



Co-Creating Knowledge: Recipe Books and Community Formation in Early Modern England

Workshop 28 November 2025, Brechtbau Room 215

Project C5 “The Aesthetics of Co-Creativity in Early Modern English Literature” reconstructs an aesthetics of collaborative authorship in early modern English literature that is ‘different’ from concepts influenced by ideas of the author as an individual genius. This workshop explores early modern English recipe books as collaborative, evolving texts that reflect and shape community formation. Far from static records, these books reveal co-creative practices involving family, friends, and professional networks. We distinguish between dialogical, diachronic, and specialization-driven modes of co-creativity to analyze how shared knowledge was produced and transmitted. Using interdisciplinary methods—including archival research and textual analysis—we examine how pragmatic genres fostered sociability and circulated expertise. Recipe books emerge as key sites for understanding multiple authorship and collective knowledge-making in the early modern period.