

# THE PERSONALITY OF ANTONINA MASILUNE AND HER CONTRIBUTION TO PRESERVING THE CULINARY HERITAGE

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## ABSTRACT

Cookbooks are an essential type of publication in the field of food heritage preservation. Antonina Masilune (1921–2019) is a cook, popularizer of Latvian cuisine and author of several books, whose cookbooks are known both in Latvia and beyond its borders. The first book by Masilune “Everyday and festive table” was published in 1982, while until now the only cookbook in the world in the Latgalian language (one of the languages that is used in Latvia) “Povõru grõmota” (The Cookbook) was published in 1992. This determined the need, when developing the research, to get to know the food recipe books published by Masilune, with the aim of popularizing the culinary heritage by developing a new graphic design of the first and only book published in Latgalian. The redesigned cookbook will popularize the knowledge and skills of Latgale’s traditional crafts in Latvia and the world today, will introduce readers to the contribution of Masilune, an outstanding cook born in Rezekne (Latvia) and internationally known lecturer, fourth class officer of the Order of the Three Stars, (the highest award in Latvia) to the preservation of the culinary heritage.

Research base: associates of Masilune – relatives ( $n = 5$ ), students of culinary courses ( $n = 1$ ). Research period – 2021, 2022. The research has a practical significance, because during the research a redesign was developed for the book published in 1992 by Masilune.

The research results were obtained using theoretical research methods: research and analysis of scientific, journalistic literature and Internet resources, which reveal the nature of the relevant problem, as well as conducted interviews.

**Keywords:** *Antonina Masilune, cookbook, culinary heritage. Personality*

## Introduction

Today, cookbooks are one of the most trusted branches of book publishing that even the Internet, with its countless recipe sites, has not been able to destroy. If people love to cook, they will always have a selection of cookbooks on their shelves. It is possible that only a few recipes will be made from these books, but cookbooks will still be bought

in search of new recipes. Today's information society dictates a new aesthetic format for the producer's visual communications and consumers. The new task of the graphic designer is the transfer of artistic meanings and images based on the needs of the users and the sequential execution of the design process. The design process turns a task or requirement into a finished product or design solution. The design process consists of several stages: defining the problem, researching, developing ideas, prototyping, choosing, implementing. Each of these requires design thinking.

Anke Klitzing in her study "Making Books: The Recipe for a Successful Cookbook" ("Cooking the books: the recipe for a successful cookbook") admits that thanks to the Internet, cookbooks have become more beautiful objects that are pleasant to the touch and well-designed with enticing photography. It may also have contributed to the trend of having more content alongside recipes in books, such as stories about the origin of the ingredients or dishes, or how the author came to create the recipe. These cookbooks are meant to be read away from the stove, and their premium design emphasizes that (Klitzing, 2020).

The cookbook should reflect not only recipe descriptions, but also create an individual and unrepeatable mood that only the specific book has, which will encourage the buyer to pick it up and, as a result, to buy it, but most importantly to use the purchased cookbook daily or during holidays and pass it on to the younger generation.

It can be concluded that even though digital books, blogs, social networks, etc. are very popular now the development of cookbooks are still relevant today. The main thing for a book is to be informative not only in terms of content, but also in terms of ergonomic and aesthetic graphic design.

Antonina Masilune is a cook, a popularizer of Latvian cuisine and the author of several cookery books, whose cookbooks are known both in Latvia and beyond its borders. The first book by Masilune " "For everyday life and for the holiday table" was published in 1982, while the only book in the world so far in the Latgalian language "Povōru grōmota" (The Cookbook) was published in 1992 by Mrs. Masilune from Rezekne. As part of the practical part of the research, a graphic design was developed for the cookbook "Povōru grōmota" written in 1992. The cookbook contains around 400 recipes: recipes for porridge, pancakes, meat, pastries, drinks and many other dishes. The book was published in 1500 copies. In the anniversary year of the publication, the period of 30 years has made this publication a bibliographic rarity. This determined the need to get to know Masilune's personality, her published recipe books, more closely when developing the research.

The redesigned cookery book today will promote the research, restoration and creative processes of the cultural heritage of food, popularize the passing on of the skills and knowledge of traditional crafts of Latgale in Latvia and the world, will introduce the readers to the culinary contribution of Masilune, an outstanding cook born in Rezekne and internationally known lecturer, fourth class officer of the Order of the Three Stars in the preservation of heritage, as well as will promote the distribution and accessibility of newly created cultural values to the general public.

## Methodology

The purpose of the article is to study the importance of cookbooks in a historical and contemporary context, as well as, based on the results of empirical research, to analyze the personality of the outstanding cook and lecturer Masilune, born in Latgale, and her contribution to the preservation of Latvian culinary heritage.

The research results were obtained using theoretical research methods: studying and analyzing scientific, journalistic literature and Internet resources, which reveal the essence of the relevant problem, and an interview was conducted, which is, accordingly, a method of empirical research.

Scientific and journalistic literature was studied in the collections of library funds and Internet resources. Within the framework of the article, three scientific publications, two books, seven Internet resources were analyzed. The initial selection of literature is based on key words relevant to the research. The aim of the literature analysis was to get an idea of the historical development of cookbooks and their relevance today in the European context. The limitation of the research is determined by the research of the creative contribution of a specific personality in the field of cooking.

The basis of the research is the associates of Masilune – relatives, students of culinary courses. Research period – 2021, 2022. The research has a practical significance, because during the research a redesign was developed for the book “Povōru grōmota” published in 1992 by Masilune.

In order to learn more about Masilune’s personality and her contribution in the field of culinary heritage, her associates were interviewed. The surveys were conducted from October 2021 to January 2022 using the structured interview method. The invitation to participate in the survey and answer the questions compiled by the authors was sent by e-mail to six relatives of the cook, book author, some of whom knew her well from childhood and youth years, the younger generation got to know her later in life, as well as four course attendees of culinary courses. Answers to the interview questions were received from five relatives and one course attendee. The interview consisted of seven open questions. The questions are slightly different for relatives and course attendees. The purpose of the interviews was to find out the multifaceted personality of the Latgale-born cook and lecturer Masilune and her role in preserving Latvia’s culinary heritage, in order to supplement Masilune’s biography with the knowledge gained in the interviews, which is included in the annotations of the redesigned cookbook. The answers to the survey questions were given both in writing and orally, and the answers were clarified during the interviews. The resulting data were collected and analyzed.

## Results

### **The historical and contemporary context of cookbooks. Theoretical review**

Cookbooks have a long and rich history, and the first culinary works were known in ancient times. Cookbooks are a special type of book that instructs the user on what and

what to do to prepare a particular dish. With constant changes in technology as well as human consciousness, cookbooks are constantly evolving, trying to understand their user and respond to their needs. Visually, the language of cookbooks has changed over the centuries (Charko, 2015).

The visual image of books is often determined not only by content, but also by modern design trends, which change every year, as graphic design has also changed dramatically in the last decade: pixels and computer programs replaced pencils and paper (Филь Ш. & Филь П., 2008).

In the program “Known in the Unknown”, Doctor of Arts Astra Spalvena states that: “Cookbooks are published when something changes in the food culture. Cookbooks are the harbingers of change. That’s why we can’t always be sure that what we see in the cookbook was actually eaten at the time period” (Gulbinska, Kropa, Lāce-Baltalksne, 2016).

Spalvena noted that initially cookbooks in Latvia were about holiday food, they are more complex dishes made from more difficult to obtain and more prestigious products, they are dishes that take longer to prepare. Everyday food recipes were not included in cookbooks because the cook knew them by heart or passed them down by word of mouth (Gulbinska et al., 2016). Initially, vegetable dishes, baking recipes were rarely included. The cook already knew that, it was self-evident.

If we take into account the beginnings of the history of recipe books in Latvia, we should talk about an important event that took place 227 years ago, when the first recipe book in Latvian was published (see Figure 1.) which included 414 recipes (Matisone, 2020).

414 recipes – this is an impressive number of recipes even for many modern cookbooks, which could not compete in such a variety of recipes with this, now 227-year-old, “*The first cookbook translated from German books*”. The 227-year-old book was published in Rubene’s rectory and is the first cookbook in Latvian. Now it has been reissued and can provide both ideas for interesting recipes and is also a testimony of the history of its time with long-forgotten words and expressions (Matisone, 2020). However, the first original cookbook written directly in Latvian was published in 1796 under the title “Latvian cookbook for manor cooks” (Gulbinska et al., 2016).



**Figure 1** The first cookbook (<https://www.retv.lv/raksts/ta-pirma-pavaru-gramata>)

In order to understand the significance of this book, we need to go back more than 200 years in history – at that time, serfdom had not been completely abolished in the territory of Latvia. Pastor Christofs Harders of German origin begins to serve in the Rubene parish, who wants to educate Latvian farmers and sets up a printing press in his rectory (Matisone, 2020).

The first cookbooks published in Latvian give an idea of the menu of the nobility of the Baltic provinces, the history page about the dining table of the nobility of Latgale has not yet been written. Neither serfdom, and its late abolition, nor the ban on printing contributed to the development of culinary literature in the Latgalian language. No matter how paradoxical it sounds, the first cookbook in Latgalian was published only in 1992, it is “Povōru grōmota” by Latvian culinary legend, Latgalian Antonina Masilune. There is no evidence of an older recipe book in the Latgalian language (Vilcāne, 2021).

Unlike modern cookbooks, which specify in detail how much of which products to add and how long to cook, the first Latvian cookbook did not specify the amount of products and the duration of cooking. Detailed instructions for cooking are also missing from many 20th century 20s and 30s cookbooks. This could be explained by the experience of the cooks, because in the past more time was devoted to food preparation and many things were taken for granted, there was a more developed culinary intuition (Vilcāne, 2021).

When studying the designs of the oldest cookbooks in the territory of Latvia, it must be recognized that until 1900, the gothic font was also dominant in book printing. For example, in the cookbook published in Jelgava in 1796, we see a recipe for cooking potatoes for manor cooks (Muzeja arhīvus pārļapojot: kartupeļu..., 2020).

In the 19th century, the history of cookbooks changed to a Latvian audience, and the wealthiest Latvians started using cookbooks in their households. One of the authors of books about whom quite a lot is known is Hermine Zalite (1901–02: “Housekeeping and the art of cooks” (reprints 1902; 1907; 1921; 1927; 2012) (Blumberga, 2016).

The last period in the history of cookbooks in Latvia begins in 1990, when the way people perceive food changed. It was more talked about as pleasure and entertainment. Professions such as restaurant critic, sommelier, food photographer emerged, culinary tourism also became a full-fledged hobby. The search for a new identity was underway, and cookbooks from the 1920s and 1930s were widely published in the 1990s. It was an attempt to restore Latvian gastronomy in the situation where it was interrupted by the war. Cookbooks were often published by well-known people. One such book was “Feast with Martin”, “by Martins Ritins, which reflected a change in the treatment of food, namely food as a source of pleasure and its preparation as a creative process. The role of the cook also changed, the cook was no longer a hard worker, but a celebrity. The second cookbook, which came out later, is “Sirmā Latvija”, the author of which Martins Sirmāis popularized not recipes, but a way of life (Blumberga, 2016).

It must be admitted that recently cookbook exhibitions have been frequently held in Latvia (Latvian Book Exhibition in Kipsala, book exhibitions in city and village libraries, the Great Cookbook Exhibition in the Latvian Academic Library, etc.). It takes place in

cooperation with educational institutions or Culinary Heritage cooperation projects. In such exhibitions, it is valuable to examine not only the design of the books, but also the content of the book, understanding their meaning and importance today. Ancient cookbooks are engraved not only with beautiful fonts, but also with wise life instructions on how to keep the human body strong and healthy.

A cookbook or recipe book is still one of the best-selling types of books on the market today. People love looking at pictures of delicious food and being inspired to cook it (Вишняков, 2020).

Not so long ago, most books had a fairly simple design. Modern trends in book design have changed radically. Now the appearance of printed editions becomes more expressive, unique, more noticeable (Дизайн книги, 2019).

Nowadays, designers pay attention to all elements when developing graphic design for books. Previously, when designing a book, all attention was focused on the cover, but now designers include the design of the spine in the overall design concept. It significantly attracts attention and makes the work unique (Дизайн книги, 2019).

When researching the list of the best cookery books of 2021, it was concluded that the most current trend in book design is photography. Without a doubt, the photo conveys the information about the food best. A person can immediately see how the food will look, often without even reading the content of the recipe and will see what the meal will be made of. With the help of a picture, you can understand not only how the food will look, but you can also feel its taste and smell, but of course it depends on how much a person's imagination is developed.

Researching information about more current books of the years 2021/2022, it was concluded that an important prerequisite for creating a book is not only the creation of food photographs, but also the message that the book will carry. The book should contain not only food recipes, but also the author's story, for example, about his childhood, or family traditions, or even the mentioned national values. A recipe in itself as a recipe is a formation of words, the added value to it is the message. Combining the message and the recipe together creates a spiritual and physical meal that brings emotional pleasure, then the goal of the book has been achieved.

In the redesign of the book "Povõru grõmota" developed during the research, the authors of the article used photos of food, which is a current trend nowadays, even Masilune herself has said: "*A cookbook without photos is dumb*". The photos were taken in cooperation with professional photo master Zaiga Petteri. In the redesigned book, the photographs carry not only informational messages about the food, but also tell a story about Latgale, creating the atmosphere of Latgale, thanks to the chosen color range of brown earth tones, the earthenware selected for the photo sessions, it tells the readers a story both textually and visually about the most popular recipes of Masilune in the only edition published in Latgalian.

## Analysis of peer interviews about Masilune's personality and her role in preserving Latvia's culinary heritage

Research of scientific articles ( $n = 3$ ), scientific books ( $n = 2$ ) and Internet resources ( $n = 7$ ) allows us to conclude that the graphic design of cookbooks is very important. The visual image of the book reflects not only the process of preparing the recipes, but also often shows the table culture and etiquette of the respective nation, as well as conveys a message about the cultural heritage of food in general.

Working on the new image of the book was a big challenge, because the book "Povōru grōmota" published in 1992 has its own unique story, and redesigning the book is more difficult than creating a new design for the book. When working on the redesign, you should think about the fact that the first edition book does not lose its meaning, but on the contrary, it becomes stronger. The redesigned book will serve as a memorial from the hometown of the lecturer and cook Masilune and the entire creative team that worked in 2022, during the commemoration of the book's 30th anniversary, so that the new edition can go to its readers, passing on knowledge to the new generation.

As part of the research, in order to learn more about Masilune's personality and her contribution to the field of Latvian culinary heritage, associates of the cookbook publisher were interviewed. The selection of interviewees was chosen not only according to Masilune's blood relations, but also interviewed people who knew her as lecturer and book author. Paternal relatives of the cook – Anatolijs Slahtovics, Albina Slahtovica, Zenija Viluma, Solvita Jukna, Daniels Jukna – took part in the interviews. Slahtovics, Slahtovica and Viluma had contact with Masilune in her youth and adulthood, while the younger generation of her relatives – Solvita Jukna and Daniels Jukna – gave their answers in the surveys specifically about the last years of the cookbook author's life. Maruta Latkovska, the former editor-in-chief of the magazine "Katoļu dzēve" (Catholic Life), a journalist, a visitor to Masilune's culinary courses and the proofreader of the Latgalian written language of the redesigned book, also took part in the interview. Respondents involved in the interview were informed about the publicity of the study and gave verbal permission for their personal data and interviews to be made public.

The interview is one of the most widely used qualitative data collection methods. The validity of the interview is not so much about uncovering the truth during the interview as about a balanced description and interpretation of the interview. In an interview, subjective meaning is almost always revealed, rather than a response elicited in a standard form (Pipere, 2011). According to the form, a structured interview was used, consisting of specially prepared questions. The research and the interview are aimed at broadening the understanding of the specific phenomenon, as well as at improving the tools with which this phenomenon is studied. Discovering the nature of the process allows you to see the techniques that can be used to move the process in a direction desired by the person (Kristapsone, 2014).

Interviews were organized between October 2021 and January 2022 by sending questions in e-mails. In total, questions were sent to 10 respondents, of which six responded. Questions were asked about the observations from the meetings with Masilune, about

the insights and benefits gained during the conversations with her, interesting events and memorable moments, as well as all interviewees were asked a question about Masilune's contribution and role in Latvian culinary heritage conservation.

The article includes some significant interview answers of respondents, which vividly describe Masilune's creative personality and her contribution to the field of Latvian culinary heritage.

The "*recipes' mother*" Antonina Masilune (see Figure 2) was born in Rezekne and lived in the home of Lukna, Rezekne district, Sakstagals parish, Tiskadu parish, she spent her childhood and youth years here, often visiting her hometown Rezekne. Based on that the interviewees were selected – relatives living in Rezekne city and county.

Antonina's cousin Slahtovics remembers that, until the Second World War, Nina's (Masilune) family lived in the Lukna manor not only in the summer, but also moved in throughout the year. The household took care of the beautiful property of Lukna, lived happy as their four children grew up, often visited their relatives in the Papu manor of the nearby Ozolmuiza parish near Slahtovici (Anatolia's family), on Sundays, they visited each other with a carriage.

Slahtovics told historical facts from the everyday life of the Zadvinski family, more precisely about the times of the Second World War, the post-war period and the nineties. Delving into his memories, he says: "...the war drew a line between the active life of Nina's parents and the carefree life of young people. Two of Nina's three brothers went on the run. At the very beginning, to Germany, then to distant America. On the other hand, one of the brothers, Romans, was intercepted by a passing bullet right at the Sakstagals station, when the family had almost boarded the train to Riga, where they would go as refugees to Germany. Both brothers – Peteris and Zigfrids crossed the borders, but Antonina and her mother stayed in Latvia, living in Riga for many years, afraid to visit their homeland. Thanks to the regime of the Soviet times, Antonina did not go to Latgale, she only dared to return as a guest in the spring of 1990 for the funeral of her mother's brother, the owner of Papu Manor Viktor Slahtovics (Anatoly's father). From this year, Antonina's regular visits to relatives living in Latgale and Rezekne resumed."



**Figure 2** Photograph of Masilune's youth (photo from Masilune's cousin Viluma's personal photo archive, around 1938)



From the memories of Masilune's cousin's wife, Slahtovica: *"...I remember when we visited Nina in Riga unannounced. She was surprised by the uninvited guests but received us kindly and was happy to meet. The first thing she said was "oh horror, what will I treat you with? My fridge is almost empty". When she opened the refrigerator, she found herring-bone. And a very tasty dish was prepared. Nina breaded the fish in beaten egg and coated it in flour, added spices, fried it, and as a result the dish turned out to be very, very tasty".* In general, Albina remembers that Nina was a very attractive person with a fantastic sense of humor. For each specific occasion, she had her own "humorous recipe" with which she attracted the attention of those around her, *"as an actress,"* said Albina.

On the other hand, a relative cousin Viluma telling the story, Viluma remembered that Nina taught her mother how to cook herring in a fur coat. Until then, mom didn't even know that such a recipe existed. Zenija writes: *"...all the following years, when my mother received guests, herring in a fur coat (according to Masilune's recipe) was always served at the festive table".* Viluma also talked about Masilune's visit to her brothers in distant America, where she gave lectures and baked cakes for her brother Zigfrids Zadwinski's family, with whom she stayed, the cakes were brought to work for his fellow doctors. Colleagues praised Nina for such delicious cakes and joked that she should stay in America. Nina herself told Zenija: *"while visiting her relatives in America, she received a compliment that she was Latvia's Julia Child".*

Latkovska, a participant to Masilune's cooking courses, speaking about her first memories of meeting Mrs. Masilune, says: *"my first meeting with Ms. Antonina was during my student years, when I was already working in a women's magazine. She was a culinary consultant there. I remember that a bright and very talkative woman came to the editorial office. She talked about food with such passion that you could see in her every feature how extraordinarily delicious the pie, stew or porridge she told about was".* Ms. Latkovska also notes that Masilune had a great ability to captivate the audience with her stories about everyday and festive meals, cooking and serving, as well as excitingly and inspiringly she talked about the cultural etiquette of the table – table setting and behavior at the table while enjoying the food served by the hostess. In later years, when Ms. Latkovska attended Masilune's courses, as she herself says: *"..the courses were well received",* the journalist admires the lecturer's ability to speak with such a *"fiery passion"* and love to talk about the gifts of Latvian nature, products grown in Latvia and the necessary skills to use these gifts. Latkovska mentions that lecturer constantly emphasized: *"..extremely meaningful is how neatly the table is set",* Masilune did not skimp on the details in cooking. For example, when making an ordinary sandwich, it was important for her that *"..so that the butter is spread in an even layer from end to end and that there is no bare spot at the crust, so that the crust is not divided."* The course attendee remembers that, with today's mind, she is well aware that every sentence Masilune said about food was remarkable and worth remembering. After some time, Ms. Latkovska met again with Ms. Masilune, but already in Latgale while working at the Vilani printing office, where in 1989 she renewed the magazine "Katõļu Dzeive". Ms. Masilune wrote for the magazine her memories of the Aglona women's gymnasium, where she studied at the time, and also

told about her youthful dream of becoming an actress. A stumbling stone for the career of an actress and the possibilities of obtaining a university education was biography with two brothers abroad and a diploma from the Aglona gymnasium in her pocket unfit for the Soviet era.

On the other hand, Solvita Jukna, a relative of Masilune of the younger generation, remembers: *“I remembered how Masilune took charge of preparing food for her mother’s anniversary. The most vivid impression was the honey cake, it was so indescribably delicious, I thought to myself, how can you make such a delicious cake! I silently hoped that they would not eat the entire cake on the anniversary, that there would be leftovers and I would be able to eat them... but it was of course eaten”*. The relative also remembers when she studied at the Riga Pedagogical Institute, sometimes she did not go home during the holidays, but stayed with her aunt Masilune. In the interview, she says: *“...it was such a fantastic, easy, free (from home) vacation, starting with the fact that Masilune spoiled me by cooking different dishes. I really wanted to learn to cook like that too. I also liked to communicate with her about various topics, also about men, I was a young girl then and of course I was very interested in this topic. I got a lot of advice. I was inspired by her art of speaking, her ability to find contact with every person. She was so easy to talk to!* Jukna notes that aunt Masilune was a very hospitable, sweet, simple, but at the same time elegant lady. She says in the interview: *“...I am proud that I had such a relative”*.

A relative of the younger generation, Daniels Jukna, who was the last of his relatives to visit Masilune, talked about the positive impression that aunt Masilune left on him. Daniels said: *“...even though Mrs. Masilune was very ill herself during the last meetings, she took care of the guests, welcomed them like on holiday, including me”*. The relative remembers that his aunt served him a sweet sausage on the table, told a whole story about the history of its creation, was very hospitable and kind. She was proud of her family, especially her younger brother Zigfrids Zadwinski, who was a big supporter of charity events and a supporter of culture. She was pleased to come directly from the Zadwinski family. In her essence, as Daniels observes, Masilune was modest, never complained. She only talked about her absences as a fact, for example, talking about the social workers who came to see her, but did not particularly want to talk. Masilune said: *“...I really want to talk to someone”*, but she also realized that they do not spend a lot of time talking to patients. Masilune was very happy about her awards, especially about the medal presented by the president, she showed it to Daniels with great pride in her eyes. She was proud of what she had achieved, happy that she would leave books with many recipes for people to use. The main opinion of Daniels, a representative of the younger generation, is that: *“she really liked doing her job, not complaining about failures, but going forward, not giving in to the first failures, not giving up on everything and continuing to do what she started”*.

In response to the question about the role of Masilune in the preservation of Latvia’s culinary heritage – Ms. Latkovska mentions several aspects – firstly, Masilune’s advocacy for the diverse use of local products was especially important, secondly, the cooking courses she led and published books cultivate and popularize table culture, thirdly, her

dedication and the teacher's talent fascinated and inspired both course participants and cookbook owners. As Ms. Latkovska said during the interview: *"Antonina Masilune was a very bright and inspiring personality – a real gem in our Latvian cuisine"*. The courses attended by the participants and the books they read were a help to every Latvian housewife in learning the wisdom of the kitchen, in preparing tasty and beautifully presented food. Solvita Jukna, a respondent of the younger generation, unequivocally states that Masilune's greatest role in preserving the culinary heritage in Latvia is the popularization of Latgale, while the relative Slahtovica emphasizes in the interview that the biggest contribution of Masilune to the preservation of Latvian culinary heritage is that she left her food recipes for future generations, which we still use. Jukna, the representative of the younger generation of Latvian culinary heritage, says that *"..it is a very strong base that Masilune has given to the younger generation as well. Although I myself look at recipes on the Internet today, I think that if it were not for this basic foundation, which was provided by our previous generation, including Ms. Masilune, then the culinary field would not have developed as it did in today's Latvia, which is also very popular among young people. ..it created a kind of succession factor.. ..without this book, there would be nothing to be influenced by"*. Daniels mentions that they still use her recipes, they have not been forgotten. He mentions that Masilune has collected and compiled many recipes and has also created many, such as sweet sausage. This is also the most valuable contribution of Masilune to the preservation of Latvian culinary heritage.

## Conclusions

Cookbooks are an essential type of publication in the field of food heritage preservation. A qualitatively designed paper book acquires lasting, sustainable value and can be passed on to future generations. A cookbook is a kind of communication between the author of the book and the user. The author of more than 25 cookbooks, Antonina Masilune, devoted her whole life to cooking. By carrying out the scientific article, the study of publicity literature and Internet resources, it can be concluded:

- Cookbooks are relevant today, despite the fact that digital books, blogs, social networks, etc. are very popular now. The main thing is that the book should be narrative not only in terms of content, but also in terms of ergonomic and aesthetic graphic design.
- Masilune is a Latgale-born cook, lecturer, popularizer of Latvian cuisine and author of several cookery books, whose cookbooks are known both in Latvia and beyond its borders, and she plays a major role in the preservation of Latvian culinary heritage, specifically in the diverse use of local products and promoting of table culture in Latvia and Latgale.
- Interviews with relatives of Masilune and course attendees gave a deeper insight into the personal life of the cook, revealing her daily life, one could get an impression of what Antonina was like as a person, what were her main character traits, and the questionnaire helped to obtain the necessary data for the interviews – the lessons

learned are included in the annotation texts of the redesigned book and supplement Masilune's biography.

- Based on the research of the theoretical information and the conducted interviews about Masilune's personality and creative activity in the field of cooking, a redesign of the book will be developed in order to popularize the culinary heritage of Latvian cuisine today and introduce readers to Masilune's personality and her contribution to the preservation of the culinary heritage.

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