

and her book offers us “the first and only contemporary account of how Mexican food was prepared in California during the nineteenth century” (p.19). Pinedo was a highly educated woman, descended from the earliest settlers of northern California.

In *Encarnación's Kitchen: Mexican Recipes from Nineteenth-Century California*, Strehl has performed a crucial task of cultural recovery. Pinedo wrote her book in Spanish, and while the Spanish edition can be viewed at several libraries in California, both her book and her life deserve a broader audience. Following the lead of Ruth Reichl, who in 1991 drew attention to Pinedo's recipes in an article on California's culinary traditions in the *Los Angeles Times*, Strehl has fleshed out the biographical and cultural context of the *Cocinero* and has provided an indispensable scholarly and culinary landmark. Strehl's translation of Pinedo's dedication, introduction, and recipes is excellent. He has mainly chosen dishes with Hispanic roots and has arranged them by subject instead of alphabetically, as they appear in the original. Along with the sections on soup, breads and eggs, fish, poultry, meat, and desserts and sweets, Strehl includes a wonderful selection of vegetable- and corn-based dishes and sauces. The current volume is illustrated with archival images of Pinedo's house in Santa Clara, portraits of the author's family, and the markets and cooking equipment of the time, such as the Enterprise Nixtamal Mill for grinding corn.

Victor Valle's introductory essay highlights the complexity of the *Cocinero* both at the culinary and the cultural level. On the one hand, Pinedo's grasp of culinary history and of the distinct Spanish, Indian, and French roots of *californio* cooking stand in contrast to the majority of the cookbooks produced by Anglo women of the same period (dominated by recipes for baked goods), and even to many of our contemporary approaches to cooking. Pinedo's recipes, according to Valle, “show more than a grasp of ingredients and cooking techniques. In contrast to some nouvelle chefs today, who often travel the one-way street of subjecting native ingredients to European cooking methods, Pinedo's interpretations demonstrate a mastery of both European technique and *mestizo* aesthetics, an achievement rarely matched by subsequent Anglo interpreters of Mexican cooking” (p.12).

In terms of Pinedo's cultural context, the writing of *El cocinero español* not only provided a “respectable” and perhaps lucrative activity for a single woman in a conservative society but also dignified her family's origins and traditions and, by extension, the cultural heritage of all *californios*. Valle sees the *Cocinero* as a creative and crucial tool of

cultural assertion and as Pinedo's resistance to relinquishing her cultural identity: “The romance of her cuisine continually invoked a past that predated the time of her defeated present. By encouraging friends and family to taste the pleasures of that time, she could reveal to them the authentic ‘native’ in their midst” (p.15). Pinedo's Mexican heritage seems to wink at the reader in her remarks on English cooking in her own introduction to the collection. While she praises the French and Italian culinary traditions, she begrudgingly states that the “the English have advanced their art a bit” and then concludes that “despite all this, there is not a single Englishman who can cook, as their foods and style of seasoning are the most insipid and tasteless that one can imagine” (p.48). This attitude is again highlighted in the name she gives her recipe for Anglo-style ham and eggs: *Huevos hipócritas (con jamón)*.

Throughout Pinedo's carefully written recipes and her introduction, it is evident that she aimed to elevate the role of the chef and to ennoble her art. She draws attention to the high wages of chefs in “opulent homes” and in urban establishments, and she reveals her prescience when she writes: “I am quite convinced that the time has come when the knowledge of cooking will be obligatory; and the art will receive a major impetus because the great importance of knowing how to prepare, season, and temper foods for the fire, making them ready to help in the digestion in the human stomach, will become evident” (p.49).

Encarnación's Kitchen has important points of contact with many fields that may not normally consider the sociological ramifications of culinary history, including women's studies, American history, and Latino studies. It also makes available a collection of wonderful recipes that should inspire many to take advantage of the growing market of previously hard-to-get Mexican ingredients. Why make another Anglo cookie when one could try *Bizchochos de naranja, azahar, y anis* (Orange, Orange-Blossom Water, and Anise Biscuits)?

—Soledad Fox, Williams College

Cooking for Kings: The Life of Antonin Carême, the First Celebrity Chef

Ian Kelly

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Long before Julia Child's cookbooks revealed the secrets of preparing fine French food, before Emeril Lagasse turned

