



The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries form a very distinctive period in European food history. This was a time when enduring feudal constraints in some areas contrasted with widening geographical horizons and the emergence of a consumer society. While cereal-based diets and small-scale trade continued to be the mainstay of the general population, elite tastes shifted from Renaissance opulence toward the greater simplicity and elegance of dining *à la française*. At the same time, growing spatial mobility and urbanization boosted the demand for professional cooking and commercial catering. An unprecedented wealth of artistic, literary and medical discourses on food and drink allows fascinating insights into contemporary responses to these transformations.

*A Cultural History of Food in the Early Modern Age* presents an overview of the period with essays on food production, food systems, food security, safety and crises, food and politics, eating out, professional cooking, kitchens and service work, family and domesticity, body and soul, representations of food, and developments in food production and consumption globally.

**Beat Kümin** is Professor of Early Modern European History at the University of Warwick. He is author of *Drinking Matters: Public Houses and Social Exchange in Early Modern Central Europe* and editor of *The European World: An Introduction to Early Modern History*.

Volume 4 in the *Cultural History of Food* set

FOOD / HISTORY / CULTURAL STUDIES

ISBN 978 0 85785 028 3 (volume 4)  
978 1 84788 355 1 (set)  
Cover Design: Raven Design

 **BERG**

OXFORD NEW YORK  
www.bergpublishers.com

Front cover image: Jan Steen,  
*The Oyster-eater*, 1658–60.  
Oil on panel, 21 × 15 cm.  
Royal Picture Gallery  
Mauritshuis, The Hague.



VOL. 4

A CULTURAL HISTORY OF FOOD  
IN THE EARLY MODERN AGE

BEAT KÜMIN (Ed.)



# A CULTURAL HISTORY OF FOOD IN THE EARLY MODERN AGE

EDITED BY BEAT KÜMIN

