Studia Linguistica Universitatis Iagellonicae Cracoviensis 141 (2024): 117–137
https://doi.org/10.4467/20834624SL.24.008.19670
https://ejournals.eu/czasopismo/studia-linguistica-uic

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ON THE SPREAD AND EVOLUTION OF *PUDDING*

Keywords: word history, Wanderwort, etymology, philology, borrowing

Abstract

A better author could probably write a detective story about the word *pudding*. The cultural and linguistic complex associated with this word spans in its full extent a thousand years and six continents. This paper concerns itself only with its semantic evolution in English, and its spread to several of the geographically closest languages: German, French, and Italian, each of which has a different relationship with both the word and the dish. The intention is not to explain everything, it is too early for that, but rather to sketch the overall picture and thus to highlight those areas which require further investigation.

1. Introduction

The dish, or rather an entire collection of assorted dishes that seem to share little more than the name *pudding*, has been enjoyed in Britain for possibly a millennium, and exported together with said name to nations near and far. The present paper does not aspire to explore every branch in this great family tree of puddings; this is a task that extends far beyond the volume of a single paper and, I should imagine, the patience of a philologist. Its goal is only to paint an overall picture, to correct some inaccuracies and misconceptions, to highlight the most interesting aspects – interesting from a linguistic point of view – and finally to identify those areas which still require research.

The paper has two main parts. The first (section 2) deals with the history and the semantic evolution in English. The second, which spans sections 3 to 5, discusses the spread of the word to, and its subsequent history in, four languages. Rather than

alphabetically, however, the sections are arranged in the order of progression of an etymological narrative: German (3), followed by Italian (4), and then French (5). Each represents a different type of etymological scenario; it is possible that others may yet be found in languages that are not discussed here. The closing section contains a summary of the main points, a brief discussion, and conclusions.

2. English

The home of pudding is Britain. These dishes have for centuries enjoyed great popularity across the British Isles, and it is from there that they were exported across the world. Simultaneously, this resulted in the word developing new meanings, while stubbornly preserving the old ones, so that today one should be excused for feeling perhaps a little confused in the face of its semantic diversity. The OED lists as many as 23 meanings ranging from 'sausage' through 'rope padding' and 'fireworks' to 'clown', and still the list is not exhaustive as it does not include e.g. 'pie-like dishes' (*steak and kidney pudding*). Actually, the majority of these meanings can be derived with relative ease from each other but in order to do this, we need to start at the beginning.

2.1. Origin

The word was first attested around the year 1100 but for the first two and a half centuries it seems to have been only used as a byname or a surname. The first usage as a noun dates back to 1245 in the sense 'sausage',[1] and the next significant shift appears to have occurred before 1543, when the word took on what is essentially its modern meaning, 'boiled or steamed cake'.

Regarding the origins of the word, the OED offers two possibilities: < Anglo-Norman *bodeyn* ~ *bodin* 'sausage', or < a Germanic root meaning probably 'swelling'. The editors' preference lies with the first of these two. The MED only mentions the Old French etymology, without commentary.

Fr. *boudin* is attested since 1268–1271 (DHLF) and means 'blood sausage'. It is not a perfect match, however, because English does not typically render Fr. *b-* as *p-*. The OED suggests two parallels: *purrell* 'a transverse stripe in cloth' (15th–17th c.) ?< Ang-Nor. *burel* ~ *burrelle* 'a kind of coarse cloth' (12th c.; cf. also Engl. *burel* 'coarse woolen cloth' (14th–18/19th c.)), and *purse* (since 13th c.) ?< Lat. *bursa* '*i.a.* money bag' (from 4th c.). In the light of the total number of French borrowings in English, an adaptation that only occurs in three words must indeed be viewed as unusual.

The alternative is a root which the OED does not specify in any more detail other than deriving it from Germanic and describing it as onomatopoetic. It is suspected to

[1] In a British source in Latin. It is not clear to me why the OED classifies this attestation as "post-classical Latin" and only mentions it in the etymological section, while the 1287 attestation – likewise in a British source in Latin – is listed among quotations which I understand means that it is deemed to be English. The same applies to two attestations from around 1300 which are discussed in the etymological part of the entry.

have been preserved in such words as OEngl. *puduc* 'wen, swelling', Engl. *pod* (from 16th c.), *pudge ~ podge* (from 18th c., see s.v. *pudgy*), regional *poud* 'boil, ulcer', as well as Dut.dial. *poddik* 'thick, soft mass', MLGerm. *puddich* 'fat, corpulent', Germ.dial. (Bremen) *pudde-* in *pudde-wurst* 'large sausage, esp. black pudding', and a number of similar words in Low German. However, the OED points out that despite the similarities, the etymologies and possible relationships between these words are not in fact entirely clear, and also that they are all first attested much later than Engl. *pudding*. Unfortunately, it does not specify what are the exact difficulties in establishing these relationships. Tengvik (1938: 145) mentions some of the words listed by the OED, and derives them from the root **pud(d)-* meaning 'to swell, bulge'. See section 6.

Nevertheless, the OED also suggests that both these etymologies may be correct in the sense that the bynames (attested from the 12th c.) could be of Germanic origin, while *pudding* 'sausage' (from the 13th c.) might be an Anglo-Norman borrowing. This stands somewhat in contradiction to the earlier criticism of the native hypothesis, but I believe that it is a possibility well worth considering. See section 2.3.

A third possibility is also mentioned by the DHLF (*pudding*), where Ir. *putog* is proposed as the source. Unfortunately, the DHLF does not say anything more, and does not provide any references. The intended Irish word was probably *putóg* 'intestine, sausage, pudding', which is in fact more likely to be itself a borrowing from English (MacBain 1911 *putag*), possibly OEngl. *puduc* (above) conflated with *pudding*.

2.2. Evolution

The first attestations refer to different types of sausages. The MED adduces "tucetis [glossed:] pudingis" (ca. 1300), *fartum: a puddyng* alongside *tucetum: a poddynge* (ca. 1425), *podyngs of shepe blode yevith gode aperyde* (ca. 1465, possibly 1373), *puddynge: Lucanica* together with *Hagas, puddyge: Tucetum in tundo*, and *Puddynge: Fartum, omasus* (1440), etc., and defines the meaning as 'A kind of sausage; the neck of an animal filled with stuffing; a filling or stuffing; also, tripe; ?also, haggis; also *fig*'. Similarly the OED states, 'The stomach or one of the entrails (in early use sometimes the neck) of a pig, sheep, or other animal, stuffed with a mixture of minced meat, suet, oatmeal, seasoning, etc., and boiled; a kind of sausage. Also as a mass noun: a quantity of this.'. The earliest detailed descriptions can be found in the Harleian MS 279 (ca. 1430; Austin 1888: 41–42) in the form of recipes for *puddyng of purpaysee* and *poddyng of capoun necke*. The first is not too dissimilar from black pudding, and the second comparable to haggis (though, apparently, the author distinguishes between the two, cf. the recipe for *hagws of a schepe* on p. 39).

Both are essentially mixtures of finely cut or just small ingredients, encased in entrails, and both these features become the basis for new meanings during the Tudor period, a time of great change for the word.

On the one hand, when used in the plural, *puddings* begins to mean 'bowels, entrails, guts'. The first attestation is dated to about 1525, in a copy of a 1444 text. This might be a spontaneous evolution in English but it might have also been influenced by Fr. *bodeyns* id. (1396; OED *pudding*).

On the other hand, around 1550, *pudding* is recorded for the first time with reference to a sweet preparation, one reminiscent of the modern bread pudding. According to the OED, what connects this usage with the meaning of 'sausage' is that it "apparently implied the boiling of the mixture in a bag or cloth" (OED *pudding*). This seems a reasonable assumption, considering that haggis and black pudding are boiled in a casing, but it is unlikely for three reasons. The work in question is *Regiment of lyfe*, T. Phayer's extended translation of the first edition of J. Goeurot's *Le sommaire et entretènement de vie*, and the word appears in it in a recipe for a plaster for gout: "seeth [the ingredients] togyther a lytle as ye would make a pudding, afterwarde sprede them vpon cloutes" (Goeurot and Phayer [ca. 1550], chapter 12). Firstly, the instruction to spread the concoction on cloth suggests that it did not come from a pot already wrapped in cloth. Secondly, the recipe contains very little fat; in all likelihood it would not be able to hold its shape – this concurs with the instruction to spread it – which means that boiling it in a cloth would only add complications with no benefits. Thirdly, the original French word is *bouillie* 'porridge' (this is based on a later edition, Goeurot 1575: 150. Unfortunately, I cannot access the first edition but a comparison with Goeurot and Phayer [ca. 1550] suggests that this particular recipe was not changed in the 1575 edition. Regarding the meaning of *bouillie*, see DHLF *bouillir*.).

It appears more likely that the similarity between haggis and black pudding on the one hand, and Goeurot's plaster on the other, lies in their consistency, which is that of finely cut or small ingredients in a sauce. A similar understanding of the concept of *pudding* is evident in a multitude of sixteenth-century recipes in which it means effectively 'stuffing' (e.g. Dawson 1587: 6, 13, 17), as well as its later meanings of *Indian pudding* (from 1654; OED), and *rice pudding* (from 1749).[2] Probably, it was also this sense that became petrified in *puddingstone* (1752; OED), and in AmFr. *poutine* (section 5.3).

Simultaneously, the first sweet variants begin to appear during the sixteenth century, especially in the form of bread puddings. This extension was surely eased by the fact that the distinction between sweet and savoury, the main course and the dessert, was not nearly as rigorous during the Tudor period as it is today, and meat was regularly paired with fruits. This unification, however, was not complete and bread puddings were not encased in entrails and boiled but rather baked as a dish on its own.

Additionally, bread pudding can also be seen as the transitional form with regard to consistency. In the seventeenth century, puddings boiled in cloth are recorded for the first time. They are still a mixture of fine ingredients, savoury, sweet, or both, with grains in some form, and fat, often suet. Fat is crucial from the chemical point of view, as without it the entire preparation would not solidify and would ooze through the cloth into the water. Regardless, the effect is that of *pudding* shifting its meaning again, this time in the direction of 'cake'. It should be noted, however, that the two concepts never fully merge, as is indicated by the

[2] Cf. https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=rice+pudding&year_start=1500&year_end=2019&corpus=en-2019&smoothing=0 [accessed: 19 February 2023].

phrase *cake & pudding* in the meaning 'reward, advantage' (1556, 1681; OED), and also the modern usage.

Overall, the evolution of the primary meaning from 'sausage' to 'cake' is, therefore, not nearly as remarkable as it may at first seem. The leitmotif is that of a mixture of fine ingredients in a sauce. Until the sixteenth century, these are mostly meat and grains, boiled in entrails ('sausage'). During the sixteenth century, the meat can be enriched or even replaced with fruits, the grains can be in the form of bread, and the whole concoction can either be cooked or baked as a standalone dish ('porridge'), or encased in meat, skin, or pastry which is then boiled, baked or roasted ('stuffing'). Finally, in the seventeenth century (Davidson 2014: 656), the natural casing can be replaced with cloth, resulting in a much firmer consistency ('cake'), but preserving the characteristic rotund ('swollen') shape of haggis. An interesting aspect of all this is that the old meanings continue to be used alongside the new ones, producing eventually the semantic hotchpotch that *pudding* represents today.

The next, and last, significant change occurs in America. The earliest attestation listed in the OED is F. Merritt Farmer's 1896 recipe for pineapple pudding, where the resulting dish bears more of a resemblance to thick custard or blancmange than to cake. This variant becomes widespread in the U.S., and its popularity is later further cemented by the introduction of instant pudding powder, as well as ready-made puddings in single portion packaging.

The OED justifies the shift from 'cake' to 'custard' by highlighting the fact that "[p]udding is sometimes also used as a filling for pies or pastries". This is an appealing explanation, but somewhat improbable since Farmer recommends that her pineapple pudding, and indeed some of her other puddings, should be served as a standalone dish (Merritt Farmer 1896: 344, 345). The dating of around 1840 that was suggested by Olver (2015), appears to be more realistic, and so does her explanation. By the nineteenth century, the practice of thickening porridge-style and milk puddings with eggs had already been well-established (cf. e.g. Carter's 1730 recipe cited by Olver 2015, or Carter 1749: 146). However, access to fresh eggs was not always guaranteed, especially in the frontier regions, so alternative thickeners were used, such as custard powder, which was invented around the same time, or starch. Though this new kind of pudding has never completely replaced the old usage of the word, it has relegated it to second place, and not just in America; see sections 3 and 4.

Taking into account the considerable and lasting popularity of puddings in Britain, it is not surprising that the word developed figurative meanings. Some of them are clear but several require a brief discussion.

It seems that originally, *pudding* referred especially to two types of sausage: black pudding and haggis. Both have characteristic shapes, and both those shapes gave rise to new meanings; the former, to 'a kind of fuse for exploding a mine' (169 and 'penis' (1693), and the latter, to 'a type of bomb' (1919). A slightly less clear-cut case is that of 'some kind of artificial light or firework', a sense that appears briefly during the second quarter of the sixteenth century. Perhaps this was an allusion to the shape (cf. Butterworth 1998: 3, 22, 23, 43, 88, 101), or perhaps to the act of stuffing the

container with gunpowder, etc. A similar evolution based on the round shape can be seen in AmFr. *poutine* (section 5.3).

Another early figurative sense of *pudding* is that of 'fool, clown'. This appears around 1635 when 'a jester' is referred to as *Iacke Pudding* (OED *jack pudding*). Not long after, in fact about 1675, a May-day farce was performed in which one of the roles was named *pudding*. Surely connected here, as well as being self-explanatory, are the phrases *pudding-headed* (1726), and *pudding-head* (1851).

Likewise the meaning of 'poisoned or drugged food (esp. liver) fed to a dog to disable or kill it', which appears in 1827 in the slang of British criminals, is fairly straightforward. Similarly, the meaning 'something easy to accomplish', attested from 1884, cf. e.g. "[i]t's a pudding job" (1915).[3] Also self-explanatory are the meanings 'anything of the consistency of a pudding' (by which the OED apparently understands 'the consistency of porridge'; from 173, 'anything of a soft or spongy consistency' (from 1902), and 'any sweet dish served as a dessert' (from 1934). The origin of the meaning 'fetus' (from 1937) can be clearly deduced from the phrase *to have a pudding in the oven* 'to be pregnant'.

The last suspected figurative meaning, 'rope padding', is perhaps more interesting. It is a nautical term attested since about 1625, meaning 'any rope padding or binding which prevents chafing or impact damage'. This meaning could possibly be derived from 'sausage' due to the fact that it bears a certain resemblance to a coil of black pudding-type sausages (see also section 5., but maybe a better candidate would be the meaning of 'swelling' as wrapping *pudding* around a rope leads to it becoming swollen.

Besides all the nominal meanings, the OED also lists two verbal meanings of *pudding*: 'to supply or treat with pudding or a pudding', and 'to wrap with rope, tow, etc.', and both are said to originate from the nominal *pudding*. Such an origin appears to be in accordance with some quotations, e.g. *puddinging our anchors* (1788); *dosed me and puddinged [i.e. poulticed] me* (1882) – but less so with others, e.g. *to pudden the yards* […] *to preserve them fram galling* (171; *offering of an egg, a handful of salt* […] *is termed 'puddening'* (1851); *pudden the bight with Jagiello's shirt* (1980). Others suggest that *to pudden* and *to pudding* can be used interchangeably, e.g. *[t]hieves* […] *have a method of quieting* […] *watch-dogs* […] *which they call 'puddening the animal'* (1858; see above).

I can see two possible explanations. One is that *to pudden* < *pud*, shortened < *pudding* (OED ²*pud*), the other that it is part of one family together with *pod*, *pudge*, etc., which all go back to **pud(d)*- 'to swell, to bulge' (see section 2.1).

2.3. Summary

Based on English data alone, it seems that, despite the OED's unspecified reservations (see section 2., the scenario that requires the fewest assumptions, is as follows:

[3] Incidentally, Polish provides a close semantic parallel in the form of *bułka z masłem* lit. 'bun with butter' to denote 'something easy to do'.

Germanic **pud(d)-* 'to swell, to bulge' > Engl. *pod*, *pudge*, etc., and also *to pudden* 'to cause to swell'. It could be that *pudding* may have always been part of this family and only shifted its semantics to 'sausage' under the Anglo-Norman influence, or it may have been borrowed from the Anglo-Norman *bodeyn* ~ *bodin* id., and become distorted phonetically under the influence of the **pud(d)-* family, owing to the rotund appearance of the dish. Its later semantic development has been summarized in Fig. 1.

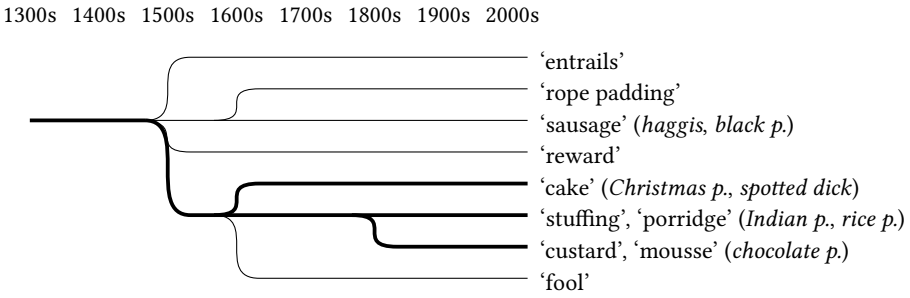

Figure 1: Semantic evolution of Engl. *pudding*. Minor senses omitted

3. German

The primary German reflex of *pudding* is, quite simply, *Pudding*. Though there is a degree of uncertainty surrounding its evolution, the more intriguing shape is *Budin* which appears to be difficult to explain other than through a misunderstanding.

3.1. *Pudding*

Like many of the words discussed here, Ger. *Pudding* also underwent a semantic shift that appears to have been of a different nature, though it is difficult to say what this nature exactly might be.

The earliest attestation that I am aware of is dated 1687 but the word must have been known to the German public by then, or at least this is what the author assumed: "arbeitet dieses alles steiff durch mit eurer Hand als einen Pudding / und machet Ballen daraus" ('work all this stiffly with your hand like a pudding / and make balls out of it'; Thieme 1687: 81). The dish was probably still seen as foreign, however, because a 1705 cook book only uses the word once, in a recipe for a variant of plum pudding which it calls "Englischer Pudding" ('English pudding'; Blankaart 1705: 146). Even half a century later, the word is still sometimes set in roman type instead of blackletter (Oldmixon 1744: 694). The understanding of *Pudding* as 'cake' continues into the twentieth century and, just as in English, the word can refer to both sweet and savoury preparations (e.g. Weiler 1788: 358–370, Meyers [1905–1909]).

At least throughout the nineteenth century, Ger. *Pudding* probably also referred to a dish more akin to either porridge (cf. section 4.4) or perhaps custard. I could not find a precise recipe but the word *Milchpudding* 'milk pudding' is attested in multiple medical texts from this period, and it almost always appears in the phrase *Eier- und Milchpudding* 'egg and milk pudding' (e.g. WGH 51 [1834]: 819).

By the end of the nineteenth century, a new compound with *Pudding* appears in print: *Pudding-Pulver*. The earliest attestation known to me is from 1877, and is quite informative: "Liebig's Pudding-Pulver […] Pudding ohne Eier" ('Liebig's pudding powder […] pudding without eggs'; DFL 230: 4), and "Das Liebig'sche Puddingpulver […] Die praktische amerikanische Hausfrau, schon längere Zeit mit diesen Präparaten bekannt […]" ('Liebig's pudding powder […] The practical American house wife, who has been familiar with these preparations for a long time […]'; IB 223: 2). Not long after, in 1894 Dr. Oetker's powder was introduced (C.-C. Andresen, Dr. August Oetker KG; p.c.), and has ultimately proven to be more successful commercially. The popularity of this type of pudding has eventually surpassed and indeed all but replaced the older meanings of Ger. *Pudding*.

It is thus open to debate in what way *Pudding* had been used in German between the 17th and the 20th centuries. One possible interpretation is to view it as an amalgam of two, possibly even three, independent acts of borrowing whereby the phonetic shape was never changed, but the meaning shifted to what is currently the most common in English. (Incidentally, the same phenomenon of 'cultural update' occurred in American French; section 5.2.) From this perspective, *Pudding* could perhaps be seen as a pair or a triple of homophones rather than a single word.

However, the late attestation in Roman type (Blankaart 1705: 146) allows for another interpretation, which is that the word was not truly borrowed into German until at least the early 19th century, and that all its previous occurrences are in the nature of a foreign word, as if it were a citation of an English word which instead of having a meaning of its own, is only a reference to the full semantic gamut of the original.

3.2. *Budin*

The earliest attestation of Ger. *Budin* of which I am aware can be found in Goldoni (1762: 76, 87–89), a translation of a 1745 Italian comedy. The word used in the original was *bodin* ~ *bodino*, and specifically, *bodino all'inglese* (section 4.4). Similarly, in Neubauer (1779: 547, 570), *englishe*[*r*] *Budin* corresponds to *boudin a l'angloise*. This, in turn, is translated by Tocquot (1808, s.v. *Dumpling*) as *dumpling*, and by Salmon (1816, s.v. *bag*) as *bag-pudding*.

In Goldoni's play, *Budin* "ist ein englisch Gerichte" that "sieht aus wie ein Muß" (1762: 76, 87), so probably a kind of 'porridge'. In later works, the word refers to a type of bread dumpling similar to *Knödel* (e.g. Wieserin 1796: 157; Kraft/Nelken 1880: 154; Meixner 1822: 207; Steinbrecher 1823: 34). Surprisingly, *Budin*, *Boudin* and *Pudding* can be used interchangeably (e.g. Löffler 1833: 589; Kudriaffsky 1880: IX).

It appears that *Budin* has always been a relatively rare word, especially outside Austria, and that it fell out of use entirely by the end of the 19th century. It may be, though it is not certain, that in this brief time, Ger. *Budin* gave rise to another word in the family, namely Pol. *budyń* 'custard-like dessert' < 'cake', 'stuffing', etc. (Stachowski 2023).

Equally uncertain is the origin of *Budin* itself. It appears to conflate the phonetic shapes of Fr. *boudin* and It. *bodin* ~ *bodino*, to be viewed by its contemporaries as a rendering of Engl. *pudding* and, apart from the seemingly unique appearance in Goldoni, to denote a dish specific to the lands of the Austrian Empire.

3.3. Summary

Ger. *Pudding* makes its first appearance in the 17th century. For about two hundred years, it seems to only function as a foreign word, a reference to Engl. *pudding* and as such, it mirrors the semantic evolution of the English word from 'cake' through 'porridge' to 'custard', the latter a result of the influence of American English. It is only in the second half of the 19th century that *Pudding* settles for good in German, and when it does it only retains the latter sense of 'custard'.

Simultaneously, throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the word *Budin* is also in use. It is considerably rarer, being mostly limited to Austria. It can refer to 'porridge', though more commonly it denotes dishes that are more similar to *Knödel*, i.e. 'dumpling'/'cake'. Most likely, *Budin* arose from a conflation of all three, Engl. *pudding*, Fr. *boudin*, and It. *bodino*. In turn, it might have itself become the source of Pol. *budyń* 'custard'.

4. Italian

During the eighteenth century, Italian finds itself under a barrage of new phonetic shapes connected to the word. The majority are more or less similar to *bodino*, although variations with an initial *p-* also exist, some forms have *-u-* instead of *-o-* (‹ou› is also attested; LEI 1598), some have a double *-dd-*, in some *-i-* is replaced by *-e-* or *-ei-*, in others *-n-* is followed by *-g-*, some have *-a* in place of the final *-o*, etc. Their meanings are diverse, too, but remain within what has by now become a familiar pattern: 'sausage', 'savoury or sweet cake', 'porridge', 'custard' and others. Thankfully, it seems that a general picture of what happened in Italian can be reconstructed without necessarily examining all these variations in detail, and we will focus on the most frequent,[4] in chronological order.

[4] https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=bodin%2Cbodino%2Cboudin%2Cbudin%2Cbudino%2Cpodino%2Cpudding%2Cpudino&year_start=1600&year_end=2019&corpus=it-2019&smoothing=0 [accessed: 25 February 2023]. Note that these are only the sample forms; a fuller list can be found in LEI (1598–1599). Also note that not all of the results are the word in question, e.g. *Bodin* is also the surname of Jean Bodin, a French jurist and philosopher, whose works were translated into and discussed in Italian.

4.1. *pudding*

It is not entirely clear to me when *pudding* appeared for the first time in Italian. LEI (1602) seems to date it to 1544, but simultaneously references p. 1598 where the word is said to have appeared as late as 1908. At the same time, LEI ascribes the introduction of the word to Cocchi and Algarotti, by which it probably means the physician Antonio Cocchi (1695–1758), and the polymath Francesco Algarotti (1712–1764) (cf. p. 1598).

The earliest attestation that I could find is in Rozier (1776: 92), in the phrase "il *pudding-stone* degl'Inglesi", i.e. 'as the English call it'. This is a date that is much more in line with the other phonetic shapes.

The first attestation in relation to food that I am aware of is in de la Harpe (1782: 267), who describes the English practice of making a paste out of plantains and boiling it in the form of a pudding. There is nothing in the phrasing to suggest that the author suspects the reader might be unfamiliar with the word.

The use of *pudding* in Italian continues throughout the following centuries but the word never gains great popularity – until the twenty-first century when it all but explodes (cf. fn. 4). The reason for this is most likely the advertising efforts of food companies which hope to elicit greater enthusiasm for their product by giving it a foreign-sounding name.

4.2. *pudino*

LEI (1598) dates *pudino* to an unspecified time before 1758. Indeed, Altieri's 1727 dictionary mentions the word twice: under *Bag-pudding* and under *Hasty pudding*, so clearly in reference to the English dish.

Similarly in Darell (1728: 375), *pudino* is used twice to render Engl. *pudding* (cf. Darell 1713: 290), but in this case the translator very thoughtfully added a footnote explaining that *pudino* is "[c]ibo, composto dagl'Inglesi di farina, burro, ova, zucchero, e uve passe, bollito, o arrostito; assai grato, e buono specialmente per quelli che hanno pochi denti" ('a dish, composed by the English of flour, butter, eggs, sugar, and raisins, boiled or roasted, very agreeable, and especially good for those who have few teeth'; Darell 1728: 375).

Several decades later, Lapi (1767: 23) no longer felt it was necessary to explain the word to the reader when he wrote about a type of bean that was commonly sown in Tuscany, and from which people made cake (*torta*) and a kind of porridge (*pudino*) that they called *faverella* (cf. GDLI).

The earliest actual recipes that I was able to find are provided by Leonardi (1790: 104, 113, 199–206). Many contain references to Britain or Germany in their names, and essentially what they describe are cakes, both savoury and sweet. Specifically, *pudino all'Italiana* is a sweet variant of cheese bread pudding.

4.3. *budino*

The oldest attestation of *budino* mentioned in LEI (1598) is from 1870, but the word has a longer history. The earliest mention that I could find is in Salmon (1743: 173),

as a foreign word referring to life in Britain. The intended meaning is not clear from the context, but most likely it is the dominant meaning of Engl. *pudding* at the time, which appears to have been 'cake'.

Just ten years later, James (1753: 4, vol. 8) uses *budino* as if it were a commonly understood word, with his intended meaning probably being 'porridge' (section 4.4). The work, however, is a translation from English so it is not the best evidence.

In Valmont di Bomare (1793: 258), we find *budino* in the phrase *budino di mare*. Far from a fish pudding, however, it describes an animal, most likely a black sea cucumber (*holothuria atra*). The work was originally published in French, so in all likelihood the Italian translator simply used Italian words to render the French name *boudin de mer*. This name does not appear to have caught on.

Subsequently, the probable usage of *budino* as 'cake' makes a further appearance in Berenger (1796: 147) but, again, this is a translation of a French work, and in addition a description of travels around the world.

Meanwhile, before 1788, *budino* (~ *bodin* ~ *boudin* ~ *budíng* etc.; LEI 1598) begins to be attested with the meaning 'sausage', and specifically 'black pudding'. This is the combination that will ultimately prevail, albeit only to a degree (see section 4.5).

Later on, *budino* will also develop some figurative meanings. It is interesting to note that they can be both similar, but also the exact opposite of the English sense: on the one hand, 'soft, weak, inept person' (1990; LEI 1599; cf. Engl. 'fool'), and on the other 'damage, disaster' (1966; LEI 1599; cf. Engl. 'reward, advantage').

4.4. *bodino*

According to LEI (1598), the earliest attestation of *bodino* can be found in a 1745 text by Goldoni in the meaning of 'dish consisting of meat and greens […] baked in a mould in an oven'. Unfortunately, the abbreviation which identifies the particular text appears to be missing, but it most likely refers to Goldoni's play *Il servitore di due patroni* where, in the 1753 edition, one of the characters is introduced to a dish called *bodino all'inglese,* a dish which he discovers is similar to, but better, than polenta (Goldoni 1753: 456; also *bodin* on pp. 448, 456, 457). In the same year, *bodino* is used in James (1753: 327, vol. 7) to describe a dish prepared by the Germans from millet and milk, so presumably 'porridge'. The form *budino* is also used in the same work, probably with the same meaning (section 4.3).

The 1762 German translation of Goldoni's comedy is the oldest attestation of which I am aware of Ger. *Budin* (section 3.2). Clearly, a connection exists between German and Italian but its details remain obscure to me. In contrast to 'porridge', an attestation from just five years later suggests an altogether different kind of preparation: "Il bodino, che sanno essi del sangue, e delle budelle de'loro cavalli, riesce migliore del nostro del porco" 'The *bodino*, which they know to be from the blood and the intestines of their horses, is better than ours from pork' (SGV [1757]: 348).

An interesting case is that of Hamilton's treatise on the diseases of women and children. The original, published in English, included the advice that lying-in women may be fed "something solid, as boiled fowl or chicken, white fish, or light

pudding" (1792: 335). The entire treatise was then translated into French, and from French into Italian (see the title page of Hamilton 1802). The French version renders *light pudding* as *boudin blanc* (1789: 230), with the Italian form as '*bodino* made with milk and sugar' (1802: 68). Typically, *boudin blanc* is made of white meat, milk, eggs, and grains in some form, and it has the shape of a sausage (cf. e.g. Liger 1790: 729). I was not able to find a historical record of a sweet variant.

4.5. Summary

The attestations summarized above paint a fairly clear picture. During the eighteenth century, the Italians repeatedly and concurrently borrowed Engl. *pudding*, Ger. *Pudding*, and Fr. *boudin* ('sausage'; section 5.1). All those words were adapted phonetically in more than one way; some of these ways overlapped, and for a long time they all remained in use simultaneously. Eventually, during the twentieth century, *budino* emerged as the primary variant (cf. fn. 4), but in the process it absorbed the meanings of almost all the others – as well as becoming the name for new varieties of the dish that were developed in or imported to Italy – resulting in a less than clear semantic family today that includes, among others, custard-like desserts (*b. alla vaniglia*), custard-like desserts with meat (*b. di pollo*), porridge/cake/pie-like desserts (*b. di riso*), cheesecake-like desserts (*b. di ricotta*), savoury cake-like dishes (*b. di spinaci*), as well as a type of blood sausage.

Incidentally, the more common word for 'blood sausage' is *sanguinaccio,* which is also the name of a dessert with approximately the consistency of thick custard that is made from pig's blood, milk, chocolate, and dried fruits.

In reality, the lack of clarity is not as serious as it may seem. *Budino* refers primarily to a type of dessert similar to custard, and it is the primary name for this type of dessert – although this may soon change, considering how much *pudding* has gained in popularity in recent years (section 4.1).

It was mentioned above that *budino* absorbed the meanings of *almost* all the other phonetic variants. The one that it is missing is that of 'puddingstone', in which sense the shape *puddinga* is used, most likely a borrowing from Fr. *poudingue* id. (section 5.2).

5. French

Besides being a possible source of Engl. *pudding*, and a certain source of Engl. *boudin* 'blood-sausage' (1845; OED), French is also a recipient of several variants of the word, of which one, *poutine*, has ultimately found its way back into English.

5.1. *boudin*

This suspected etymon of *pudding* has been attested in French since 1268–1271, and though the original recipe appears to have been lost, it seems that the word has always referred to a kind of sausage, probably one containing blood (DHLF, TLFi).

Interestingly, since at least the seventeenth century, English-French dictionaries translate *pudding* as *boudin*, and vice-versa.[5] This may be in reference to the English sense of 'sausage', in some cases, but this certainly is not always the case.[6] Descriptive French dictionaries from the period consider the primary meaning of *boudin* to be 'blood sausage'; they record some figurative meanings (see below), but nothing that would match the culinary senses of Engl. *pudding*.[7] The phenomenon seems to have largely stopped by the twentieth century.

Like Engl. *pudding*, Fr. *boudin* has over the course of centuries developed a number of figurative meanings which allude primarily to its shape, that is tubular and short or wound in a coil (see also section 2.2): 'penis' (16th c.), 'semicylindrical moulding around the base of a column' (1690), 'coil of wire' (1690), 'small roll of tobacco', etc. (Bescherelle 1871, DHLF, TLFi s.v.). Among these, the meaning 'prostitute' (1890; DHLF) is probably the only one whose semantic and/or cultural motivation is not immediately clear.

Similarly to Engl. *pudding*, the etymology of *boudin* is not known.

Salvioni (1914: 375–376) equates the word with It. *boldon* etc. 'pig blood pudding (in the sense of *custard*)' (Venetian; cf. Paoletti 1851). DHLF and TLFi reject this idea because the Italian word is first attested in the sixteenth century, three centuries after Fr. *boudin*. Gamillscheg (1928; after DHLF and TLFi) proposes **botellinus* < Lat. *botellus*, classical *botulus* 'intestine'; this hypothesis, in turn, is rejected by DHLF and TLFi due to the phonetic difficulties.

Ultimately, the proposition that both DHLF and TLFi tentatively support derives *boudin* from an onomatopoetic root *bod-* 'swelling, something swollen' (without an asterisk in DHLF and TLFi, but also without assigning the root to any specific language). Other words derived from the same root would include: *bedaine* 'paunch, belly' (1400), probably < OFr. *boudine* 'navel' (DHLF); *boude* 'navel' (Champagne; DHLF, Daunay 1998: 102); *bouder* 'to sulk, to pout' (DHLF); maybe *bedon* (ca. 1404; DHLF *bedaine*). Cf. also *boursouflé* 'swollen, puffy' (13th c.) which DHLF derives from an onomatopoetic root *bou-* (again, without an asterisk), a variant of *bod-*; and TLFi directly from *bod-*.

There is a conspicuous similarity between *bod-* and *pud(d)-* as mentioned in section 2. Less obvious is how exactly they relate to each other; see section 6.

5.2. *pudding*

According to DHLF, *pudding* was borrowed to French in 1678 but, rather puzzlingly, the word had already been in use since the sixteenth century. Today, it has a phonetic and orthographic variant *pouding* (see below); for some time from 1752, the spelling

[5] Cf. e.g. Miège (1684 *boudin*, *pudding*), Boyer (1756 *pudding*), Boniface (1830 *pudding*), Clifton and McLaughlin (1904 *pudding*).

[6] Cf. e.g. Miège (1684 *dumpling*, *plum*, *quaking*), Boyer (1756 *bag*), Boniface (1830 *dumpling*, *plum*) – in the latter *poudin* instead of *boudin*.

[7] Cf. e.g. Furetière (1690 *boudin*), DLAF ([1798]; *boudin*), Noël and Chapsal (1832 *boudin*).

poudin was also used (DHLF), and DHFQ (424) also mentions *poudine* in 1810. The pronunciation is yet to become fully established: [-u-] alternates with [-y-], and [-iŋ] with [-iŋg], [-inʃ], [-inʒ] (TLFi), and [-iɲ] (DHFQ 423).

Primarily, the word denotes a 'cake'. The earliest full recipes that I was able to find were published in 1730; one describes a variant of bread pudding, the other a sweet pudding boiled in cloth similar to a Christmas pudding (Massialot 1730: 261–263). The modern understanding of the word is the same, so much so that Le Robert considers Fr. *pudding* to be synonymous with Fr. *plum-pudding*.

The variant *pudding* is more frequent in France, with the variant *pouding* predominant in Canada. DHLF seems to suggest that the latter continues a borrowing that occurred in Europe, while DHFQ derives it directly from English. Neither, unfortunately, provides any justification. However, EuFr. *pudding* only means 'cake' (Le Robert) whereas AmFr. *pouding* has the senses 'cake' and 'custard', which means that regardless of whether either DHFL or DHFQ is right, a second borrowing must have occurred in America that added the latter meaning to the word. Ger. *Pudding* has undergone an analogous 'cultural update' (section 3).

A special case, and apparently a separate borrowing, is Fr. *poudingue* 'pudding stone'. It is first attested in 1752 or 1753 (DHLF, TLFi). Here, the pronunciation is with a nasal vowel ([ɛ̃ː]; TLFi), which probably completes the full range of possible phonetic adaptations of Engl. *pudding* in French.

5.3. *poutine*

DHFQ lists as many as seven meanings of AmFr. *poutine* ~ *potine*: 'type of cake' (from 1810; more commonly referred to as *pouding*), 'type of dumpling' (from 1883), 'fat person' (from 1909), 'moonshine' (from 1931), 'unappetizing mixture of various foods' (from 1939), 'complicated affair' (from 1959), and 'potato chips with cheese curds and gravy' (from 1978).

DHFQ (428) rejects Engl. *pudding* as a possible source of *poutine*, allowing only for an English influence with regard to the first sense, 'type of cake'. The reason DHFQ cites for this rejection is that the devoicing of *-d-* would have been a highly unusual adaptation. Instead, it offers a surprisingly wide selection of French dialectal forms with comparable meanings, e.g. for the sense 'cake': *poutigno* ~ *poutingo* ~ *poutino* 'marmalade'; for the sense 'dumpling': *potin* 'pâté', *poutis* 'thick mash', *potine* 'cast iron pot', and others; for the sense 'unappetizing mixture': *poutingo* 'bad ragout', *poutringo* 'mix of different things', and others; for the sense 'moonshine': *potin* 'iron cucurbit for distillation', *poutée* 'residue from a distillery', etc.

In other words, DHFQ (428–429) proposes that the majority of the meanings of *poutine* are continuations of different words from different dialects, which all merged into one word in Canada – or two, if *poutine* and *potine* are to be counted separately. DHFQ, however, considers them to be one word *poutine* which just happens to be "sometimes pronounced [pɔtˢɪn]" (426). It also needs to be emphasized

that the phonetic changes that would have been necessary to transform almost any of those potential etymons into *poutine* are by no means regular.

This is a concern because generally native words evolve in a much more predictable manner than the way in which loanwords are adapted (cf. e.g. Stachowski 2018: 39; 2020). Moreover, variation in voicedness does in fact sporadically occur in English borrowings in American French, though its causes are not entirely clear. Paradis and Lacharité (2008: 109–110, where further examples can be found) attribute this phenomenon to the fact that "what English classifies as voiced stops are, from the French point of view, voiceless". This is less true, however, with regard to intervocalic stops such as in *pudding*. Mateusz Urban (Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland; p.c.) suggested what I believe to be a more plausible explanation. In American English, even in the 19th century (Boberg 2017: 384), /t/ and /d/ tended to be both pronounced [ɾ] in the intervocalic position, opening the door to misinterpretation and hypercorrection.

DHLF, while mentioning the possibility of a native origin for *poutine*, is slightly more receptive to the idea of a borrowing, but only in so far as proposing EuFr. *pouding* as the source (which < English; section 5.2).

Admittedly, not all senses of Fr. *poutine* are entirely clear. A borrowing from English explains 'cake' and 'dumpling' (from 'bag pudding'; cf. *poutine râpée*), and from the latter 'fat person' (cf. a similar evolution in English, e.g. 'bomb' in section 2.2). Nevertheless, 'complicated affair', 'unappetizing mixture', and 'chips with cheese and gravy' are certainly all connected, and seem to derive from the meaning 'finely cut or small ingredients in sauce' (section 2.2; OED *pudding*, sense I.1.b). It may be that this is also the origin of the sense 'moonshine', via 'mash', but in this case the connection with *potin*, *poutée*, etc. appears to be a possible explanation.

Despite it being a very recent innovation, comparatively speaking, the exact origin of the chip-based dish is not known. EC adduces two anecdotes but it is not clear that either is true. Regardless, it has been gaining in popularity in recent years, to a point where the word was borrowed back into English and, be it through English or directly from French, has now also begun to appear in other languages across the globe.

5.4. Summary

Three French words are of interest to us, each with a different relationship to English.

Firstly, *boudin* 'blood sausage', which is attested as early as the 13th century, could either be the source of Engl. *pudding*, or a sister derivative, and possibly both. The least likely is that it is not related at all. In the first scenario, *boudin* > *pudding* '1. surname; 2. sausage'; in the second, *boudin* < **pud-* or similar > *pudding* 'sausage' > 'surname'; in the third, **pud-* or similar > *pudding* 'surname' and simultaneously *boudin* 'sausage' with later > *pudding* 'sausage'. See section 2.3.

Secondly, Fr. *pudding* is a simple 17th century borrowing from English. In contrast to the original word, the French reflex is limited to the sense 'cake', though in Canada its semantics have been extended to also include 'custard'.

Thirdly, *poutine*. This form is a uniquely Canadian borrowing which appears to preserve traces of obsolete English meanings, and continues these in its individual way: 'mixture' > 'complicated affair', 'chips with cheese and gravy', perhaps also > 'mash' > 'moonshine', and possibly also 'round sausage' > 'fat person'. Of these, 'chips with cheese and gravy' has gained such popularity that it was borrowed back into Engl. *poutine* id. It seems that AmFr. *poutine* must have been in actual use considerably earlier than the first documented attestation from 1810.

6. Discussion

The paper follows the evolution of *pudding* in four languages: English, French, German, and Italian. Though some details still require further discussion, in particular phonetic explanations, the main directions appear to be clear, and have been presented, in a simplified form, in Fig. 2.

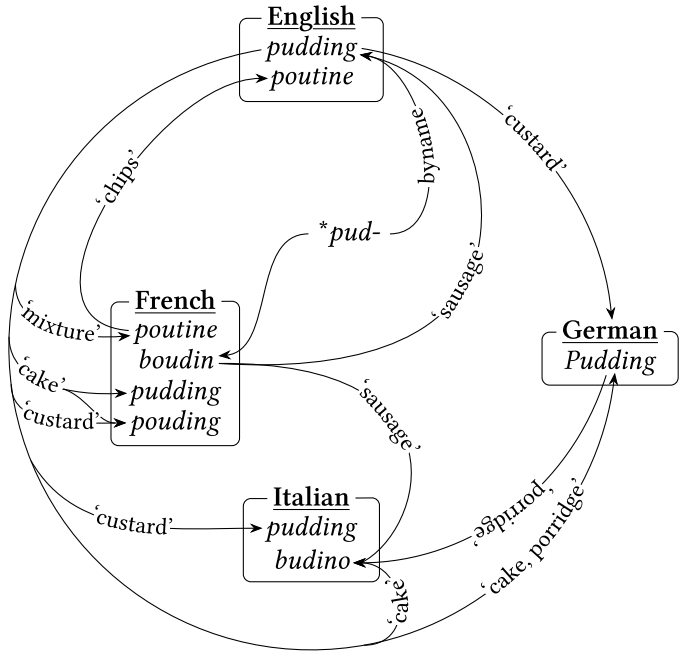

Figure 2: Spread of Engl. *pudding*. Minor branches and uncertain connections omitted

The main unresolved issue is that of the ultimate origin of the word (section 2.1). The earliest attested stage is in English, between the eleventh and thirteenth century, as a byname. The OED ascribes the later meaning of 'sausage' to the influence of Fr. *boudin* 'black pudding'. It is possible, though at this point unfortunately speculative, that the byname had in fact had the same sense, cf. DFD (*Budde*). This would agree with the meanings of a considerable number of Dutch and Low German words that

the OED adduces as potentially related, and as stemming from the same root meaning 'to swell', which it believes to be Germanic and onomatopoetic. More about this second characteristic can be found in Liberman's works (2000: 219; 2008: 7–8).

Interestingly, the purported French etymon *boudin* is derived from a root *bod-* 'swelling, something swollen', which is also believed to be onomatopoetic (section 5.1). DHLF and TLFi cite it without an asterisk, but also without assigning it to any specific language. Simultaneously, LEI discusses the Italian reflex of *pudding*, *budino*, as part of a rather extensive entry "Pre-Lat[in] **bot(t)-*; **bond-*/**bold-*; **but(t)-*; **pott-* 'swelling, cavity'" (section 4.3). It is probably also worth mentioning PIE **bed-* 'to swell' (IEL), as well as PE (?) **(a)pad-*, **(a)pew- ~ *peut-* id. (Gysseling 1987: 53). Considering the suspected onomatopoetic nature of this word, one might even add the Arabic root *b-d-n* 'to be fat'.

Thus, a substantial body of evidence has already been collected that points to the existence of a root meaning 'to swell', which is composed of three phonemes: a bilabial stop, a labial vowel, and a dental stop, in that order. The specific language from which it originated, its exact phonetic composition and, more to the point in this context, its relation to all the words referred to above, is yet to be established.

Abbreviations and references

Am- = American; **dial.** = dialectal; **Dut.** = Dutch; **Engl.** = English; **Eu-** = European; **Fr.** = French; **Ger.** = German; **Ir.** = Irish; **It.** = Italian; **L-** = Low; **Lat.** = Latin; **M-** = Middle; **O-** = Old; **PE** = Paleo-European; **PIE** = Proto-Indo-European; **Pol.** = Polish; **Sp.** = Spanish

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[8] ‹Dorell› on the title page, but cf. Darell (1704).

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