, reflected in Middle English, where *bacon* can refer not only to a 'flitch of bacon', but also to the 'whole carcass of a pig'.[15] Similarly, they are evoked by Present-day English terms such as *porker*, where the word for the living animal echoes its later use as food (see *OED*, s.v. *porker*, "1. a. A young pig raised and fattened for food [...] (also more generally) a pig"; see also s.vv. *baconer*, *beefer* and *vealer*).

13 Drinking, on the other hand, is the definitive element of Anglo-Saxon feasting (cf. terms such as OE *gebeorscipe* 'beer-feast', translating Lat. *convivium* 'feast'; see *DOE*, s.v. *beorscipe*).

14 This is, for example, evident in the different dictionary definitions for *pork(e* in the *MED*, which lists (a) 'the flesh of swine used for food, pork', (b) 'a swine, hog [...]', or (c) 'a hog carcass'.

15 See *MED*, s.v. *baco(u)n*, 2. "c1436 *Ipswich Domesday(2)* (Add 25011) 195: Of eche bakoun [F bacun enter], obole. Of the flyche, quadrans".

In the relevant attestations from Old English, the possible metonymic shift from a zoological to a culinary interpretation is supported by collocates from the food and eating domain. In the following quotation from *Bald's Leechbook* the terms *mettas* 'dishes' [Lat. *cibi*] and [*gate*] *flæsc* set the frame, with *flæsc* having been inserted by the Old English translator where the Latin merely has *haedus* 'kid, young goat':

(3) **Mettas** him beoð nytte þa þe god blod wyrceað swa swa sint [...] healfeald **swin & gate flæsc** [...] (Lch II (2) [0307 (37.1.7)])

[Foods which produce good blood are beneficial for him; such are ... half-grown swine and goat's flesh ...][16]

Similarly, in another passage from the same source, the reference to parts of a food animal (the extremities of the limbs of swine) and the adjective *eaðmelte* 'easily digested' activate the appropriate contextual meaning:

(4) Þa ytmestan **leomo swina** beoð **eaðmelte** & geong **hryþer** & **ticcenu** [...] (Lch II (2) [0079 (16.2.16)])

[The extremities of the limbs of swine are easy to digest, and young cattle, and kids ...]

In (5), the shift from the 'livestock' to the 'food for consumption' perspective is effected by the respective verbs – OE *bycgan* and OE *etan*:

(5) [...] & **bige** ðær mid ðam ylcan feo swa hwæt swa ðe licie, **hryðera**[17] & **sceap** & win & beor & eal ðæt ðe licie, & **et** ðær beforan Drihtne [...] (Deut [0149 (14.24)])

[... and buy there with the same money whatever you like, cattle and sheep and wine and beer and all you desire and eat it there in the presence of the Lord ...]

The conceptual overlap of 'animal' and 'food' meanings is also particularly evident in the two instances where the animal term *swin* is used in a collocation with *etan*. Both of them refer to eating prohibitions. In a medicinal recipe against shingles, the medical lore warns against the consumption of various animals whose products are considered to be unhealthy.

16 On the Old English translator's rather loose handling of his Latin model, the *Practica Alexandri* attributed to Philagrius, see Cameron (1983, 156-7). The Latin text clearly refers to the animals: "et de animalibus porcina, quae mediae fuerit aetatis, i.e. porcaster et haedus [...]".

17 The genitive plural in *hryðera* (but, inconsistently so, not in *sceap*) matches the Latin ablative in the Vulgate text: "et emes ex eadem pecunia quicquid tibi placuerit sive ex armentis sive ex ovibus vinum quoque et siceram et omne quod desiderat anima tua et comedes coram Domino Deo tuo [...]" (Deuteronomium 14:26; Weber/Gryson 1994, 255-6).

(6) [...] & ne **ete** niwne cise ne fersce **gos** ne ferscne **æl** ne <fersc> **swin** [...] (Lch II (1), [0406 (36.1.19)])

[... and let him eat neither new cheese nor fresh goose nor fresh eel nor fresh pig ...]

The contiguity relations between the animal and its meat are even more evident in the food prohibitions of the Old Testament:

(7) Þa wolde Eleazarus werlice sweltan ærðan þe he godes æ forgegan wolde, and nolde forswelgan ðas spices snæd þe hi him on muð bestungon, forðan þe Moyses **forbead swyn to etenne** [...] (ÆLS (Maccabees) [0018 (85)])

[Then Eleazar would manfully die rather than transgress God's law, and would not swallow the bit of bacon/lard which they stuck in his mouth, because Moses forbade to eat swine ...]

The prohibitions on the consumption of the flesh of certain animals rest on the contention that the living animal itself is unclean. In Leviticus 11 it is spelled out which of the animals that chew the cud and have divided hooves must not be eaten:

(8) Drihten spræc to Moyse & to Aarone: Secgað Israhela bearnum, ðæt hi eton þa nytenu ðe heora clawa todælede beoð & ceowað. [...] **Hara** & **swyn** synd forbodene to **æthrinene**. **Ne ete** ge nanne fisc, buton ða þe habbað finnas & scylla. Ða oþre **synd unclæne**. (Lev [0090 (11.1-12)])

[The Lord said to Moses and to Aaron: "Say to the children of Israel that they may eat the animals which have their hooves completely divided and which chew the cud. ... It is prohibited to touch hare and swine. Do not eat any fish apart from those that have fins and scales. The others are unclean."]

Because certain animals are considered unclean, it is forbidden to touch (i.e. *æthrinan*) their body/carcass (referred to by the term for the animals, i.e. *hara* 'hare' and *swyn* 'swine') and to consume their meat. In the whole Old English passage, only the terms for the living animals are used. It is only by contextual elements (cf. the verbs *æthrinan* 'touch' and *etan* 'eat') that the meanings 'body, carcass' and 'meat' are evoked. Examples like these, in which the terms for the animals may also designate their products, testify to the close contiguity relations between the living animal, its body, its carcass and its flesh used for consumption.

3.2.2. Word formation and syntactic means

In addition to these instances, where the Old English term for the animal refers to its meat by metonymic extension, we also find genitive combinations and nouns modified by an adjective. As concerns pork, three instances of the 'noun (genitive) + noun' combination *swines flæsc* are attested. The status of such 'noun (genitive) + noun' combinations, i.e. the question whether a given Old English combination should be regarded as a compound or rather as a syntactic group, is a very controversial issue (see Kastovsky 1992, 369-70).[18] In his study of such nominal compounds in Early Middle English, Sauer (1992, 152) interestingly observes that linguists who are native speakers of German or one of the Scandinavian languages are usually more willing to accept them as compounds because these combinations have always been highly productive in these languages. For Old and Early Middle English, he finds that there is only a very small group of combinations (mainly place names, plant names and names for the days of the week) which are commonly accepted as genitive compounds in the literature (Sauer 1992, 159-61). Among the more controversial cases, Sauer (1992, 162) suggests a group of terms with classifying genitive which name "Teile bzw. Produkte von Tieren (u. Pflanzen)" ['parts or products of animals (and plants)'] and gives examples such as Early Middle English *kalues fleis* 'Kalbfleisch' ('veal') or *netes flesh* 'Rindfleisch' ('beef').

Two of the Old English instances of *swines flæsc* (examples 9 and 10) might allow an interpretation as genitive compounds. Yet, in the 'noun (genitive) + noun' combination in (9) there is no indication whatsoever which would help us to decide whether this combination should be treated as a syntactic group or a genitive compound. The two items *swines* and *flæsc* stand next to one another and none of them is modified. A compound interpretation is thus possible, but not unambiguous.

(9) Georne is to wyrnanne bearneacnum wife þæt hio aht sealtes ete oððe swetes oþþe beor drince ne **swines flæsc** ete [...] (Lch II (3) [0120 (37.1.9)])

[A pregnant woman must be warned earnestly not to eat salt or sweet, nor drink beer or eat pork ...]

In the next example (10), the adjective *geonge* modifies *swines flæsce* in the prepositional phrase *mid geonge swines flæsce*. *Mid* 'with' governs the dative, and so *geonge* (dat.) agrees with *flæsce* (dat.) rather than with *swines* (gen.). The combination thus does not refer to the flesh of a young pig but rather to 'young', i.e. 'fresh' pork. This suggests an interpretation of *swines flæsc* as a compound rather than a syntactic group here:

18 For a collection and discussion of the full spectrum of 'genitive' or 'Sb + *s*/Sb' compounds in Early Middle English, see Sauer (1992, 152-63).

(10) Þas wyrta sindon eac betste to þon [...] gesodene ætgædre **mid geonge swines flæsce** [...] (Lch II (2) [0218 (30.1.6)])

[These worts are also very good for that, ... sodden together with fresh pork ...]

In the following example (11), on the other hand, the list of different kinds of meats modifying the nominal head *flæsc* rather suggests an interpretation of these combinations as syntactic groups. A compound interpretation would only be possible for *hriþeres flæsc*, but not for the elliptical constructions designating 'pork' (*swines* [*flæsc*]), 'mutton' (*sceapes* [*flæsc*]), 'goat's flesh' (*gate* [*flæsc*]) and 'kid's flesh' (*ticcenes* [*flæsc*]).

(11) ne þicgen hie [...] **hriþeres flæsc** ne **swines** ne **sceapes** ne þicgean hie ne **gate** ne **ticcenes** [...] (Lch II (2), [0354 (43.1.6)])

[let them not consume ... flesh of ox/cow, nor of swine, nor of sheep, nor of goat, nor of kid ...]

The status of the adjective + noun combinations which unambiguously designate the 'flesh of swine/cattle used for food' – two of them referring to eating prohibitions in the Old Testament – is even more difficult to establish. Both *swinen flæsc* and *hriþeren flæsc* are noun phrases modified by a denominal adjective suffixed with *-en* (see *swinen* 'of swine', *hriðeren* 'of cattle'; *BT*, s.vv.). In view of the fact that there are adjective + noun compounds such as *gyldenbeag* 'golden crown' in Old English (see Kastovsky 1992, 370), an interpretation as a compound might be possible. Yet, since neuter adjectives are inflectionally unmarked in the nominative and accusative, a demarcation of compound element and adjectival modifier is not possible in any of the three given cases (12-14). Since there are so few examples and since we cannot apply any of the operational tests valid for Present-day English, the status of these combinations will have to remain fuzzy.

(12) Weorþen hi swa geðræste mid hungre, þæt hi eton **swynen** [adj.; acc.sg.n] **flæsc** [acc.sg.n] þæt ludeum unalyfedlic ys to etanne [...] (PPs (prose), [0188 (16.14)]; glossing Lat. *porcina*)

[They were so troubled with hunger that they ate pig meat, which is forbidden for the Jews to eat ...]

(13) Antiochus, se oferhydiga cyning, nydde hi þæt hi æten **swynen flæsc** (Mart 5 (Kotzor) [0785 (Au 1, A.5)])

[Antiochus, the proud king, forced them to eat pig meat.]

(14) Wiþ forsogenum magan oþþe aþundenum genim **hryþeren flæsc** gesoden on ecede [...] (Lch II (2) [0039 (7.1.10)])

[For a stomach troubled with hiccup or swelled up, take bovine flesh sodden in vinegar ...]

The available evidence thus clearly shows that Old English made an explicit formal distinction between the domesticated animals and their flesh, even if the Old English corpus includes a few examples where the terms for the living animals are used to refer to the animals as objects of human consumption. The expressive choices exemplified here cast doubt on the assertion that the inherited Old English animal terms were *per se* polysemous, showing a regular second meaning 'flesh of x for food'. The regular expressions for the dead animals and their meats – structurally speaking, word formations or syntagms – are exactly those we expect in a language like Old English, which to a great extent still depended on inherited lexical material and established structural patterns.

4. Middle English

Following the post-Anglo-Saxon history of designations for the flesh of swine/ox/cow/calf used as food, we find that the Old English terms and phrases introduced in the preceding sections survive well into the Middle English period (see below, section 4.2.). From the beginning of the fourteenth century, however, the terms which now constitute the 'meat'-terms of the culinary pairs (*pork*, *beef*, *veal*, *mutton*, *venison*, etc.) are attested alongside the inherited Old English terms and phrases, though not always in the restricted meaning of today's English. It has to be stressed right at the beginning of this account of the linguistic situation in Middle English that *pork* and *beef* in particular do not designate the meat of the respective animals only, but may – just like OE *swin* or *hriþer* (see above, section 3.2.1.) or Modern French *porc* or *bœuf* (see below, section 4.3.1.) – refer to either the living animal, its carcass, or its flesh used for consumption. For both *beef* and *pork* the *MED*, s.vv. *bef* and *pork(e*, accordingly lists – in this order – the following meanings: 'the flesh of x used for food', 'the animal x', and 'the carcass of x'.

4.1. Principles of language contact: Integration into the Middle English lexicon

Linguistically informed explanations for the borrowing of foreign items and the motivations behind it frequently rest on the 'gap' or the 'prestige hypothesis' (Matras 2009, 149). The 'gap hypothesis' assumes a structural gap[19] in the (future) recipient language

19 As Fischer (2000, 4) points out, any lexical gap "is only a structural and not a functional one" as speakers can always resort to linguistic alternatives like paraphrasing to express a concept. The term *lexical gap* thus "simply indicates a structure point in a lexical configuration which is not occupied by a lexicalized item".

that is perceived as such by bilingual, or semi-bilingual, speakers. As Matras (2009, 150) points out, so-called 'cultural loans' are typical 'gap-fillers'. Denominating innovations both of a material and an immaterial nature, they can be classified as a means of lexical enrichment.

The enrichment of the lexicon is also one of the functions of 'prestige loans', which typically reflect the (real and/or perceived) social or cultural superiority of the donor language community. The long-term linguistic effect may be replacement, with the more prestigious newcomer ousting the established expression, or differentiation in a number of ways, e.g. in semantic, stylistic, and pragmatic terms. As already pointed out by Käsmann (1961, 20), explanations for the adoption of loans that rest on the marked cultural and social divide between the groups in contact tend to be quite convincing in cases where the borrowings label new concepts and acquisitions. If, however, the loans are no mere additions to the lexicon, but enter a native linguistic scenario where there is a fairly well developed terminology, the 'power and prestige argument' often fails to provide a sufficient explanation.[20]

Already at this stage of our investigation it becomes clear that the history of the 'meat'-terms in the famous culinary pairs is not as straightforward a matter of lexical extension as some of the textbook accounts seem to suggest: there was neither a 'lexical gap' – a lack of words or phrases designating the flesh of the animals used for food – which was filled by the French terms, nor did these terms enter Middle English in the restricted, specialized Present-day English 'culinary' meaning. Since they can also denote the living animals, their borrowing and integration into the English lexicon cannot solely be seen in the context of prestigious borrowing and 'refined cuisine'.

4.2. The continued use of terms and phrases from Old English

As demonstrated above, Old English had a range of simple and complex terms and also phrases to denote both the various types of livestock animals and their flesh for consumption. Thus when the French terms *boef*, *pork(e*, *veel*,[21] etc. gained ground during the Middle English period, they had to find their specific place within a set of established lexico-semantic configurations and expressive choices. In fact, the inherited Old English terms used to designate the 'animals used for food', in particular the genitival combinations, are attested long into and after the Middle English period.

20 For his object of study, Middle English ecclesiastical terminology from 1100 to 1350, Käsmann (1961, 32) sees no significant influence of such factors on the lexical development in the relevant word fields: "Soziologische Momente spielen in unserem Material keine wesentliche Rolle. [...] Auch später wirkt sich die soziale und kulturelle Überlegenheit der Normannen und Franzosen auf den kirchlichen Wortschatz nur selten und dann stets indirekt aus." ['Sociological factors do not play an essential role in our material. ... Even later on, the social and cultural pre-eminence of the Normans and the French hardly leaves any traces in the ecclesiastical vocabulary, and if it does, it does so indirectly.']

21 For the orthographic variants in Anglo-Norman and Old French and their Middle English reflexes see the relevant *AND*, *MED*, and *OED* entries.

Looking at the survival of inherited Old English material, we find, for example, the terms for the living animals *cow* and *calf* occurring in one of the 'eating animals' contexts introduced above in section 3.2.1.:

(15) c1400(?a1300) KAlex. (LdMisc 622) 6341: A Folk þere woneþ .. þat **eteþ** noiþer **cow** ne **chalf**. (*MED*, s.v. *calf* 1.(b))

[There lives a people … who eat neither cow nor calf.]

Certain linguistic and pragmatic environments seem to have encouraged the prolonged use of the inherited genitival combinations. Like in Old English, we typically find them in listings of different kinds of meat, such as

(16) (a1398) *Trev. *Barth.* (Add 27944) 263a/b: **Retheres fleissh & gotes fleissh** is bettre ysoden þan yrosted and **swynes** and **schepes fleissh** is better yrosted. (*MED*, s.v. *flesh* 2b.(a))

[Cattle meat and goat's meat is better sodden than roasted and pig's and sheep's meat is better roasted.]

Sources depending on foreign models like translations and, even more so, word lists and dictionaries, seem to favour replications of the Latin model which reflect the structural peculiarities of the target language. If the Latin has a noun phrase with the adjectival modifier *caro* in postposition, this is usually rendered by an English determinative compound headed by *flesh*:

(17) a1425 *Roy.17.C.17 Nominale* (Roy 17.C.17) 661-2: Caro bouina: **beyfflesche**. Caro porcina: **swyneflesche**. Caro uitulina: **calfflesche**. Caro aucina: **goseflesche**. Caro spadonia: **capuneflesche**. Caro caponina: **caponflesche**. Caro gallinacia: **heneflesche**. (*MED*, s.v. *flesh* 2b.(a))

4.3. ME *bef, pork(e, vel(e*

4.3.1. A first look at the French borrowings: Attestation and classification

The survival of the Old English terms and phrases makes the story of the French borrowings *boef, pork(e, veel*, etc. a matter of lexical competition. Most of the French terms are first attested in a passage from the Life of Mary Magdalene in the early *South English Legendary* (c. 1300), alongside a range of inherited animal terms:

(18) huy nomen with heom into heore schip : bred i-novȝ and wyn,
Venesun of heort and hynd : and of wilde swyn,
huy nomen with heom in heore schip : al þat hem was leof,
Gies and hennes, crannes and swannes : and **porc, motoun** and **beof**;

For huy scholden passi the Grickische Se,
And for that huy nusten hou longue huy scholden thareinne be.
(Horstmann 1887, 472, lines 341-6)

[They took with them into their ship: plenty of bread and wine, venison of hart and hind, and of wild swine. They took with them into their ship all that was dear to them, geese and hens, cranes and swans: and pork, mutton and beef. For they had to pass the Greek Sea, and therefore they did not know for how long they would have to stay onboard.]

The borrowed items *venesun, porc, motoun* and *beof* here are usually taken to refer specifically to the meat of game, pigs, sheep and cattle, to be taken along together with meats of various game animals, birds and other food on a noble voyage to Rome (see *OED*, *MED*, s.vv.).[22] This meaning is also illustrated by other Middle English examples, such as

(19) (a1398) *Trev. *Barth.* (Add 27944) 265b/a: **Boores [meat]** is more hard & druye and more cold þan tame **pork** [Lat. *porcina domestica*]. (*MED*, s.v. *pork(e* (a))

[Boar's flesh is harder und drier and colder than 'tame' pork.][23]

At about the same time when John Trevisa set out to translate Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum* into English, we find Geoffrey Chaucer playing on the 'flesh' meaning of *boef* and *veel* in a tongue-in-cheek comment on the marriage aspirations and sexual appetites of old January, the "worthy knight" in the *Merchant's Tale* (Benson 1987, 156, lines 1419-20):

(20) "Bet is", quod he, "a pyk than a pykerel",
"And bet than old **boef** is the tendre **veel**".

22 This catalogue of provisions is a distinctive feature of the Laud manuscript of the *South-English Legendary*. Its retelling in manuscript A, which is very close to Laud at this point, only refers in very general terms to how richly the ship was provisioned: "A schippe thai gun to purvayen, / And richelich within to laien / Of al thing that hem nede stode" (lines 269-71; see Reames 2003, footnote to lines 341-4). In view of the arguments presented below, the terms *porc, motoun* and *beof* in this passage (in contrast to "venesun of heort and hynd") need not necessarily refer to the meats of the animals but could also designate the living animals themselves: in this parallel construction introduced by "huy nomen with heom in(to) heore schip", *porc, motoun* and *beof* are listed in one series with the birds (which are certainly taken along alive) and not together with bread, wine and venison. It is thus mainly their use in the singular which suggests a mass noun, and thus the 'meat'-meaning (although in the case of *beof* this might have been triggered by the rhyme with *leof*).

23 The *MED*, s.v. *pork(e* (a), defines *tame pork* as 'meat from domesticated hogs'. The reference here is clearly to pig*meat*, though the collocation of *tame* with *pork*, mirroring Lat. *porcina domestica*, reminds us of the close contiguity and easy blending of the 'animal' and the 'meat' meanings repeatedly addressed in this article.

["A pike is better than a pickerel", he said,
"And tender veal is better than old beef".]

This ironic use of *boef* and *veel* demonstrates that these terms and their 'flesh' meanings were firmly established in later Middle English.[24] From the Present-day English perspective, all these occurrences do not seem to present any problems, since the Middle English 'flesh/meat' meanings agree with the ones expected in Modern English. Doubts about a smooth and unremarkable path of borrowing and integration of the French terms together with their meanings arise, however, if we approach the subject from the French, or rather Anglo-Norman, perspective. In Present-day French, *porc*, *bœuf* and *veau* primarily denote the living animals, but can also designate their meat used for food; see *Grand Robert*, s.v. *porc*: "1. Mammifère ongulé omnivore (Suidés) [...], 3. Viande de cet animal"; s.v. *bœuf*: "1. (Sens extensif; zool., cour.). Mammifère ruminant domestique de la famille des bovidés [...]; 2. Du boeuf, le boeuf. Viande de boeuf ou de vache, de génisse"; s.v. *veau*: "1. Petit de la vache, pendant sa première année, qu'il soit mâle ou femelle [...], 2. Viande de cet animal (viande blanche), vendue en boucherie".

For Anglo-Norman, only the reference to the animal is attested for *porc*; the *Anglo-Norman Dictionary* (*AND*, s.v. *porc*) lists 'pig, swine' as its only meaning and gives the example "[...] vaches, berbiz, et porkes *Anon Chr* 138.15". As will be shown in the more detailed account of Anglo-Norman and Middle English cookery books below in section 4.3.2., this is also the only meaning of AN *porc* in the text types specialising on food: in the recipes of the Anglo-Norman period, the meat – i.e. PDE *pork* – is referred to as *char de porc* 'flesh/meat of pig'. For *boef*, the *AND* attests the zoological meaning 'ox, steer', supplemented by the heraldic use 'ox (as an armorial bearing)', and the culinary sense 'beef', attested in the specifying genitives *boef de saint Martin* 'beef cured at Martinmas for winter use', *fel de boef* 'ox gall', and *lange de boef* 'ox tongue'. The botanical usage of the term *boef*, as for example attested in a 13th-century gloss – "bugloss: gallice lange de boef, anglice retherne-tounge" (*AND*, s.v. *boef* (bot.)) – demonstrates the equivalence of AN *boef* and ME *rother(en)/ rether(en)* as animal terms.[25] The range of senses listed in the *AND* for AN *veel* ranges from 'calf', 'veal', and 'bullock' to 'fawn, young deer'. Taking into account this semantic diversity and the presumed spectrum of communicative encounters between Anglo-Normans and native Britons in manorial and other contexts, it cannot have been the Anglo-Norman speakers who, in using and passing on the French terms to the native English

24 The *MED* lists this quotation s.v. *vel(e* under the general meaning (a) 'the flesh of a calf used as food', whereas in the entry for *bef* 1.(c) it has been relegated to a separate and somewhat odd-sounding sense section: '*fig.* the flesh of a woman'. As in example (18) above, an 'animal' meaning for *boef* and *veel* has to be taken into consideration. The *MED*, s.v. *tender* 5.(a), confirms the primary reference of this adjective to food, but adds: "also used of a living creature destined to be eaten; dainty, choice; also *iron*" [in another quotation referring to women]. Yet again, the morpho-syntactic shape of [*old*] *boef* (singular, without an article) suggests a mass noun, and thus the 'flesh/meat' meaning.

25 Cf. *MED*, s.v. *rother* n.[2]: 'an ox, a cow, bull; *pl.* cattle, oxen', and *rotheren* adj. (a) 'of oxen, of cattle'.

population, introduced the conceptual and lexical 'culinary pair'-distinction under discussion here.

The basic zoological meaning of the words in Anglo-Norman and French is attested for the borrowed terms during the whole of the Middle English period (see *MED*, s.vv. *pork(e* (b), *bef* 2.(a), and *vel(e* (b)). Thus, in the following example, the context of grazing on a pasture quite naturally refers us to the living animals:

(21) c1440(?1400) *Morte Arth.(1)* (Thrn) 3121: Pouerall and pastorelles passede on aftyre With **porkes to pasture** [...] (*MED*, s.v. *pork(e* (b))

[Poor people and shepherds followed afterwards with pigs to pasture ...]

Instances of this 'animal' meaning are also clear where the term is embedded in a specifying *flesh of*-phrase, i.e. a phrase which is structurally similar to the Old English genitive combinations with modification of the head *flæsc*. Compare the following example from the *MED*, s.v. *bef* 2.(a):[26]

(22) ?a1425(c1400) *Mandev.(1)* (Tit C.16) 47/23: Þei eten but lytill or non of **flessch of veel** or **of boef**.

[They ate only little or no flesh of calf or ox/cow.]

Similarly, in the syntactic phrase *carcass of x*, *x* refers to the animal, though the singular forms *beef*, *veel* and *moton* in the following example suggest a conceptual shift from the count noun (i.e. 'animal' meaning) to the mass noun (i.e. 'meat' meaning):

(23) c1436 *Ipswich Domesday(2)* (Add 25011) 143: It is ordeyned that non bocher ... brynge in to ... toun to sellyn **carcaisys of beeff, of veel**, ne **of moton**. (*MED*, s.v. *vel(e* (b))

[It is ordained that no butcher ... bring ... into town carcasses of ox/cow, of calf nor of sheep for sale.]

The *MED* definitions s.vv. *bef* 2.(a) 'a bovine animal or its carcass', *vel(e* (b) 'a calf, esp. one butchered for food', and *pork(e* (b) 'a swine, hog; ~ *hog*, a hog that has been fattened for butchering' feature in fact more or less explicitly both the living and the dead creature in its food supplying function.[27] This conceptual overlap is also linguistically encoded in compounds or genitival formations such as *beyfflesche* or *beues flesch* (*MED*, s.v. *bef* 2.(a)), which by implication refer to the animal killed for food.

26 The *OED*, s.v. *veal* n.[1], erroneously groups this citation under sense 1. 'the flesh of a calf as an article of diet'.

27 See also above, section 3.2.1., on the corresponding Old English terms and their meanings and on PDE *beefer*, *vealer*, *porker*, etc.

As demonstrated for example by the following quotation from the *OED*, s.v. *veal* n.[1], 2. 'a calf, esp. as killed for food or intended for this purpose',[28] the 'animal' meaning of today's Standard English meat terms survives into Early Modern English:

(24) **1544** in *Star Chamber Cases* (Selden) II. 305 The prices of Flesh, as of **Beefes, Muttons, Veales, & Porkes**.

[The prices of flesh, viz. of oxen/cows, sheep, calves and pigs.]

That the history of the 'animal parts' in the famous culinary pairs is rather complex is also proved by the fact that many of the older usages live on in regional or technical use. Especially *beef* is still used in American English not only as a flesh term, but covers a range of meanings relating to the domesticated animal as a meat supplier; cf. *Webster's Third*, s.v.:

> **2 a** *plural beeves also beefs or beef*: an ox, cow, or bull in a full-grown or nearly full-grown state; *especially*: a steer or cow fattened for food; **b** *plural beeves also beefs*: the dressed carcass of a beef animal; **c** beef animals.

4.3.2. 'Culinary vocabulary' in Middle English times: Attestations and use of the 'culinary words' in Anglo-Norman and Middle English recipes

Much of the 'master/servant talk scenario' as constructed in some of the textbooks on the history of English (see section 1) seems to rest on the specific contexts of preparing meals and eating or, for that matter, dining. As has been pointed out above, the earliest cookery books from Britain collecting recipes which are not medicinal ones are found in the Anglo-Norman period, written in Anglo-Norman and, from the fourteenth century onwards, also in English.[29] The English sources of the Middle English period are to a large degree dependent on French models or even exemplars. For the questions central to the present topic, however, this is certainly not a disadvantage, since it is exactly the language contact between French and English which is at issue here.

It is first of all the analysis of the terms for the respective dishes that were presented at the dining table which is crucial for the 'master/servant talk hypothesis', since this hypothesis assumes that the terms entered the English language because the French nobles ordered in their mother tongue. This, in turn, would require names of dishes featuring the terms *pork(e, bef*, etc. The surviving material, however, does not support such an assumption: as the social hierarchy makes us expect, most of the names of the

28 The qualifying remark "Now rare", added to this *OED* definition, goes back to the first edition published in 1928.

29 For Anglo-Norman recipes, see Hieatt/Jones (1986). The first English recipes are collected in Hieatt/Butler (1985).

dishes are French in origin and still have a 'foreign' ring (cf. *Bruet de Alemayne, Viaunde de Cype, Mosserouns florys*, etc.; see Hieatt/Butler 1985, 43-4). The terms *pork, beef* and *veal*, however, occur so rarely and so inconsistently that a lasting influence of this register-specific usage on the English culinary language in general can be excluded. In the about 305 cooking recipes and menu descriptions collected in the different manuscripts of the fourteenth century (Hieatt/Butler 1985), *pork* and *veal* are only attested five times in the names of dishes. Similarly, there are only five instances in the 263 dishes collected in the fifteenth-century cookery books edited by Austin (1888). If dishes contain (different) meats, the term *grete flesshe*, translating French *grosse char* 'boiled beef, pork, or mutton', is frequent (e.g. in Hieatt/Butler 1985, 39, no. 2).

Other menus refer to animals directly as roast dishes, which were the favourite meals of the higher ranks of society, such as *pyggys rostyd, swan rostyd* (Hieatt/Butler 1985, 39, no. 2; cf. PDE *roast pig*) or *pygges in sauge* (Hieatt/Butler 1985, 40, no. 4). In particular, the collections of menus for feasts at high estates testify to a predilection for roasts. In the "purveanse of þe feste for þe kynge at home with þe lord spenser", for example, in addition to "grete flesshe" and "þe hede of þe bore", "swannes rostyd, herones rostyd, fesantes rostyd, [...] pyggys rostyd, conyes rostyd, [...] venesoun rostyd, pekokys rostyd [...]" are served (see Hieatt/Butler 1985, 39).[30] As the surviving historical documents show, it was thus mainly young domesticated animals and small ones such as sucking pigs, choice animals such as swans, capons, pheasants, or birds such as woodcocks, partridges or larks which were served to the nobility. This is another indication that the 'master/servant talk hypothesis' cannot be corroborated: in the later Middle Ages, *pork* and *beef* are not the meats appropriate for the noble palate.[31] In view of the names of the dishes and the meats actually consumed by the nobles, a decisive influence of 'master talk' on the semantic specialisation of the French-derived terms via ordering the menus is thus not at all very likely.

The terms *pork*, *beef* and *veal*, etc. do turn up, however, though again not very frequently, in the cooking instructions themselves. For a better understanding of the terminology, it is important to have a look at the French recipes, which most of the English recipes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are based on (see Hieatt/Jones 1985, 6-9). In accordance with the 'animal' meanings of *porc*, *bef*, etc., the French instructions use complex phrases to refer to the meat of a specific animal, i.e. *char de x* ('flesh/meat of animal x'; see *AND*, s.v. *char*[1]).

30 This predilection for roasted meat is wittily exploited by Chaucer in his description of the Monk in the *General Prologue* of the *Canterbury Tales*, where the Monk – in an ironic description of his way of life against the monastic rules – is depicted as a "lord ful fat" (Benson 1987, 26, line 200), relating that "A fat swan loved he best of any roost" (line 206).

31 See also the archaeological and historical evidence collected by Albarella (2006) and Woolgar (2006), which testifies to the fact that in particular pork had already been out of fashion by the beginning of the fifteenth century.

(25) Oume d'ora[n]ges. Ceo est une viaunde ke est apele pomme de ora[n]ges. Pernez **char de porc**, ne mye trop gras ne trop megre [...] (Hieatt/Jones 1986, 862, no. 1)

[Oranges. This is a dish which is called 'oranges'. Take pig meat, neither too fat nor too lean ...]

The parallel construction with another term for a food animal, *de gelynes* 'of hens' (see *AND*, s.v. *geline* 'hen'; this is the only meaning given), illustrates this even more clearly:

(26) e puys pernez **char de porc** e de gelynes; e puys festes couper en beu mosseus, [...] e pernez le petit pot, en ki la char est, e le metez en le grant pot [...] (Hieatt/Jones 1986, 863, no. 6)

[then take the meat of pig and of hens and cut into fair-sized pieces, ... take the small pot with the meat in it and place it in the large pot ...]

For other recipes, only specific parts of a pig – specified by a complex form: *x de porc* (cf. *pié de porc* 'pig's trotters' in the following example) – are required.

(27) Saugee. E un autre viaunde, ke ad noun saugee. [...] e pernez **pié de porc** ou char freide e metez dedenz; e puys dressez. (Hieatt/Jones 1986, 863, no. 3)

[Sage sauce. Here is another dish, which is called sage sauce. ... and take pig's trotters or (other) cold meat and put inside, and then serve.]

In all of these attestations in Anglo-French recipes, it is evident that *porc* denotes the animal rather than its meat.

In the English recipes that are translated from or modelled on the Anglo-Norman ones the phrases *flesh of x* or *lyre of (þe) x* are used to render AN *char de x*.

(28) Gef vlehs day, do þerto **vlehs of veel** oþur **cycchen** & so þou schalt habben god mete [...] (Hieatt/Butler 1985, 49, no. 32)

[If (it is) meat day, add thereto flesh of calf or (flesh of) chicken and so you will have good food ...]

(29) Chewetes on flesshe day. Take **þe lire of pork** and kerue it al to pecys, and hennes þerwith, and do it in a panne and frye it [...] (Hieatt/Butler 1985, 141, no. 194)

[Small pies on a meat day. Take the flesh of pig and cut it into pieces, and hens together with it, and put it in a pan and fry it ...]

In view of the morpho-syntactically complex expressions inherited from Old English (see above, section 3.2.2.), these phrases do not necessarily have to be analysed as loan renditions of French *char de x*, since they are structurally parallel to the Old and Middle English genitival combinations with the head *flæsc* and the Middle English expression *flessh of x* discussed above (section 4.3.1.).

Although the above usages attest to the predominance of the 'animal' meaning, there are, however, some recipes where the terms *beef*, *pork* and *veel* designate the meat of the respective animals.

(30) For to make a froys. **Nym veel** and seþ yt wel & hak it small [...] & frye yt [...] (VAR veel] or ellys **porcke**, so it be not to fatte) (Hieatt/Butler 1985, 65, no. 18)

[For to make a fried cake of minced meat. Take veal and boil it well and cut it small ... and fry it ... (variant: veal or else pork, if it is not too fat)]

(31) & þan tak þe broth of chikenes & of fresch **beef** boyled [...] (Hieatt/Butler 1985, 83, no. 2)

[and then take the broth of chickens and of fresh boiled beef ...]

Despite such examples, which agree with the Present-day meaning of the terms in question, this study of text type-specific usages yields a clear result: even in the context of cookery and eating – which must have been one of the major (socio-)linguistic contexts in which the specialized Present-day English meanings evolved and settled – we do not find a systematic restriction of the terms borrowed from French to 'the meat of the animals used for food'.

4.4. Semantic differentiation and specialisation among the 'culinary pairs'

In trying to interpret our findings about the structure and changes within the 'culinary fields' under inspection here, it seems profitable to return to Koch's (2001, 1153) "engynomic interlingual divergence pattern" scheme outlined above in section 2. Present-day English is assigned to 'type A' there, because it employs (etymologically) different terms for the ANIMAL concepts and the corresponding MEAT concepts. Applying this scheme to the earlier stages of the English language, we can definitely say that neither Old English nor Middle English are 'type A' languages. In these early periods of English we find examples where the animal terms themselves (in Middle English both the inherited terms and the borrowed ones) may also refer to the animals' flesh used for food (i.e. a 'type B' feature). The few Old English examples in which the animal terms show a contextually determined metonymic shift to the 'meat' meaning can, however, scarcely be interpreted as cases of regular polysemy, because in all these cases the 'animal' meaning still remains the primary one. As illustrated above, Old English encodes the difference between these two conceptually and pragmatically

closely related meanings in a way that still makes this relationship formally explicit: the animal term – or rather the spectrum of terms for the members of the swine class and the bovine species – shows up explicitly in word formations and syntagms of the '*x*[+ gen.]-*flæsc*' or '*flæsc of x*' type.

With the influx of the French terms of the 'culinary set' (ME *pork(e*, *bef*, *vel(e)* in Middle English, this by no means clear-cut situation becomes even more complicated. Native speakers of English as well as Anglo-Norman speakers who developed a reasonable amount of bilingualism or, eventually, shifted from French to English, had to cope with the different frame structures in the two languages. The Anglo-Norman 'culinary' terms originally behave according to Koch's 'polysemy type B', with both the ANIMAL concept and its pertinent MEAT concept forming a regular part of the semantic spectrum of these terms.[32] The Middle English speakers who adopted and used the foreign items thus must have found themselves in a 'surplus' situation as regards the number of (lexical and lexico-syntactic) forms available to express the two meanings in question.

Viewing this situation from a structuralist semantic point of view, Bammesberger (1984, 98) notes that the co-existence of two (or, for that matter, more) terms (*signifiants*) referring to one and the same *signifié* is a frequent result of borrowing, and that this kind of contact-induced synonymy is often used "for expressing differentiations". As has been demonstrated above, this process of differentiation, involving semantic specification on the side of the French borrowings, is a much slower one than is usually suggested by historical accounts of the 'culinary pairs', inspired by what Eric Stanley calls "the famous Sir Walter Scott error"[33]. That this process of selection eventually led to the ousting of the 'animal' meaning of *pork*, *beef* and *veal* in the standard language[34] is by no means surprising: the inherited English animal terms that survived into Modern English belonged to the firmly established basic vocabulary. Besides, there is no denying that any 'prestigious' connotations accompanying the borrowed items must have primarily toned with the 'meat' meaning, though it is important to point out that 'flesh of animal x for food' does not *per se* represent a kind of culinary refinement, but just denotes the 'raw material' for (more or less sophisticated) preparation. Thus there must have been further factors that supported, facilitated or even pushed this process of semantic specialization of the polysemous Anglo-Norman terms on the one hand and the sorting out of the functional distribution between the etymologically split members of the 'culinary pairs' on the other. Here semantic-pragmatic issues reflecting a changing economic reality as well as cognitive factors appear to come into play. As Sykes (2006, 69) points out, archaeological evidence attests

32 Although AN *porc* is only documented in its 'animal' meaning, the semantic spectrum inherited from Old French no doubt also encompassed the 'meat' meaning, which is sufficiently attested in Middle English (cf. *MED*, s.v. *pork(e* (a)).

33 We would like to thank Professor Stanley for this term (personal communication), which nicely summarizes our ideas.

34 It can only be indicated here that the development of English to a 'type A' language (Koch 2001, 1153) is part of the story of Standard (English) English, whereas we still find quite a number of usages across the varieties of English that show a different semantic and functional distribution in the 'culinary pairs' field, often preserving pre-Standard conditions.

to an increased professionalization of butchering techniques and a local separation of animal production and meat marketing in the wake of the Norman Conquest.[35] Sykes's conclusion, though, that "from this point, Anglo-Norman vocabulary was used for choice meat – *bœuf* (beef), *veau* (veal), and *mouton* (mutton) – while poorer cuts retained their English names (such as ox tail)" (Sykes 2006, 69), suggests an abrupt specialization of the borrowed items to their 'meat' meaning. Yet, such a sudden and rigid semantic restriction cannot be corroborated by our Middle English data.

The beginning local separation of animal farming and butchery may, however, have strengthened the differences in conceptualization between the livestock animals, their carcasses and their flesh used for food. In terms of perceptual salience, the attributes – or, in terms of structural semantics – the semantic features that characterize the living animals (as, for example, differences in sex, function and use for human life sustenance) lose most of their prominence, or even relevance, once the animal has been butchered. Using the French terms – in our case *pork* and *beef* – in their 'meat' meaning – allowed Middle English speakers to profile the meats provided by swine and cattle as a unitary entity. The possibility of opting for the borrowed simplexes and thereby being able to disregard subclassifications, for instance, according to sex (*cow* vs. *bull* vs. *ox*, etc.) was perhaps of particular relevance in the case of *beef*, which encompasses a relatively broad spectrum of bovine meat suppliers.[36] That the 'animal/meat' distinction received a separate encoding for the 'young of cattle' – i.e. *calf* vs. *veal* – can be accounted for by the special status of this type of flesh in medieval diet (and beyond).[37] It may also be relevant in this context that – while importing the collective plural *cattle*[38] – English was about to develop a lexical gap in the 'generic' singular slot of the proportional series denoting 'bovine domestic animals'.[39] A collective term for 'bovine meat' may have been even more welcome in such a situation.

These deliberations indicate that, besides having their own sociolinguistic history, the members of the 'culinary pairs' also have their individual linguistic biography, which can only be unfolded in the context of a broader, system- *and* speaker-oriented approach.

35 "Interestingly, these standardized butchery patterns appear at the same time that cattle and sheep assemblages from high-status sites begin to include a high proportion of meat bearing elements, perhaps suggesting that the elite was beginning to purchase ready-butchered joints from urban butchers" (Sykes 2006, 69).

36 A similar case could be made for *venison*. For the range of meat suppliers encompassed by this term, see *OED*, s.v. *venison* 1.a.: "the flesh of an animal killed in the chase or by hunting and used as food; formerly applied to the flesh of the deer, boar, hare, rabbit, or other game animal, now almost entirely restricted to the flesh of various species of deer".

37 The same applies for the (more complex) *sheep – mutton* plus *lamb – lamb* configuration addressed above in section 1.

38 Cf. *MED*, s.v. *catel* 2. 'livestock'; *OED*, s.v. *cattle* II. 'live stock' (in various subsenses).

39 As pointed out by Fischer (2000, 4-5; 13) Present-day English lacks a generic (i.e. common gender) term for *cow* and/or *bull*, as OE *hriðer*, "the common gender cow-or-bull" (cf. PDG *Rind*), finally fell out of use in the 17th century.

5. Conclusion

This study of the famous 'culinary pairs' in medieval English has shown that the crucial question is not why the French terms were adopted, but which factors guided their semantic and pragmatic integration into the English lexicon. As Käsmann (1961, 18; 20) pointed out almost fifty years ago, historical lexicology has to abandon its rather one-sided concentration on the foreign material. This means that, in examining contact-induced changes, specific attention should be paid to the recipient language. The available evidence clearly demonstrates that the Present-day lexico-semantic distribution among the etymologically split 'culinary pairs' cannot simply be described as the result of foreign imposition or prestige-motivated adoption. The basic nature of the concepts in question – i.e. an animal and its meat – and their coverage by a sufficient range of expressive choices in Old English make no convincing case for a 'gap filling' or 'cultural loan' hypothesis. The specialization of the polysemous terms borrowed from Anglo-Norman under inspection here – i.e. *pork*, *beef* and *veal* – definitely happened on British soil. The eventual restriction to their standard English 'meat-meaning' must have been effected much later than the current textbook hypotheses assume, and it must have been a process that was not directed by the noble speakers of the donor language in the one-sided way the 'master/servant talk hypothesis' claims. The question why the 'meat' meaning was eventually selected from the semantic spectrum offered by the Anglo-Norman terms for the integration of *beef*, *pork*, and *veal* into the English standard language can only receive a tentative answer here. It is evident, however, that this specialization had not yet been fully completed at the end of the Middle English period and that aspects of cognitive salience and pragmatic relevance have played an important role in this process.[40]

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