

# A free and open international journal

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Here it will be explained why this new journal. Everything lies in words : “molecular”, “gastronomy”, “free”, “open”, “journal”, “era”.

And I shall propose some discussion about them in order to make our project clearer. By the way, using “I” in the previous sentence makes me think that I am not particular in this editorial board: the group of colleagues who accepted a position (this means “work”) to this board will decide.

## What is molecular gastronomy

Of course, the main question is “what is molecular gastronomy”. You see: I don’t put any question mark, because there is no doubt on what molecular gastronomy is... even if I have to admit that there is a lot of confusion about it, in the general public. Let’s explain, with historical background.

When the expression “molecular and physical gastronomy” was proposed, in March 1988, between the late Nicholas Kurti and I, its meaning was clear. First “gastronomy” means “the reasoned knowledge of all about man’s nourishment”. But we added “molecular and physical” because we wanted to name the particular scientific discipline (science of nature) which was investigating the phenomena occurring during culinary processes, i.e. dishes preparation,

or more simply “cooking”. And because “molecular biology” was freshly developing, I proposed “molecular gastronomy”, but Nicholas proposed to add “and physical”. At that time, I didn’t know -I only realized it recently- that he wanted to avoid using the name “molecular gastronomy”, because this one had been proposed before by our late friend Elizabeth Thomas, who had something different in mind. Anyway we agreed for “molecular and physical gastronomy”, which I shortened later to “molecular gastronomy”.

All this is not so important. What was very clear, on the other hand, was that molecular gastronomy was not food science and technology in general, but restricted to a very specific field. First, this had to be so, otherwise we would not have taken the burden of proposing a new name; we were not playing the “name game”. But it is a fact that, at that time, no science was devoted to the study of dishes prepared by individuals, i.e. by cooks; in spite of many works in the past, there was no “science based on cooking”.

Let’s explain more clearly. At that time, there was (of course) some science and technology of food ingredients, as well as science and technology of industrial processes, but almost no studies were focusing on the hundreds of “real” sauces that cooks do (one paper on béarnaise in *Nature* was

considered as “exotic”, “original”); no work was devoted to wine cooking in spite of the fact that wine is a main ingredient being cooked in more than 68 % of all wine sauces; nothing on coq au vin, nothing on goulash, nothing on arancini of rice with beef, nothing on Christmas pudding, etc. Clearly some scientific studies were needed, in this specific field.

Also it was clear that molecular gastronomy was not cooking, otherwise it would have been called something like “molecular cooking”, but some confusion was unfortunately created when we invited chefs at our International Workshops on Molecular and Physical Gastronomy, in Erice (Sicily). Indeed we had a good reason to invite chefs, i.e. what we had in mind was to explore “real culinary practices”, and not our ideas of them, so that we wanted to see chefs showing us their real work. But almost immediately, because of the world success of the Workshops, the confusion was there, and even chefs (you know, some are stars!) said to the press that they were doing molecular gastronomy... which was not true, because they confused science, technology and technique.

By the way, I have to say that I am much in favor of technology, because it's technology that creates improved computers, planes, bridges... I am promoting technology everywhere, even being myself a scientist, and because works are better when words are right, the science inspired cooking was finally called “molecular cooking” (look: I am using a different name here). Of course, molecular cooking was not created in 1992, but much before, more or less when Nicholas proposed to use physics tools and methods and the kitchen, and when I proposed myself to “translate” the chemical hardware in the kitchen, in 1980.

Finally a useful definition, published for many years in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (and in other dictionaries): molecular cooking means using “new tools and methods”, as we rightly recognized with Nicholas since the beginning of this exciting adventure. By the way, since I said many times here “Nicholas and I”, I should add that, since the beginning of molecular gastronomy or of molecular cooking, more friends contributed, such

as Harold McGee, Ugo and Beatrice Palma, Jean Matricon, Peter Barham, Thorvald Pedersen... and many others. They did some works, either in molecular gastronomy, or in molecular cooking, or in education; some did some scientific research, some used molecular gastronomy for teaching (science, in particular, but also cooking), some popularized new ways of cooking... I respect of course all aspects, but I just want to write here that different activities are not all alike... and this is why this Journal here will distinguish the various aspects, with “indulgence”, let's say “kindness”. In my laboratory, it is written in big letters on the wall “The summum of intelligence is kindness and honesty”. By the way, this motto will be proposed to all reviewers of this Journal... but this will be explained later.

Just to finish about what is molecular gastronomy, let's repeat that it means looking for the mechanisms of phenomena occurring during the making of dishes (“cooking”), and let's also repeat that we make a difference between science (of nature), technology, technique, education. All this parts will have their own section in this Journal.

### **Why a free and open journal (model diamond)**

Now, let's discuss this Journal. First, is it needed ? Yes, there are many other journals for food science and technology, sometimes with high impact factor, but it's true that frequently, just as molecular gastronomy was not clearly identified within food science or food technology, the papers that we could propose did not find their right place into such journals as *Food Chemistry*, of the *Journal of Food Science*, or the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, *Nahrung und Lebensmittelwissenschaft*...

Clearly there was a real need.

Then, “open” : it is true that scientists publish their work in order to share with colleagues the excitement of their results, as well as the passion for scientific research. When money comes into the play, it can alas become bad,

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because it prevents some of us accessing the data. Let's remember that in the old times of sciences, in the XVIIIth century, all went through personal letters (and they belong, by law, to those who receives them). Then open access is a must, an advance of our time after some time when laboratories had to spend a lot of money on libraries.

But one big issue, today, is that the authors have to pay! And this is not fair, because one should get paid for a publication (authors rights, royalties). And this is why this journal has to be "free".

Then, finally, the conclusion : this journal will be free and open.

How will it be produced ? Just as any other scientific journal: when a paper is received, it is sent to one member of the Editorial Board, so that he/she looks for two or more reviewers, who can look at the paper, and recommend or refuse the publication. But we shall now give more details.

#### **How it works, and why it could be useful for all**

Now, let's go into more details on how this Journal works. Indeed, there is a "core": a science section. And this needs strict reviewing, as any other journal. But others sections don't need the long reviewing process, even if we have to ensure that the information given is of high quality. I propose that our main rule will be always: "The summum of intelligence is kindness and loyalty". For example, about the "News" section: no need for reviewing... but we have to ensure that it is right information. For example, if there is a fee for a molecular cooking course, this one should clearly given. This will be easily done.

But, again, the main part is the "science" section, because this is molecular gastronomy. And here, there is no reason that the quality should be poor... on the contrary: about "cooking", we have to be even more strict than in others fields of knowledge, because there is a risk that "dear colleagues" can confuse molecular gastronomy and technique.

This means, practically, that :

- everything should be done by email

- manuscripts have to be sent to a particular email adress : [ijmg@agroparistech.fr](mailto:ijmg@agroparistech.fr) when manuscripts will be received, it will be checked that the manuscripts are prepared correctly (not the English language, but rather the typeface, the size of letters, the format of references..., I mean easy to do things); see "Guide for the authors"

manuscripts having the right format will be attributed (I shall do this) to one member of the Editorial Board, so that :

the Editor in charge will look for two reviewers, to which the manuscript will be sent anonymously; the Reviewers will be asked to apply the rule "The summum of intelligence is kindness and loyalty", which means that:

they will be asked to focus on the "Material and Method" section, as well as on the Results section ; for the first one, they will ensure that the experimental part is very precisely explained, and that all experimental details are correctly justified; for the results, these should be given without being generalized (one should stick to results, and not mix results and discussion) ; the "Interpretation" section should be left freely to authors (they can say wrong things, but it is left to their responsibility, and clearly distinguished from the results)...

but the reviewers will be proposed to discuss the proposed interpretations, either anonymously, or under their signature, in a added part to the article; this added section will be always present under the title "Comment of the interpretation by the reviewers), but it can be empty

the Editor will takes a decision from the two reviews, and possibly will ask for other advices when needed

finally the manuscript will be published online only, and available for free as pdf file, with a reference, as any other journal; manuscripts will be given a year of publication, a number, pages numbers; authors will be encouraged to distribute widely their published articles with the right references.

#### **Let's work, now**

With all this being written, I would propose that

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we now begin creating a community of “friends”, i.e. individuals sharing a common interest for science, technology, technique... related to cooking. Please contribute to the making of this community by inviting papers, making this Journal active. Don't hesitate to send information for the various sections to [jmg@agroparistech](mailto:jmg@agroparistech), distribute widely the pdf file of published manuscripts, share this link.

Vive la gourmandise éclairée (Celebrate enlightened gourmandise).

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