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Transitions in Culinary Cultures? A Comparative Study of France and Britain

Andy Gatley

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of City University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Centre for Food Policy
School of Community and Health Sciences
City University
London

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Abstract

Considerable popular, academic and policy debate surrounds the alleged decline in cooking skills within contemporary society, the factors influencing domestic food practices and the impact upon diet and health. Often regarded as a global phenomenon, it appeared pertinent to undertake a cross-cultural comparative analysis and compare current domestic food practices in Britain with France. France was selected because, while it shares many similarities with Britain, it possesses a radically different food culture.

The research drew on a range of perspectives and disciplines and the first stage of the fieldwork involved interviewing members of the public in both countries about who cooks what, how, when and why. The second stage asked 'experts' within the policy domain to comment on the emerging narrative and discuss the implications of any 'culinary transitions' for policy development.

Both countries have witnessed changes in food supply, and combined with the demands of modern life, have resulted in a decline in cooking. However, food, cooking and eating remains symbolically more significant to French people's cultural identity. A powerful culinary discourse was widely celebrated and frequently articulated by the State to underpin France's national identity. Such attachment to a deep rooted culinary culture has acted as a bulwark against globalising tendencies within the food system.

Food related policy in France has supported French food and a 'traditional' daily model of three highly structured meals, often consumed in the company of others. In Britain, uncoordinated policies to promote healthier diets, lifestyles and occasionally cooking have occurred but with little focus on culture. The situation in Britain now demands a strategic approach supported via the state, the community and an understanding of how cultural practices, including the ability to cook, underpin how people make the choices they do from their food environment.

Abbreviations and acronyms

AA	Automobile Association
ACA	Academy of Culinary Arts
ACdF	Academie Culinaire de France
	(French Academy of Culinary Arts)
AFSSA	Agence Francaise de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments
	(French Food Safety Agency)
AOC	Appellation d'origine controlé
	(Protected Designation of Origin)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BEUC	Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs
	(European Consumers' Organisation)
BMI	Body Mass Index
BNF	British Nutrition Foundation
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CCT	Compulsory Competitive Tendering
CEDUS	Centre d'Études et de Documentation du Sucre
	(Centre for the Dissemination and Research of Sugar Products)
CFES	Comité Francais d'Éducation pour la Santé
	(The French Committee for Health Education)
CHD	Coronary Heart Disease
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIDIL	Centre Inter-Professional de Documentation de l'Industrie Laitière
	(Registry of the National Dairy Industry)
CNAM	Conservatoire National des Arts et des Métiers
	(National Conservatory of Arts and Trades)
CNAMTS	Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Maladie des Travailleurs Salariés
	(French National Health Insurance Agency for Wage Earners)
CODES	Comité Départmental d'Éducation pour la Santé
	(Departmental Committee for Health Education)
COMA	Committee of Medical Aspects (of Food and Nutrition Policy)

CRÉDOC	Centre de Recherche pour l'Étude et l'Observation des Conditions (Research Centre for the Study and Observation of Conditions)
CRES	Comité Régional d'Éducation pour la Santé (Regional Committee for Health Education)
CWT	Caroline Walker Trust
DCSF	Department of Children, Schools and Family
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfES	Department for Education and Schools
DoH	Department of Health
EC	European Commission
EEN	EPODE European Network
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EPODE	Ensemble, Prevenons l'Obèsité des Enfants (Together let's prevent obesity in children)
ESA	European Snack Association
EU	The European Union
FSA	The Food Standards Agency
GM	Genetic Modification
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
HCSP	Haute Comité de la Santé Publique (Senior Committee for Public Health)
HEA	Health Education Authority
IEFS	Institute of European Food Studies
INED	Institut National d'Études Démographiques (National Institute of Demographic Studies)
INPES	Institut National de Prévention et d'Éducation pour la Santé (National Institute of Prevention and Health Education)
INSEE	Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (Institute of National Statistics and Economic Studies)
IOTF	International Obesity Task Force
JCA	Junior Chef's Academy
LEA	Local Education Authority
LIPT	Low Income Project Team

MNC	Multi-National Corporation
NACNE	National Advisory Committee on Nutrition Education
NFM	Nestle Family Monitor
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHS	National Health Service
NICE	National Institute of Clinical Excellence
NUD*IST	Non-Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing
OCHA	Observatoire Cidil de l'Harmonie Alimentaire (Cidil Research Centre for Dietary Well-Being)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OPCS	Office of Population Censuses and Surveys
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PDO	Protected Designation of Origin
PGI	Protected Geographical Indication
PNNS	Programme National Nutrition-Santé (National Programme for Nutrition and Health)
PUFA	Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids
SMRP	School Meals Review Panel
TNS	Taylor Nelson Sofres
QSR	Quality Solutions and Research
RDA	Regional Development Agencies
RSA	Royal Society of Arts
SA	Soil Association
SFT	School Food Trust
SMRP	School Meals Review Panel
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
URCAM	Union Régionale des Caisses d'Assurance Maladie (Regional Union of Sickness Insurance Agencies)
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organisation (of the United Nations)
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Chapter 1 : Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The impetus for this research was the policy debate surrounding the alleged decline in cooking skills within contemporary society. Such debates were further fuelled by the abolition of cooking skills from the National Curriculum in 1994 followed by increased discussion among food campaigners, policy makers, journalists and academics[1] about whether cooking skills were still necessary for those entering the twenty first century and if so, how children would acquire such skills. Veteran food campaigner Prue Leith (2001) considered that most parents nowadays cannot cook and as such few skills would be passed down to their children and furthermore, future generations will no longer have the opportunity of learning how to cook at school. Mintel (2002: 6) noted how the British public increasingly rely on convenience foods and some academics suggested that the public's diminishing cooking skills further facilitated them being moulded in to *'passive consumers'* of 'ready to eat meals' by powerful multi-national food companies eager to capitalise on people's inability to *'cook from scratch'* (Lang *et al.* 1993).

The initial focus of this research was to examine *'The Culinary Skills Transition Thesis'* proposed by Lang *et al.* (2001) which is derived from British and European research and which argued that cooking skills were undergoing an immensely significant change which they referred to as a '*culinary transition'*. By this they meant "*the process in which whole cultures experience fundamental shifts in the pattern and kind of skills required to get food onto tables and down throats"* (p. 4)*.* They considered that cooking skills were an important influence on domestic cooking practices and in turn how any diminution of such skills could have a negative impact on diet. With increasing levels of obesity and diet related non-communicable diseases in Britain (and many other parts of the developed world) such issues remain high on the policy agenda. While no causal link has been established between the ability to cook and obesity it has been suggested that food choices are more limited if people lack the ability to prepare foods (Fieldhouse 1995) and that where people have become de-skilled they become more reliant on ready-meals which are frequently high in fat, sugar and salt (Stitt *et al*. 1996). Lang *et al.* concluded that such a transition in culinary skills demanded State and professional

[1] For example, in the 1990s, various campaigns such as Get Cooking!, Focus on Food and subsequently their partnership with the Food Standards Agency to launch the 'Cooking Bus', have all been aimed at encouraging people to cook.

support for cooking skills if citizens were first to understand what constitutes a healthy diet; second, be empowered to exercise control over their diet and finally to connect with the *"social norms of a society in which food is central both for existence and identity"* (p. 4).

Paradoxically, at the same time it would appear that interest in food and cooking has greatly increased, spilling out into the popular media with entire newspaper supplements given over to the subject as well as the nightly TV scheduling of celebrity chef and cookery shows. Delia Smith alone has sold 20 million books worldwide (Stratton 2009) and "*been immortalised in the Collins English Dictionary"* (Mintel 2002: 6). Furthermore, a total of 18 million cookbooks worth £265 million were sold in the UK in 2002 (*ibid*). Such interest and apparent desire to learn in relation to food and cooking presents an interesting contradiction during a time when the debate on the demise of home-cooking rumbles on (Rappoport 2003). Many academics are also critical of any conclusion that there is demise in home cooking and question the blunt distinction between *'cooking from scratch'* and the use of convenience type foods. For example, Francis Short's critical review of the *'Transition thesis'* suggested that rather than a transition people still demonstrate a range of cooking skills albeit different ones than in the past and such debate gave further impetus to research this academic and policy area (see Short 2002, 2003, 2006). As such the intention of this thesis was to ascertain whether there has been gradual change, decline, a transition or indeed a revival in the use of cooking skills as well as the significance of any such changes, notably to health, everyday life and policy formation.

1.2 The development of focus

It became apparent that analyses and debate about cooking skills alone would fail to acknowledge the complexities of how domestic food habits, practices and behaviour are deeply embedded in culture[2]. Such a relationship suggests the need not to avoid an emphasis on an *'over-individualised understanding of food behaviour'* (Lang *et al.* 2009: 228). Furthermore, Lang *et al.* (1999:34-35) consider that important though cooking skills are, the *"cultural attitudes of the public"* have a significant impact on the application of cooking skills and food choices. Caraher *et al.* (1999), concur that it is

2 'Culture' refers to the way people live their everyday lives, all which is learned, shared and transmitted across generations of social groups, including attitudes, beliefs and customs.

necessary to locate domestic food practices within a wider social and cultural context. It has been suggested that any food policy which wishes to influence food choice aimed at improving public health needs to understand and engage with a range of academic disciplines which explore both the macro and micro factors within the complex food system (Lang *et al.* 2009).

From an initial review of literature it appeared that terms such as *'food culture', 'foodways'* and *'culinary cultures'* had been adopted in an attempt to fully encompass how cooking practices are rooted in people's cultural and social habits and also that research into such dynamics could usefully inform policy development (Douglas 1984; Cabinet Office Report 2008; Lang *et al.* 2009). However, achieving robust and distinctive definitions as a basis for adopting any such terms is problematic[3]. Sociologists of food such as Murcott (2008) cautioned about using the term 'foodways', a term more often used by social anthropologists and which tends to emphasise folkways in relation to the production, procuring, processing, preparing and the ultimate serving and eating of food (Santich 2008). Santich and Albala (2008), Australian and American food scholars respectively, considered that the term 'food culture' goes beyond foodways in that it also includes ideas and values, customs and traditions (see also Ray 2008). Meanwhile, those working more exclusively within the domain of food policy such as Lang *et al.* (2009: 228) acknowledge 'food culture' to be a useful concept and define it as *"the shared assumptions, meanings, social interactions, practices, mores that are exhibited in daily food behaviour".*

'Food culture' appeared a more appropriate focus than the term 'foodways' because of its inclusivity of values, ideas and behaviour in relation to domestic food practices, as well as the broader environment in which these have and continue to be formed. However it did not seem to adequately acknowledge the influences on attitudes to cooking, food shopping and eating habits which appeared essential to this research. Of significance was how Short (2006) and Lang *et al.* (2009) describe 'culinary culture' as the knowledge and experience of how to plan and create a meal. Mennell *et al.* (1994: 20) consider it to be *"a shorthand term for the ensemble of attitudes and taste people*

[3] See the debate in November 2008 on the 'ListServe' of the 'Association for the Study of Food and Society' (ASFS) when professors from Britain, the USA and Australia including Anne Murcott, Ken Albala, Krishnendu Ray and Barbara Santich argued about the meaning of such terms.

bring to cooking and eating" and furthermore that the study of culinary cultures *"appear to be an emerging trend, and an area in which much research still needs to be done" (p.27)*. Santich (2008) agrees that the concept, while narrower in meaning than food culture, not only focuses on cooking but also embodies eating in a broader sense and as such incorporates the development and increasing substitution of eating outside the home for foods previously consumed inside the home. As a result it was decided that the study of culinary cultures would promote deeper understanding in relation to cooking and eating within contemporary society and as such, provide a framework with which to analyse how domestic food practices may be transforming and how such knowledge could be used to inform policy development.

1.3 The adoption of an interdisciplinary approach

The subject of food and cooking has been attracting increased scholarly attention. West (2008: 510) confirms that *"recent years have seen growing interest in the study of food, whether in the humanities, the social sciences, or the natural sciences".* This has been accompanied by the formation of a number of assorted associations, institutes and research centres[4]. It was also apparent that research into food and cooking tends to be situated outside the core of academic hierarchies and is perhaps why Germov and Williams (1999: xvii) suggest that "*its study is the province of diverse academic disciplines"* and as such requires an interdisciplinary approach (see also Johnston 2008). Counihan and Van Esterik (1997: 1) agree that *"food crosses so many conceptual boundaries, it must be interpreted from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives"*. As such, for this research on cooking skills and their significance to food policy it appeared crucial to move beyond disciplinary straight-jackets and engage with competing perspectives in order to develop a more holistic and *"systematic framework for thinking"* about the subject (Murcott 1995; 232, see also Johnston 2008; Lang *et al.* 2009).

[4] For example, *'The Association for the Study of Food and Culture'* in the USA, the establishment in 2002 of the *'Insitut Europeen d'Histoire et des Cultures de l'Alimentation'*, the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies *Food Studies Centre* in 2007, not to mention Britain's first centre for Food Policy at City University in 2002.

An interdisciplinary approach appeared essential for a study such as this if it were to fully explore issues of change and the significance of any changes, along with the drivers and barriers and ultimately, the policy implications. It has been suggested that such an approach must be *"to guide us toward a different academic and culinary menu, rather than the meat and potatoes of isolated disciplines and mono-cropping"* (Johnston 2008: 274). Consequently, this research has had to draw on a range of literature within the social sciences and assess the contribution the different disciplines make in relation to the alleged decline in cooking skills within contemporary society.

1.4 Diverse drivers of change and continuity in relation to culinary cultures

Many macro-historians have made a significant contribution to the field of study and have tended to prioritise how a range of different social, economic as well as cultural factors are influencing change in relation to domestic food practices including the alleged decline in cooking. For example, they tend to privilege how lifestyles have changed and as a result how this has influenced attitudes and behaviour in relation to food. They express the view that culinary cultures have always evolved alongside broader cultural changes and stress how such developments are linked to key social determinants and powerful economic structures in which food is both produced and consumed (see Murcott 1982a; Mennell 1996; Warde 1997; Nestle Family Monitor 2001; Mintel 2003; Cabinet Office Report 2008). Availability and access to different foodstuffs is clearly important however behaviour in relation to food, including the ability to cook and the choice of whether to exercise such skills is also influenced by social interactions which are in turn shaped by factors beyond a person's domestic situation such as state policies, nutritional, educational and other institutional regimes, the mass media, geography, history and the food industry itself (see Murcott 1982a; Fieldhouse 1996; Warde 1997; Lang *et al.* 2009).

At the micro level, it has been suggested that people have elected not to cook for a variety of reasons and Keynote (2007) highlight changing working and family structures and in particular the rising number of working women, the increase in single-person households, greater exposure to foreign cuisines, a lack of cookery instruction in schools and competing demands on leisure time. Such factors, combined with the alleged decline in culinary skills may mean that people are less willing to spend time

and effort in the kitchen. Evidence suggests that consumers now expect a plentiful supply of 'cheap' food provided by an intensive global agri-food industry and increasingly rely on highly-processed convenience foods as a solution to hectic modern lifestyles and that the food industry has simply responded to such demand.
While it may be that culinary cultures, including cooking practices are constantly evolving and developing, other academics and in particular the structural anthropologists[5] consider that given the extent of change in both production and consumption of food as well as the relationship people have with it, in many ways, the role and meaning of food in everyday life remains much the same. Indeed, as Warde (1997: 22) notes, *"different cultures preserve a sense of identity through their food practices"* and such deep seated continuities contrast with the above stated changes in domestic food practices. Fischler (1990) also questions whether a few decades of an abundant food supply will be able to change meaningful food habits that have been forged over hundreds of years. The extent to which domestic food practices are governed by fixed socio-cultural rules and therefore slow to change on the one hand compared to the extent to which they may be more quickly, deeply and universally influenced by broader changes within the socio-cultural context on the other, and as such might be in a period of transition, was the core focus of this research. As such, theoretical frameworks such as those proposed by the macro-historians or developmentalists and those proposed by the structural anthropologists would require further investigation so as to be able to systematically question the significance of any such changes to culinary cultures.

1.5 A global phenomenon?

Whilst evidence suggests cooking skills and culinary cultures in Britain may be in a period of transition, questions have begun to arise as to whether powerful structural factors within the food system were increasingly operating at a global level and having a more universal impact on domestic food practices and diet around the world. It appears that since the Second World War there has been accelerated and significant change to the food supply chain and this is said to have dramatically impacted on the relationship and engagement which the individual has to food, its purchase, preparation and consumption (Mennel 1996; Lang *et al.* 2001; Pollan 2007). Furthermore, evidence

[5] Including Claude Levi-Strauss, Mary Douglas, Rolande Barthes and to some extent Pierre Bourdieu

suggests that the pace of globalisation has greatly increased since the 1970s and that the spread of large multi-national companies allied to the initial political-economic process is now associated with a further wave of cultural transformation, namely a process of cultural globalisation[6] (Wallerstein 1979; Giddens 1990; Robins 1991; Hall *et al.* 1992; Waters 1995; Needle 2004). Hall *et al.* suggest that social life is increasingly mediated by global marketing which they consider has contributed to a *'*cultural supermarket' effect and that

> *"within the discourse of global consumerism, differences and cultural distinctions which hitherto defined identity become reducible to a sort of lingua franca or global currency into which all specific traditions and distinct identities can be translated. This phenomenon is known as cultural homogenisation"* (p. 303)

Robins proposes that cultural products are now assembled from all over the world and turned into commodities for a new 'cosmopolitan market place' so that *"everywhere there is Chinese food, pitta bread, country and western music, pizza and jazz"* with each being absorbed into a world market of cosmopolitan specialities (Levitt 1983: 30-31).

The McDonaldization of Society thesis (Ritzer 2000) analysed the global spread of 'fast food' and 'convenience food cultures' and the corresponding decline in the need for cooking skills. The growth in sales of ready meals, the international popularity of American styled fast food restaurants or '*burgerization'*[7] (Millstone *et al.* 2003; 95) and the concomitant trend towards snacking have all been blamed for the growing incidence of obesity and diet related diseases and while countries such as Britain, North America, Mexico and Australia may head the world's obesity league, the incidence of obesity is increasing worldwide with over 1.0 billion adults being overweight and a further 475 million being obese (Keynote 2007; IOTF 2010). Social nutritionists such as Popkin (2001: 871) emphasize how a range of socioeconomic and demographic changes and in particular factors linked to increased income and urbanisation have also had a profound impact on the overall structure of diets in *"most countries in Asia, Latin America, Northern Africa, the Middle East and the urban areas of sub-Saharan Africa".* He refers to this as the 'nutritional transition' which is characterised by the increased

[6] This has also been referred to as 'The McDonaldization of Society' (Ritzer 1993) or even the 'McDonaldization of Culture' (Fischler 1999).

[7] The growth in number of international fast food restaurants such as McDonalds and Burger King - not only in the USA and then Europe but also in the Asian, Pacific, Middle Eastern and African regions (Millstone *et al.* 2003).

consumption of animal food products, fat and refined sugars and a decline in total cereal intake and fibre. He also blames the spread of such high fat 'western diets', along with the declining activity levels, on the growing levels of obesity now found in several such parts of the world. Millstone *et al.* (2003); Schmidhuber *et al.*(2006) and Andrieu *et al.* (2006) agree that many diets around the world are tending to converge and countries as widespread as Canada, Zimbabwe, Australia, Turkey, Denmark, Japan, Greece, Korea, Finland and France, are also debating culinary cultures as well as 'cooking skills' as an issue of concern (see ; Rodrigues *et al.* 1996; Symons, 1998; Lang , *et al.* 1999b; Bonzo *et al.* 2000; Zubaida *et al.* 2001; Short 2002; Baderoon 2002; Foodshare, 2002; Perineau, 2002; Jones *et al.* 2003). Keynote further suggests that while Continental Europeans, notably the French, Italian and Spanish may still value their traditional cuisine, the sales of chilled processed foods are rising and undermining any allegiance to what has been referred to as the Mediterranean diet[8]. Furthermore with increased female employment in such countries and other economic and social changes, eating habits and domestic food practices may also be experiencing some sort of transition.

1.6 Britain and France: A cross-cultural comparative analysis

With evidence suggesting that domestic food practices and diets were increasingly being influenced by powerful structural and cultural changes operating at a global level, it appeared particularly appropriate to compare and contrast any such changes to Britain's culinary cultures with any changes occurring to the culinary cultures of another country. Cross-cultural comparative research can be a useful means with which to gain deeper in-sight into social phenomena and greater awareness of social reality across different socio-cultural settings (Hantrais 1995). In interdisciplinary research such as this, contextualized and cross-national comparisons serve not only to gain a more profound understanding of each country, but can be used to focus on the degree of variability between nations and look for explanations of differences by referring to the wider social context (Maurice *et al.* 1986).

[8] A dietary recommendation that became popular in the 1990s based on a diet perceived to be common in areas bordering the Mediterranean Sea, most notably southern Italy, Crete and Greece. The diet included high levels of consumption of olive oil, legumes, vegetables, fruit and unrefined cereals, moderate consumption of dairy products and fish, low consumption meat products and moderate wine consumption. Saturated fat represented 8% or less of calories consumed and the diet was linked to a reduction in coronary heart disease.

While many countries could have been selected for comparison it was decided at an early stage that it would be more appropriate to select a country which was similarly developed and shared certain other geographical, socio-economic, historical and political similarities. Evidence of similar institutional and industrial structures with which culinary cultures interact was felt to be important in the development of deeper understanding and explanation. The generation of more directly comparable data of people's domestic food practices from across two similar countries as opposed to selecting a country with vastly different traditions, customs and cultural heritage was also considered a priority. Furthermore, as well as the importance of considering the availability of broadly comparable and comprehendible literature and data sets, practical issues such as the distance needed to be travelled to undertake fieldwork also needed to be taken into account by any PhD student.

Bearing in mind such factors, a western European nation appeared particularly pertinent with which to compare the transition in culinary cultures alleged to be occurring in Britain. Many such countries were examined as potential candidates but ultimately France was selected for a variety of reasons. On the personal level, the researcher was familiar with the country and able to speak and understand the language and this would be advantageous in facilitating any comparative study. Furthermore, research has also been undertaken in relation to France's culinary culture and some comparative research has already been initiated between France and other European countries including Britain. There also exists appropriate and accessible market reports and large scale surveys and all together this provides an essential foundation for any such comparative research. In addition, writers such as Mennell *et al.* (1992) have suggested that not only would a comparison of these two countries make for a rewarding area of study but that it is also an area where more research should take place.

Perhaps of greatest significance is that France is Britain's closest foreign neighbour and historically there has been close contact between them, including periods of intense economic and political rivalry as well as periods of mutual cooperation (see Pettinger *et*

al 2006, Rogers 2004). There are obvious similarities between the two societies [9] (see Mennell 1996, Pettinger *et al.* 2006) but also important internal variations and noticeably, many aspects of their culinary cultures appear very dissimilar. Indeed Pettinger *et al.* (2006: 1020) consider there to be important differences in their:

> *"development of distinctive culinary cultures* [and that] *their cuisines are popularly seen as offering striking contrasts, even though they have been in mutual contact and influenced each other for many centuries"* (see also Mennell 1996).

Pettinger *et al.* (2004) ask how it is that two countries could be so close geographically and yet so far apart gastronomically. By this they are not discussing simply ways of cooking and recipes *"but in their underlying attitudes towards the enjoyment of eating and its place in social life"* (p. 307). The apparent absence of a strong, uniquely national British cuisine in contrast to what is regarded as stronger French national and regional cuisines also contributed to the rationale for the selection of France.

At the same time, in the twentieth century and particularly from the 1960s onwards it has been suggested that there is some convergence of food practices and diets in both countries and that the pace of change to culinary cultures has accelerated both in France and Britain (Mennell 1996). However, what is less clear is the nature and significance of such changes along with the similarities and differences in France and Britain's response to such factors. The timing, rhythm and manner in which a range of powerful influences may be operating at a global level and in turn may have been accepted or rejected will provide an important in-sight into this dynamic area of study. In particular, this comparative study of *"distinctive culinary cultures"* will focus on people's sense of reality in relation to their culinary culture and their experience of change in relation to cooking and eating practices. This cross-cultural comparative analysis will provide a lens by which to observe such phenomena and identify how two different cultures and policy environments help shape knowledge, attitudes and application of cooking skills and help identify future direction for food policy which may not have previously been considered.

[9] For example, over hundreds of years they have shared much history and cultural heritage, including such significant social processes as industrialisation, the division of labour, urbanisation, and the development of a closely related history of eating (see Mennell 1996, Pettinger *et al.* 2006)

1.7 The research process

After undertaking an initial review of the literature and identifying the overall terrain of the research as outlined above, it was necessary to formulate the aims and objectives of the research so as to direct the research process. Clearly *'The Culinary Skills Transition Thesis'* (Lang *et al.* 2001) had to be exposed to critical scrutiny and this would entail examining what cooking skills were currently used in the home, how domestic food practices might be changing and also, evaluate the key forces that were responsible for change and continuity both at the macro and micro level. It was also important to analyse whether people possessed the necessary skills to cook, current policy in relation to cooking skills and whether policy could be further developed so as to help empower people to make healthier choices in relation to their diet if they so wished. However, as noted above, it was soon recognised that people's attitudes to cooking were a significant influence on their cooking practices, that such attitudes were deeply rooted in culture and that it was therefore essential to study domestic food practices within a broader socio-cultural context if policy was to be effective.

It was clearly necessary to establish whether any such transition in culinary skills was a peculiarly British phenomenon or indeed whether it was more widely structurally determined and in particular compare how Britain and France compare in any transition in their respective culinary cultures. It was also appropriate to identify and compare how policy frameworks operate in each country to support cooking and healthy diets and then identify both successful practices and potential policy options. As such the overall aim was:

> To compare current domestic food practices in France and Britain, analyse how they might be changing and evaluate the factors responsible for driving any such changes along with the policy implications.

The following objectives were then developed to achieve such an aim:

- explore and account for people's actual practices and experiences in relation to cooking in the home in Britain and France and compare this to what had been done in the past
- categorise both at the macro and micro level, the key forces driving both change and continuity in relation to domestic food practices and assess their influence and limitations.
- compare the changes within and between Britain and France and develop an explanatory framework.
- examine policy support in relation to domestic food practices in both countries and suggest future policy direction

Before developing any research questions or engaging in a review of academic literature, Chapter 2 needed to provide a statistical overview and brief comparison of France and Britain's demography and economic performance so as to facilitate future comparisons. It also provides some useful background information in relation to the similarities and differences in relation to the changing structures of their respective diets and their impact on health. Finally, it was necessary for this chapter to establish the range of formal and informal food and culinary policies that have been published and/or promoted in each country.

It was then essential to fully explore the academic and policy literature which was found to be scattered across the social sciences. Initially chapter 3 sets up the theoretical perspectives which serve to develop a systematic framework with which to study cooking and eating habits. This chapter then draws on the work of functional and structural anthropologists and after establishing a definition for terms such as 'cooking', examines how social variables and 'lifestyle' impact on cooking habits, explores secondary data and theory regarding how people acquire cooking skills as well as the skills now used to transform foods ready for eating in both France and Britain. The notion of a 'proper' or structured meal can then be examined and the extent to which it can be said that 'de-structuration' of meal patterns and eating habits are occurring in either country can be assessed.

It was felt important that chapter 4 focus on the historical development of France and Britain's distinctive culinary cultures. First of all it was imperative to examine the cultural apparatus and culinary discourses that have been circulated to bolster the longevity and symbolic significance of food and cuisine to national identity. The chapter then prioritises the analysis established by the developmental perspective in relation to powerful, often global factors that are considered to be driving change and the further development of culinary cultures in an era of globalisation. All of this provides a valuable insight into the similarities and differences between culinary cultures in France and Britain and a platform from which to compare contemporary attitudes and behaviour to food, diet and health.

Chapter 5 contains details about the methodology and design of the research process. Drawing on the above review of literature and underpinning theories, the chapter first establishes the 'Research Questions' required to further direct the research process. Bearing in mind the exploratory nature of these questions and the need to make sense of individual's everyday experiences in relation to domestic food practices as well as the requirement to ask those within the policy domain what, if anything needs to be done, this chapter argues in favour of a qualitative methodology. Having also chosen to adopt a comparative approach it was felt that for the initial stage of the fieldwork it was essential to ask the public in France and Britain about their actual domestic food practices, experiences and attitudes and the extent to which they felt these were being influenced by the changing world as they see it and how in turn this influences their culinary cultures. As such, for phase 1 of the research, 30 interviews were undertaken with individuals within their homes in two comparable cities, namely Nantes and Cardiff. After some preliminary analysis of the data it was then decided to take the emerging narrative back out into the field and interview those in a position to have expert knowledge of the policy area to comment on the initial findings. They were also invited to discuss what they considered to be the policy priorities at a local and national level and give their responses to the overall research questions. This second phase of the research involved almost 20 respondents drawn from throughout France and Britain. Chapter 5 contains further details of the research respondents, how they were selected along with an examination of data analysis methods. Issues relating to the reliability and validity of the research are evaluated and finally, ethical considerations are discussed and used to develop an operational code of practice.

Chapters 6 and 7 present the findings of the fieldwork. Chapter 6 presents the findings from Phase 1 of the primary research, namely the data from the interviews with the public in France and Britain about their actual domestic food practices and this is arranged around five key themes which emerged as a result of deep engagement with the data. Each theme is further subdivided in an attempt to better organise the data and best capture the wide ranging narrative which was provided by the respondents. Similarly, chapter 7 then presents the findings from Phase 2 of the research. Data from respondents in both countries with expert knowledge of cooking and related policy issues is organised around four broad themes and as above, is further sub-divided in order to best demonstrate the diversity of views that were discussed by the respondents.

Chapters 8 and 9 then discuss and compare the primary data from both phases of the research and include further reference to secondary sources. Chapter 8 focuses on the perceived changes and continuities to culinary cultures in France and Britain and analyses the significance of the factors that appear to be driving change in relation to domestic food practices. Ultimately it compares the rhythm, manner and degree to which such factors are accepted, resisted or rejected in each country. It concludes via an evaluation of cultural frameworks developed to describe the fundamental differences that exist between British and French culinary cultures. Chapter 9 is concerned with the policy debate in France and Britain and in particular examines and compares the data in relation to the position each country takes with regard to the promotion of cooking skills as well as broader policy initiatives in relation to diet, health and rising levels of obesity.

Finally, chapter 10 develops the overall conclusion to the thesis. It addresses the research questions in relation to the alleged decline in cooking skills within contemporary society, the factors influencing change and continuity in relation to domestic food practices and ultimately whether there have been transitions with regard to culinary skills and culinary cultures more generally. It goes on to present an explanatory framework before addressing policy priorities in relation the effective promotion of cooking skills within a broader food policy environment. A final evaluation of the research is then presented.

Chapter 2 : Comparison of France and Britain and their food policy frameworks

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to explore policy in relation to diet and health in France and Britain and in particular how culinary policies may have been developed to promote understanding of food and the acquisition of cooking skills. Before a comparison of relevant policies can be made it is first necessary to establish a broader comparison of the two countries demography and economies.

2.1.1 Demographic Overview of France and the UK

According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2008) the population sizes of metropolitan France[10] and the UK are the second and third highest respectively within Europe at just over 61 million although given that the UK is less than half the size of metropolitan France, gives Britain a significantly higher population density. Furthermore, whilst urbanisation in the UK is recorded at 90%, France has a lower rate at 77%, although now increasing more rapidly. Age structures of both countries appear remarkably similar and both demonstrate an ageing population.

Interestingly, total fertility rate in France is the highest of all EU nations after Ireland and most population growth is due to natural increase, unlike in the other European countries, including Britain that appear to be more as a result of immigration[11]. Whilst difficult to precisely compare immigration statistics the CIA (2008) puts the net migration rate per 1,000 inhabitants at 1.48 in France compared to a much higher 2.16 in the UK.

The principle ethnic minorities in France are of 'North African' and 'Indo-China' origin and in Britain are recorded as 'Black', 'Indian' and 'Pakistani'. France is recorded as being principally 'Catholic' with only 2% of the population recorded as 'protestant' while the UK is considered to be principally 'Christian'. Significantly, there are almost twice as many Muslims in France (5% of population) as in Britain (CIA 2008).

[10] France métropolitaine or colloquially l'Hexagone, is the part of France located in Europe, including Corsica but excluding Overseas French Departments.

[11] According to the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2009), between July 2001 and July 2004 the population of the UK increased by 721,500 inhabitants, of which 66% was due to immigration while according to the Institut national de la statistique et des etudes économiques (INSEE) (2008), in the three years, between January 2001 and January 2004 the population of metropolitan France increased by 1,057,000 inhabitants, of which 36% was due to immigration.,

2.1.2 Economic Overview of France and the UK

The 2008/09 global financial crisis has had a significant impact on most economies however it is worthwhile to gain a 'snapshot' of the underlying similarities and differences of France and the UK's economy prior to the crisis. According to the CIA (2008) while the French economy has featured more extensive government ownership and state intervention than the UK, over the last two decades, both countries have reduced public ownership and relied more on market mechanisms, albeit with greater resistance and at a slower pace in France. France's commitment to maintaining social equity and social spending can be seen as partly successful in that the numbers living *'in poverty'* along with measures of inequality of income and wealth distribution suggest that France is a more equal society than the UK (see appendix A). While the UK has a larger workforce and considerably less unemployment than France, the GDP and GDP per capita of each country is similar, although slightly higher in the UK and has been growing faster.

Both countries during the past 40- 50 years have witnessed a transition to service based economies and as can be seen from the appendix A, the sector now contributes over 75% to their gross domestic product and employs over 75% of the workforce in both countries. The average weekly hours worked is comparable in France and Britain (Fitzpatrick *et al.* 2010). Significantly, France's agricultural land area is just over two times larger than that of the UK (Fitzpatrick *et al.*) and combined with its greater rural population, has continued to employ almost three times as many persons in the agricultural sector (4.1%) and yet is only a little over twice as economically productive. However France, perhaps partly due to its farmed landscape, remains an attractive and the most visited country in the world and is the world's third largest recipient of income from world tourism (CIA 2008). While both countries are part of the European Union (EU) and can be seen to trade widely with other EU member states, the UK has maintained the USA as its most significant trading partner and many argue maintained a closer economic, political and military relationship with America generally along with stronger cultural ties.

2.1.3 The changing structure of diets in France and the UK

. Since 1945, and particularly since the end of the 1960s, there has been unprecedented change in relation to food supply in many countries and this has been accompanied by an increase in obesity levels and other diet related diseases.

	France	UK
Average calories available per person per day (2001 – 2003)	3,640	3,440
Total energy consumption from saturated fat (1998)	15.5%	13.5%
Consumption of meat per capita (2002)	101.1 kilos	79.6 kilos
Total percentage of energy derived from animal products sugars and sweeteners (2003)	48%	42%

Table 2-1 Comparison of key dietary statistics of France and UK

(adapted from Drewnowski *et al.* 1996; Rozin *et al.* 2003; Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006; Millstone *et al.* 2008)

Overall energy availability in both France and the UK continued to rise between 1961 and 2001 and as shown in Table 2.1, between 2001 & 2003 more calories were available in France compared to the UK (Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006; Millstone *et al.* 2008). Furthermore, the French eat what most people would consider a highly palatable diet, containing more total fat and saturated fat than the American diet (Drewnowski *et al.* 1996, Rozin *et al.* 2003) and more saturated fat than the UK diet (Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006)[12]. For example, consumption of meat in France was about 25% more per capita in 2002 than the UK (Millstone *et al.* 2008) and by 2001 total energy from both polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) and from 'free sugars' in the UK was almost double that of France although by 2001 had much reduced, while that of France had increased to a level only marginally below that of the UK. Overall it can be seen that the total percentage of energy derived from *'animal products, sugars and sweeteners'* in 2003 was higher in France than the UK (Millstone *et al.* 2008: 115), and such a 'nutrition transition' is likely to have a significant impact on health and diet related diseases in both countries (Drewnoski & Popkin 1997, Millstone *et al.* 2008).

[12] Energy from saturated fats has continued to rise between 1961 and 2001 in France while in the UK, admittedly from a much higher starting point, has declined (Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006). The 15.5% of total energy consumption derived from saturated fat in France in 1998 represented the highest of any of the then 15 EU nations, whereas the UK represented the mid-point among the same nations (Lloyd-Williams *et al.* 2008).

Overall the nutritional content of EU diets have become more homogenous over the last fifty years with Mediterranean countries reflecting increased consumption of saturated fats, cholesterol and sugar, as indeed France has, and many Northern European countries significantly reducing their consumption of saturated fats and sugar, as has been the situation in the UK (Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006).

2.1.4 Rising levels of obesity and the French paradox

Given the above statistics and with the more affluent EU consumers able to spend more money on meat, alcohol and convenience foods, rising obesity[13] levels are increasingly a cause for concern in countries such as France and Britain (Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006) although it is perhaps surprising that the prevalence of obesity among adults of both genders and also children is currently lower in France than Britain (WHO 2007; IOTF 2008).

	France	**England**	**England 2009**
Male obesity (2006)	16.1%	24.9%	22.1%
Female obesity (2006)	17.6%	25.2%	23.9%
Males overweight (2006)	41%	44.7%	43%
Female overweight (2006)	23.8%	32.9%	32.8%
Boys (5-17) obese	2.7% (06/07)	5.7% (07)	n/a
Girls (5-17) obese	2.9% (06/07)	7% (07)	n/a
Boys (5-17) overweight	10.4%(06/07)	17%(07)	n/a
Girls (5-17) overweight	12%(06/07)	19.6%(07)	n/a
	France	**UK**	
Average BMI (2006)	24.5	25.4	n/a
Life expectancy at birth (years) both sexes (2006)	81	79	n/a
Death rates from being over-nourished per 100,000 people (e.g. from coronary heart disease -CHD)	76	204	n/a

Table 2-2 Comparison of obesity, BMI, life expectancy & death rates – France & Britain/UK

(Adapted from Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006; IOTF 2008; Millstone *et al.* 2008, Health Survey for England, 2007 & 2009, WHO, 2010)

[13] Obesity is defined as a condition in which a person's weight is more than 20% above the ideal range for their height (a BMI of over 30) (Keynote 2007)

From the above data it can be seen that obesity rates for both males and females was considerably higher in England than France and although less marked, the rate of those overweight was also higher in England (BMI of between 25 and 30) with men being more likely than women to be overweight but women more likely to be obese (Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006, IOTF 2008). Furthermore, the average BMI in the UK was 25.4 and thus 'overweight' compared to the average BMI in France which was 24.5 ('officially healthy') and according to statistics reported by the BBC (2006), France has the second lowest BMI among the 20 European nations it surveyed although there is considerable regional and age variation. Interestingly, while the French enjoy a diet containing more meat, total fat, saturated fat and perhaps more calories generally than those in the UK, they remain not only less obese but death rates from being *'over-nourished'* such as from CHD are almost a third of those recorded in Britain (Millstone *et al.* 2008: 115). Indeed France has the lowest rate of mortality from CHD of all industrialised countries other than Japan and such a phenomenon, combined with their high dietary fat intake was referred to as the *'French paradox'* in June 1992 by the British medical journal *The Lancet* (Renaud *et al.* 1992, Appelbaum 1994; Mudry 2010). Further research has indicated that while the French eat more saturated fat than those in the UK, they actually consume slightly smaller portions and thus fewer calories as well as greater variety of foods and this, along with their consumption of red wine, helps provide an explanation of the 'French paradox' (see Drewnowski *et al.* 1996, Rozin *et al.* 1999, 2003, 2006, Fraser 2004 and Fischler *et al.* 2008).

2.2 Food policies in Britain

In Britain, and especially since the Victorian period, there has been a range of welfare reform policy in the area of public health, with a number of initiatives related to diet and nutrition as a means of improving health. Landmark reforms of the twentieth century include those of Lloyd George (1906-14), which included the provision of free school meals to poor children (1906) and most notably the Beveridge Report (1942), leading to the establishment of the welfare state. More recently, the influence of diet to public health has been expressed in a number of initiatives, reports and White Papers[14].

- [14] *The Health of the Nation* White Paper (1992)
- The *National Food Selection Guide* (1994) and successive NACNE and COMA reports

With the dramatic rise in obesity and diet related illness such as diabetes and CHD, there has been increased recognition from a variety of government departments and agencies that future policy needs to address the speeding up of Britain's transition to a healthier diet (Cabinet Office Report, 2008). These include, for example:

- the NHS's 5 A DAY campaign, based on WHO guidelines
- the FSA's campaigns on:
    - reducing salt intake
    - traffic light food labelling
    - controlling food advertising
- National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). Advice to government on what action would improve health and recommended a number of measures to improve the quality of food, educate consumers about what they are eating and curb some of the food industry's excesses.

These and various other national and local initiatives by NGOs, professional groups and charities, aimed at obesity and health, have tended to dominate the agenda (see Aynsley-Green *et al.* 2007).

2.2.1 Culinary policies and cooking initiatives in schools

The British State appears to have rarely focused on protecting Britain's culinary heritage although has at times felt the need for cooking to be taught in schools. During

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- *Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation*- White Paper (1999)
- *Choosing Health*- White Paper (2004)
- *Choosing a Better Diet: a food and health action plan* Department of Health (2005)
- *Healthy Living Award* -The Scottish Consumer Council & Scottish Executive (2006)
- *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives* A Cross Government Strategy for England (2008)
- *Recipe for Success: Towards a Food Strategy for the 21st Century*. Cabinet Office Strategy Unit. *The Foresight Report* (2008)
- *Change4Life – Eat Well, Move More, Live Longer* NHS strategy following on from the Foresight Report (2009)
- *Food 2030* Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2010)
- *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: One Year On.* A Progress Report on the 2008 Strategy (2009)
- *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: Two Years On.* A Progress Report on the 2008 Strategy (2010)

the late nineteenth-century and throughout the first half of the twentieth century there was considerable debate about the poor having access to cooking facilities and suitable foodstuffs, whether they had adequate cooking skills and the subsequent impact on health (Rowntree 1901; Rowntree 1941; Boyd Orr 1943; Spring-Rice 1981; Burnett and Oddy 1994; Short 2002). Victorian philanthropists such as Chadwick, (and later Fabian's women's groups), called for the poor to be taught the basic skills of cookery[15].

The ebb and flow of these discourses of gender, gentility, domestic service and cooking continued and according to Lang and Caraher (2001, see also Mennell 1996), the State became increasingly concerned that not only should the working classes be able to prepare a healthy diet for themselves in order to remain productive but that 'good cookery skills' were essential for domestic servants and then after World War 1, essential for running the familial home (Hardyment 1995)[16]. Official and voluntary action began to introduce cookery into schools[17] largely because of increased knowledge about dietetics and health but also because industrialising societies required both men and women to spend long hours working away from home thus disrupting the informal inter-generational transmission of cookery knowledge (Kouindjy 1926; Mennell 1996).

However cookery classes were finally removed from the National Curriculum in England in 1994 under pressure from industry which wanted greater focus on teaching of skills appropriate for those who might seek employment in the food and catering industries (Caraher *et al.* 2010). A design and technology curriculum was developed which included an option to study food however it has been criticised due to its limited focus on cookery skills. The State remains ambivalent in the promotion of such skills preferring once again to leave it to the voluntary or NGO sector to promote cookery although this sector has vociferously demanded the reintroduction of compulsory practical cookery into the schools (see Stitt *et al.* 1996; Leith, 1997, 1998 and 2001; Purvis, 1999; Royal Society of Arts, 1999; Lang *et al.* 2001; Rhodes, 2002).

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[15] Alexis Soyer's *'General Ignorance of the poor in cooking'* appeared in England in 1854

[16] Similar anxieties about domestic and family life were also common in America and for example The Ladies Home Journal implored *'young girls'* not to take up paid factory work but to attend cookery school and *"choose some business that is in line of a woman's natural work"* namely as a servant and cook (Orne Jewiett 1889).

17 Classes were introduced in to schools in Sweden in 1865, Germany in 1870 and the USA and France in 1882 (Kouindjy, 1926).

Given the concern about rising levels of obesity and the crucial role food plays in children's health (see also Cabinet Office, 2008, Crawley 2010), evidence has been presented that the appropriate delivery of cooking classes and food skills among children could play an important part in reducing diet related diseases (Acheson, 1998; Bostock, 1993; Demas, 1995; DoH, 1995 & 1996; Kennedy and Ling, 1997; Caraher *et al.* 1995; Dobson *et al.* 2000; *Lang et al.* 2001; Stead *et al.* 2004; School Meals Review Panel, 2005; Aynsley-Green *et al.* 2007). In the 1990s initiatives to promote cooking were developed and operated by a mix of charities, NGOs and the food industry and continue to flourish[18]. While the Department of Health promoted 'Cooking for Kids', the Food Standards Agency has developed a community cooking campaign aimed primarily at disadvantaged and vulnerable children, delivered at schools and holiday clubs entitled 'Focus on Food' (1998) in partnership with sponsors such as Waitrose (The Food Standards Agency 2004). More recently, Sainsburys' and the British Nutrition Foundation have launched 'Active Kids Get Cooking' (Mintel 2003, Crawley 2010) and the Academy of Culinary Arts (ACA) runs the Adopt-A-School programme. This is based on the scheme run by the *The Academie Culinaire de France* whereby professional chef members visit mainly primary schools and teach children about taste, food provenance, nutrition and cooking skills. Around, 21,000 children take part in the initiative per year (Academy of Culinary Arts, 2008; Caraher *et al.* 2010). The ACA is also partly responsible for the 15 week Junior Chef's Academy courses which attracts commercial sponsorship and aims to encourage 14-16 year olds in to a career in catering via teaching them about cooking at colleges usually on a Saturday morning. It currently reaches approximately 2,000 youngsters per annum.

Under mounting pressure, the previous government established *The School Food Trust* (SFT) and with £20 million lottery funding established *'Let's Get Cooking',* a national network of optional, after school cooking clubs for children, their families and the wider community (Crawley 2010). Four thousand schools are in the network and according to Edwards (2010), 500,000 people have so far had the opportunity to develop their cooking skills with 90% of club members going on to cook at home and share their skills with at least one other person. *License to cook* has also temporarily been established for those 11 -16 year olds who do not currently have access to practical cooking

[18] These included the National Food Alliance's 'Get Cooking' (1993) (see Clarkson and Garnett 1995) and the Royal Society of Arts' Focus on Food' (1997 & 1998).

lessons and want them (Carter 2010). Other initiatives include that of the Soil Association, who, along with three other food focused charities formed the *'Food For Life Partnership'*, which is funded from 2007-11 via a £16.9 million Big Lottery grant and currently works with 2,500 schools not only to promote healthier and more sustainable school meals but also practical food education like growing food, cooking and visiting farms (Bruntse-Dahl 2010). The previous Labour government finally agreed to the re-introduction of cooking as a compulsory part of the curriculum for all 11–14-year-olds by 2011 and the aim was for *Let's get cooking* and *Licence to cook* to feed into a Cooking in Schools Programme Board which was established by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to oversee the transition to compulsory cooking in schools (Caraher *et al.*). However, the new coalition government has since halted the school buildings programme, promoted the development of 'Free Schools' and 'Academies' and there is doubt whether there is now the political will or the necessary investment to enable the reintroduction of compulsory food skills (Crawley).

As discussed, many academics, food and health campaigners and journalists have called for the re-introduction of food and cooking skills in the belief that they could play an important part in reducing diet related diseases (see also Jones *et al.* 2010). However while food is important to health, and cooking is an important life skill, evidence that cooking skills actually improves a child's health and nutrition and/or whether such skills are passed on and used in the family are questioned and as such the acceptance of policy is vulnerable (Crawley 2010, Wills 2010). Indeed, whilst State support for better nutrition among children has at times aimed to increase food skills, it has also tended to focus on changing the environment around children such as restricting the advertising of less healthy food options and making healthier food choices easier. However, the effectiveness of such restrictions have also been questioned (Buckingham 2010) and furthermore, the take up of the current nutritionally regulated school meals is low and may decrease further if the school meal grant is reduced as expected (Jones *et al.*)[19]. However, Jones *et al.* are more optimistic that programmes such as 'Food for Life' do provide a more integrated approach to food education. They discuss how evidence suggests that such 'multi-component' programmes operating across the school are working well and how further opportunities exist for stakeholders to play a positive role in creating change within schools. They

[19] School meal take up averages 43% in primary schools and 37% in secondary schools (Jones *et al.* 2010)

argue that an integrated and 'bottom-up' approach is more likely to be successful than any single intervention driven by 'experts'. Buckingham (2010) goes further and suggests that it is necessary to look at children's and families' food practices within a broader context and explore the cultural meaning attached to food. Brutse-Dahl (2010: 21) adds:

> *"To mend the UK's broken food culture, we need to change the way we view food and consequently the way we eat. This kind of change requires knowledge of food and farming systems as well as skills to grow and cook our own foods."*

Whilst there are undoubtedly many success stories, many such initiatives do not reach all children. As such many children who could most benefit from the charitable initiatives do not participate and any attempt to create a whole school approach is further frustrated. What emerges is a fairly ad hoc, reactive, short term and fragmented approach to the area of cooking skills and food education more generally within public policy.

2.2.2 Policies in relation to food in schools

Largely as a result of The Education Act (1980) which removed the obligation on LEAs to provide a balanced main meal of the day to school children and the subsequent Local Government Act (1988) which introduced Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) within the sector there has been wider debate not only about cooking skills but the standard of school meals offered to children and a realisation of the need not only to improve the quality of school meals but to develop a more holistic approach to food within schools more generally (Keynote 2007). As a result of such debate, along with the publication of a critical report by the Caroline Walker Trust (1992), a series of interventions and papers appeared[20]:

[20] The National Healthy Schools Standard – DoH & DfES (1999)

- *The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme* - NHS (2000)
- *The Food in Schools Programme* - DoH and DfES (2001)
- Minimum food and nutrition competencies for Children aged 14-16 – FSA (2004)
- *The Healthy Living Blueprint for Schools* - DfES, DoH, FSA and DEFRA (2004)

Finally, in 2005 the DfES announced the School Meals Review Panel (SMRP) due to continued concerns about children's diets and rates of obesity and diet-related diseases. Chaired by Suzi Leather, the *Turning the Tables: Transforming School Food* (SMRP 2005*)* report emerged after a successful media campaign and national debate[21]. The government then announced the establishment of *The School Food Trust* (SFT) in 2006*,* an independent agency reporting to government and charged with promoting the health of children & young people by improving the quality of food consumed in schools. Food and nutritional standards have now been enforced, food on school premises controlled and a £240 million school meal grant made available to help address the resultant rising food costs and to provide training for school kitchen staff Jones *et al.* (2010). As discussed above, the 'Food for Life Partnership' has also made a positive contribution to embedding a 'whole school approach' to food in more than 2,500 schools. However, after the initial unpopularity of the new school meals, evidence suggested that the number of school meals begun to rise but the increased and largely unrestricted availability of cheaper 'fast foods' from outside of the schools, poor dining facilities, lack of skills and leadership in some schools along with some deep seated attitudes to food continues to undermine attempts to develop a positive 'whole school approach' to food.

2.2.3 Community led food skills initiatives and local food projects

There has been considerable growth in local food projects which tend to be funded by statutory agencies and charitable bodies such as the Big Lottery Fund (Dowler and Caraher 2003) as well as those funded via the Department of Health's Change4Life (Crawley 2010). These are inclined to be run in disadvantaged communities and geographically range from the 'Cookwell' intervention in Scotland (2000 – 2002), the Sandwell Food Network in the Midlands to the Get Cooking in Brighton and Hove![22] (Lang *et al.* 2001; Wrieden *et al.* 2002; Stead *et al.* 2004; Wrieden *et al.* 2006; Borrill 2010). Dowler *et al.* (2003: 57) consider that:

> *"local food projects meet some short-and long-term needs, including the development of skills and confidence to buy and prepare food."*

[21] Celebrity chef, Jamie Oliver's 'Feed Me Better' campaign captured the public's attention via his successful TV programme and lobbying to improve school meals.

[22] For example, the Get Cooking in Brighton and Hove is produced by the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership with support from Food Matters and the Health Promotion Team at the Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust.

However they also suggest that such *'quick fix'*, piecemeal solutions fail to adequately address underlying causes of poor diet and that rather than state philanthropy at the local level, what is required is planned state intervention into nutrition if the health of the population is to improve.

An interesting development which is largely local in nature and which has attracted corporate and local council support has been developed by celebrity chef Jamie Oliver. In 2008, following his successful television programme and associated recipe book, he established the 'Ministry of Food' pilot in Rotherham, a walk-in shop offering cookery lessons and food advice to the public. Other centres have since opened and his aim is for a national network of 150 centres to be funded by central government at an estimated cost of £22.5 million (Oliver 2008). As well as establishing a web site of news, recipes and product promotion, he pioneers associated 'Pass it on' events in a variety of commercial and community settings and hopes to establish mobile cooking busses and to further work with supermarkets to promote recipe cards and money off coupons backed by the 'Healthy Start' voucher scheme. The extent of Government support remains uncertain and participants, often in disadvantaged areas, normally have to pay for such classes.

While all such voluntary projects and cookery classes can be useful, they rarely attract the most vulnerable (Aynsley-Green *et al.* 2007). Dowler *et al.* (2003) point out that the development of such local initiatives remain a UK phenomenon but that other European countries *'may be moving along the same route'* (p. 58).

2.2.4 The promotion of regional cookery and local foods

While it appears that the British State has been reluctant to engage in the protection of culinary heritage or regional cuisine, there is evidence to suggest that some people are becoming more interested in food and motivated to buy 'local' and regional specialities as well as some resurgence in cooking and interest in British cuisine (Ashley *et al.* 2004; James 1997; Defra 2008).

As in France, automobile tourism began to develop from the beginning of the twentieth century and was supported by motoring associations such as the AA which started inspecting and listing hotels and restaurants although unlike France, there was less concern about any regional specialities. The *Good Food Guide* appeared in the 1950s although the issue of British cuisine remains sparse and of the top five restaurants in 2009 none served British food (Warde, 2009). VisitBritain (2009), lists no culinary roadmap, however there are links available to seventeen regional 'food links'[23] while other links tend to focus on enabling the wholesaler or individual consumer the possibility of buying produce directly from the supplier. Business groups such as The Country Land and Business Association (2007) promote local British food and voluntary groups such as the Regional Food Group Alliance (2009) communicate the work of eight regional food groups to national agencies, food related businesses and consumers on matters concerning regional food and drink. Pressure groups such as Sustain (2009) are also involved with supporting the local food sector and for example, have worked with the Countryside Agency and the Soil Association (2009). Friends of the Earth (2009) have lobbied Government, Local Authorities and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) over the need for farmers markets and other mechanisms to support local food producers and many other such national and local pressure groups exist. Significantly, from the first farmers market in 1997, there were an estimated 550 by 2008, and turnover from direct selling by farmers, pick-your-own and box schemes, organic foods as well as the sale of vegetable seeds have all increased suggesting that there is a trend in contemporary British food culture for authenticity and the linking of local artisanal food products to origin (Ashley *et al.* 2004; Defra, 2008). Indeed there has been increased applications to Defra under 'Protected Food Names' for the equivalent of '*Appellation d'origine controle'* (AOC) status for food products that meet the criteria laid down in European Council Regulations such as 510/06 in relation to the designation of origin (Protected Designation of Origin - PDO) and geographical indication (Protected Geographical Indication - PGI) for agricultural products and foodstuffs (Defra 2008b)[24].

[23] In the case of the Yorkshire link it lists regional specialities such as Theakston's Beer and Wensleydale cheese with further links to the brewery and creamery respectively.

[24] Examples of applications include the Cornish pasty, Armagh Bramley apples, Jersey butter, Scotch beef, the Cumberland sausage, Arbroath Smokies, Cornish clotted cream and Yorkshire forced rhubarb was the 41st British product to get Protected Designation of Origin status in 2010 (Defra, 2008b; Guardian, 2008; BBC,2010).

It can be seen that regional food products, and to a lesser extent, food tourism, has started to attract some support from various commercial, social and special interest groups however the response of government again appears to be limited and lacking coherence and coordination. Furthermore such offerings of authenticity in relation to food is frequently beyond the reach of many consumers being both costly and difficult to access and it has been suggested reflects *'old social divisions along class and educational lines'* (James, 1997: 81).

2.3 Food policies in France

As in Britain, successive waves of state intervention to improve public health, including initiatives focused on under and malnutrition started towards the end of the nineteenth century[25] however, it was not until the 1970s when attention turned to health promotion. In 1972 the Ministry of Health and the National Health Insurance fund (CNAMTS) set up the French Committee for Health Education (CFES) to deliver a health promotion policy. It works with a network of state institutions as well as the 118 regional and departmental health education committees (CRES and CODES) (INPES 2004). For example, in 1992 the CFES in collaboration with other agencies [26] set up a series of "Health Barometers" or surveys to research French people's attitudes and behaviour in relation to health. Trends in the population's health behavior was then used to help refine the objectives of the national prevention programmes and the 1999 Health survey produced some highly significant results which were issued in 2000.

However, by the end of the 1990s it was recognised that policy in relation to diet and obesity had not been successful and in 1999, the Department of Health in consultation with the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Action initiated research, policy reform and educational campaigns particularly via the *Haute Comite de la Sante Publique* (HCSP - High Committee for Public Health) and the *Institut National de Prevention et d'Education pour la Sante* (INPES - National Institute of Prevention and Health Education) (Téchoueyres 2003). "Towards a public health nutrition policy in France" was then published and its

[25] Under the auspices of The French Ministry of Agriculture, Marceline Michaux's *'La Cuisine de la ferme'* appeared in 1867 also aimed at improving the state of cooking in rural France (Mennell 1996).

[26] National Health Insurance Fund for Salaried Workers, the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity, the Public Health Committee and the Interdepartmental Mission for the Fight against Drugs and Drug Addiction

recommendations were presented to the Secretary of State for Health in June 2000 (HCSP 2000). France then made nutrition one of the priorities of its presidency of the EU and recognising the need to establish a national healthy nutrition plan, the Prime Minister at that time, Lionel Jospin, announced the establishment of the *Programme National Nutrition-Santé (PNSS)* or National Programme for Nutrition and Health in 2001. The programme is co-ordinated by the Secretary of State for Health, in liaison with representatives from government ministries responsible for national education, for agriculture and fisheries, for research, for youth and sports and for consumers. Furthermore, the PNNS brings together expertise from many public and private sectors involved in the fields of intervention[27] and its objectives were to modify food consumption, increase physical activity levels and reduce the prevalence of obesity. To help achieve this, the National Institute of Prevention and Health Education (INPES), a public administrative body, was created by government in 2002 to replace the CFES and now had particular responsibilities for overseeing the National Nutrition and Health Programme (PNNS). The first programme (PNNS1) lasted between 2001 and 2005, and the second (PNNS2) ran from 2006 to 2010 and shared a general objective to improve the health of the whole population through better nutrition and thus aimed to modify both the demand and supply side of the equation (INPES 2004). Similar to Britain, in relation to the demand side they focussed on education and communication strategies to increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables, decrease the consumption of fat, sugar and salt and to promote regular exercise. An evaluation of the first phase was completed in 2007, and while the messages were generally well received, achieving positive change in dietary habits among the lower socio-economic groups has been more difficult and PNNS2 specifically aimed to broaden its reach to such groups. However both phases focused on promoting the cultural, pleasurable and familial/collective aspect of eating and have consistently warned against snacking between meals. Recently a leading hospital in Paris has started teaching patients being treated for obesity how to cook and instead of being put on a diet are encouraged to share and enjoy a three-course meal with others but warned to avoid snacking and TV dinners (BBC 2009).

[27] This includes the High Committee of Public Health, the National Council for Food and the technical departments of the different ministries involved, in conjunction with the Assembly of Regions of France, the French Food Safety Agency, the Institute of Health Monitoring, the National Fund for Health Insurance, the National Federation of French Benefit Societies, scientific experts and of consumer representatives (HCSP 2000).

2.3.1 Culinary policies and cooking initiatives in schools

The French state has often recognised and promoted the significance and enjoyment of food and cooking to people's sense of self and national identity and in recognition of the broader cultural dimension of food, the Ministry for Cultural Affairs was given the responsibility to both foster and protect interest in France's national cultural heritage. In the early 1980s, under President Mitterand, Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy asked Jack Lang, then Minister of Culture, to write a report on the future of gastronomy and soon after *'many great cooks received either the Legion of Honor, the Merite, or the Arts and Letters award'* from a president *'faithful to a certain culinary tradition'* (Pitte 2002: 108). The Ministry's responsibilities in relation to gastronomic and culinary policy were extended in 1985 to include food culture, notably *'cuisine terroir'* and according to Csergo (1997: 185) the aim was to further acquaint French citizens, and also tourists, with *'the varied palette of our tables'.* This was followed by a government initiative which attracted corporate support in the 1990s, which led to the establishment of the *'Semaine du gout'* (Week of Taste). Its key aim was to teach children in school about *'taste'* and '*terroir'* under the supervision of chef members of *L'Academie Culinaire de France*[28]*.* As such*,* 3,500 chefs visit schools each autumn and as discussed above, such an idea has been partially copied by the Academy in Britain (Stitt *et al.* 1996; Abramson, 2007). The state has since commissioned a 22 volume, culinary inventory of French food by region (*Inventaire culinaire du patrimonie de la France*) and has once again produced roadmaps and now road signs covering the entire country pointing out '*Sites remarquables du gout'* (Taste sites of interest) (Abramson, 2007).

2.3.2 Policies in relation to food in schools

Although cookery appeared as a part of 'home economics' for girls up until the mid 1950s, practical classes have never formed a compulsory aspect of the curriculum for all students although aspects of nutrition, diet and food hygiene have been taught as part of the science curriculum. However after the establishment of the CFES in the 1970s and in particular from the 1980s onwards, partly in response to the perceived threat of the 'Americanisation' of eating habits, the government increasingly took action in relation to food education more generally. For example, in 1983 the Minister for

[28] The initiative was developed via Jack Lang's association with Jacques Puisais at the state supported French Institute of Taste based in Tours and established in 1976 and both were enthusiastic advocates of the need to further socialise children in to the ways of their culinary culture (Pitte 2002).

Education stated that lunch breaks must be part of the broader educational project because they promote socialisation, responsibility and conviviality and help develop healthy eating practices and the discovery of new foods (Téchoueyres 2003). However, as noted, by 1999, it was recognised that nutritional policy had not been successfully applied and following research by the HCSP the *Bulletin Officiel* in November 2000 laid down food based guidelines which sought to decrease fat intake, increase the consumption of certain micro-nutrients and provided advice on the structure of meals and portion sizes (Ministere de l'Economie dFedl, 2001). It also emphasised the need for a relaxing environment for lunch breaks and:

> *"outlined activities developed around taste and culinary heritage, including taste vocabulary, recipes, specialities, spices and flavours…and water fountains were to have priority over soft sugary drinks"* (Téchoueyres 2003: 380).

Téchoueyres' research on school meals partly focused on the cultural meaning of food and she quoted an excerpt from the opening speech by President Jacques Chirac at the *Salon de l'Innovation Alimentaire* in 1998 where he said:

> *"France bears a food model based on taste, variety and table pleasures, a model which was forged over the centuries and which is always enriched by a mixture of innovation and tradition. This model belongs to the identity and the culture of our country". (*p385)

Her work found that such a discourse penetrated the foundations of French society and that the Republic's schools needed to present a model that not only promoted the development of health and personality but one that maintained the French culinary tradition and consumption of local (*terroir*) produce. Indeed, she states that:

> *"Foodways are evolving, and many people in France wonder and doubt, fearing foreign invasions of new food habits (at least of what they consider 'foreign'): traditional meals are not what they used to be. Food has always been a special vector for the transmission of cultural values and the reproduction of both life and society. Therefore food educators, particularly towards the young, generate many debates within the Republic's institutions and require action."* (p. 373)

She identified that there were anxieties not only about a fast food culture and *'malbouffe'* (bad food) but also the influence of advertising, the fear of standardisation as well as how social changes are perceived to be eroding cultural roots. Furthermore , concerns about the manner in which agribusiness was able to enter the school

environment and influence food choice and culinary cultures more generally attracted government action. PNNS (2001) stressed that:

> *"education of taste is a means to lead children to consume with pleasure, in secure surroundings, quality and varied foods….to arouse as early as possible the taste for 'eating well' (bien manger)…[and that]…Individual food choice is a free choice; it must be guided by valid, understandable and independent information"* (PNNS 2001)

Similar to the work associated with the SFT in Britain, the Public Health Law of 2004 demanded that all educative material circulated by food industries must conform to the PNNS, that vending machines be removed from schools and whilst a ban on the advertising of food to children on TV was not successful, a Decree of February 2007 stated that any food advert must include either a health message (which must cover at least 7% of the height of the screen) or the advertiser must pay a tax equivalent of 1.5 per cent of the cost of the advertisement.

While such action may have further bolstered French food culture, Téchoueyres (2003) reported on a large survey conducted by the *Institut Aquitain du Gout* (the Institute for Taste in Aquitaine) during the '*semaine du gout*' which in October 2001 concluded:

> *"young French people express a very developed sense of taste and appreciation and display culinary knowledge, particularly of regional products."* (p: 387)

Policy support in France to educating children about food appears less concerned about teaching cooking skills per se and instead adopts a more coherent approach to the cultural, gastronomic and pleasure aspects of food and culinary knowledge. Dr Arnaud Basdevant, head of the nutrition at the large Pitie-Salpetriere hospital in Paris tends to agree that in relation to obesity, not only structured meal times are essential but that it is important to enjoy food, select a range of good quality food and celebrate the culture of food because he considers that when good quality food is enjoyed people tend to eat less (BBC 2009).

2.3.3 Community led food skills initiatives and local food projects

As Dowler *et al.* (2003) point out, the development of community led food skills initiatives and/or local food projects are rare in other European countries although there has been significant development of a community health intervention programme in France and it is increasingly being adopted across Europe. EPODE (Ensemble, prevenons l'obesite des enfants – Together lets prevent obesity in children), while stressing that Government needs to play an important role in defining nutritional norms and developing nutritional, food and physical activity policies, has prioritised a behaviour centred approach which promotes fun and the non-stigmatisation of any food. Initially piloted in ten towns in France, with the support of the EU, four European Universities and commercial partners including Nestle, Mars and Orangina Schweppes, an EPODE European Network (EEN) has now been established for the exchange of information and best practice in relation to the implementation of community based interventions across participating countries in the EU. It shares many similarities to the UK's Department of Health's Change4Life which is also community based and designed to get families to change their lifestyle primarily via getting people to eat and cook more healthily as well as becoming more physically active (Summerbell 2008). Like EPODE/EEN, Change4Life also seeks support from a range of commercial partners (as well as Government departments and NGOs) such as Unilever, Mars, Tesco and Britvic soft drinks and aims to reduce UK rates of obesity (Change4Life 2011; EPODE 2011).

2.3.4 The promotion of regional cookery and local foods

As more fully discussed in Chapter 4, regional cooking, *terroir* and the institutionalisation of culinary heritage has for centuries gained the support not only of various commercial, social and special interest groups but also the state which appears to have intentionally pursued a gastronomic and culinary policy as a means of constructing regional and national identities. Once again, in order to safeguard French identity from the perceived threat of economic and cultural globalisation, the State appears to continue to be attracted to increased *"legislation that sought to institutionalize cultural practice"* (Abramson 2007: 125).

2.4 Conclusion

Both France and Britain are concerned about the health implications of a poor diet, but the French State in particular more expressly states its fear and condemnation of a 'fast food culture'. Furthermore, the French State appears to take a more proactive and central role with Presidents and Prime Ministers enthusiastic to reinforce and promote the role of food and eating as a central part of a shared French identity. Interestingly the French appear less concerned about the teaching of actual cooking skills, an area seen as significant by many NGOs in Britain. Whether a focus on teaching broader culinary knowledge, as in France or a more explicit, if ad hoc, approach to the teaching of cooking skills, as in Britain is the most effective means to encourage the selection, preparation and consumption of a healthier remains to be further evaluated. What is clear is that neither nation has yet been able to address the increase in obesity levels and other diet related non-communicable diseases.

Chapter 3 : Food, cooking & meal patterns in France and Britain: Theory and Practice

3.1 Introduction: Theoretical perspectives on food, cooking and eating

Any discussion on the subject of cooking habits and culinary cultures remains speculative and difficult to develop without a relevant and coherent theoretical base and a systematic and structured framework in which to think about the subject (see Murcott 1995, Short 2002). Theoretical approaches or perspectives located within the sociology of food and eating demand further consideration and for example, Mennel *et al.* (1992; 6 - 7) suggest there was *"first functionalism, then structuralism and more recently, developmental perspectives",* and that *"each of these fashions have been associated with research into different substantive aspects of food and eating"*. However, such perspectives are not neat, self contained academic cul-de-sacs and different writers have developed different approaches and while some fit neatly into one particular tradition, other researchers are less constrained and continue to develop and borrow from more than one approach.

Initially then it is necessary to briefly review the main theoretical perspectives after which it is possible to more deeply consider the evidence in relation to cooking, meal patterns and eating habits and begin to explore the extent of change and continuity in relation to such domestic food practices and culinary cultures in both France and Britain.

3.1.1 Functionalism

Key sociologists and functionalist anthropologists interested in food and eating such as Marx, Durkheim and Weber considered consumption a function of production and that clear class divisions determined norms of consumption. Mennell *et al.* (1992:7) considered that:

> *"...a characteristic of the functional approach was a concern with how foodways expressed or symbolised a pattern of social relations."*

Within many social groups, food provisioning activities require co-operation, with individuals performing certain tasks which demonstrate the maintenance of social structures and in turn expresses the social relations of the group. Furthermore, food allocation within a social group may demonstrate certain social relations which are

regarded as important for the stability of the whole system. For example domestic food practices such as cooking, may serve to reinforce and promote certain gender roles within the traditional nuclear family (Beardsworth *et al.* 1997). Such an approach tends to offer a very static and stable view of human social organisation which might not always adequately reflect reality. However, neo-functionalist approaches have usefully been applied to studies that are concerned, for example, with access to foods, cooking habits and how this influences diets, health and food culture across different social groups. Survey data clearly highlights health and dietary inequalities which is highly relevant to those engaged in food policy and as such remain pertinent to this research (see Spring Rice 1981; Dowler and Rushton 1994; Leather 1996; Bell *et al.* 1997).

3.1.2 Structuralism

Structuralism refers to the tradition[29] which is particularly prominent among many French anthropologists, most notably, Claude Levi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, along with Mary Douglas from Britain. Such academics have studied domestic food practices from a symbolic perspective and according to Mennell (1996:7), Levi-Straus's writing on food which was first published in 1958 has *"transfixed almost everyone working on that subject"* (see Fieldhouse 1986; Murcott 1995; Caplan 1997). Of particular relevance is how Beardsworth *et al.* (1997: 61) describe how structuralists when researching domestic food practices tend to focus on:

> *"...the rules and conventions that govern the ways in which food items are classified, prepared and combined with each other. The assumption is that these surface rules of cuisine are themselves manifestations of deeper underlying structures."*

Levi-Strauss considered that such rules were like a language and that deciphering the symbols and metaphors contained in such rules would enable researchers to understand the rules underlying everyday life. Studies point to how different cultural groups choose to feed themselves in quite different ways and develop "*complex meanings in what and how they eat, meanings that tell them – and us – something about the nature of the social group in question"* (Murcott 1995:222). Levi-Strauss (1963: 84) explains that the:

[29] Lupton (1996) defines a structuralist perspective as being concerned with how the thoughts, values, actions and identities of individuals are broadly structured via social norms and expectations and how these are further linked to the wider organisation and structure of the society in which they operate

> *"...culinary domain …. led towards an understanding of particular cultures and societies because the cuisine of a society is a language into which that society unconsciously translates its structure."*

As such, by examining the culinary cultures in France and Britain will help shed light on how and why they developed, their significance and the extent to which they might endure in the face of powerful drivers of change.

Levi-Strauss also attempted to analyse the constituent parts of a cuisine and distinguished *"certain structures of opposition and correlation"* (Levi-Strauss 1963: 86). Such a study is particularly pertinent as he undertook an analysis of French and English cooking and whilst noting marked differences between the cuisines also identified three binary oppositions which he considered were central to an overall shared framework. The oppositions were: national versus exotic, staple versus its accompaniments and savoury versus bland. Levi-Strauss found that in English cooking, the main dishes of a meal tended to be prepared from native British ingredients and cooked in a fairly bland manner but accompanied with more exotic ingredients whereas in French cooking, the opposition between national versus exotic was much weaker and the constituent parts of a meal, both the staple and the accompaniments, were strongly flavoured and often tended to be combined rather than separated as in English cooking (see Mennell 1996; Ashley *et al.* 2004). Douglas (1997) also pointed to how in England, unlike France, melon is often served with powdered ginger and a slice of orange and of course in Britain, Cheddar cheese is often accompanied with exotic 'Indian-style' chutneys while in France, cheeses are served simply with bread and French wine. Whilst Levi-Strauss's analysis is not without its weaknesses[30] it does provide a useful perspective into both similarities and differences between French and English foods, cooking and what he considers to be their underlying fixed structures. Other important distinctions that structuralists made were between edible and inedible food, along with other binary oppositions such as 'raw' and 'cooked', 'nature' and 'culture'. Their integration into a *'culinary triangle'* is given below when analysing the meaning of cooking.

Barthes also considered that each item of food represents a sign or item of communication and differences in signification and meaning produce a system of

[30] For example, it appears that Levi-Strauss was not always comparing like with like and the combination of exotic ingredients in the main dish in France appears more likely to be a feature of French *'haute cuisine'* while his focus in England was more focussed on middle class home cooking (see Mennell 1996; Ashley *et al.* 2004).

communication that could then be analysed (Mennell 1996; Caplan 1997). Fieldhouse (1986:67) adds that by studying food practices in a society such as *"who prepares it, who eats it, when and where it is eaten tells the observer a lot about the social group under investigation"* and such observation combined with the use of language and the meanings it contains are crucially important when analysing how different social and cultural groups determine rules in relation to food and eating. Such rules underpin the very foods that are considered acceptable to eat and those which are regarded as unacceptable and so play a vital role in the construction and confirmation of individual, cultural, national and even global identities, all of which are recurring themes in this study. Fischler (1988) explains how food is central to individual identity because food crosses the barrier from the outside world into the inside world of the body via ingestion and thus transfers the meanings and symbolic properties of the food into the body of the consumer. The consumption of red meat, and the blood contained within, is understood to symbolise strength and masculinity and Beardsworth *et al.* (1997) explain how foods may represent high status while others are associated with a low social class position. Such a framework of analysis is useful when later examining the construction of national cuisines and the extent of their continuing significance to national identities.

Douglas believed that food preparation methods, as well as food choices and the frequency with which foods are consumed, encode messages about social occasions and social relations. She developed a framework of categories to describe everyday eating patterns ranging from the daily menu to the snack or mouthful (Douglas 1997: 36). Her analysis of meal structures in Britain particularly focused on 'deciphering a meal' and meal sequences and she found similar overarching structures appeared to inform most meals eaten in Britain. Such is the significance of her work generally that it is discussed below in context when analysing change and continuity in relation to meals and eating habits.

Bourdieu (1986) is regarded by Mennell *et al.* (1992) as occupying a position somewhere between the structuralists and the developmentalists. His work is further integrated into this thesis due to the significance of his explanatory frameworks in relation to the consumption of food as an expression of class.

3.1.3 A Feminist perspective and cooking in the home

Cooking as a domestic role within the family appears more likely to be a responsibility borne by women and this has promoted an important feminist analysis, influenced both by functionalism and the structuralist perspective (Oakley 1974 & 1990; Charles and Kerr 1984 & 1988; Brannen, Dodd, Oakley and Storey 1994; Charles 1995; Murcott 1982, 1986, 1995 &1998b; Lobstein 2009). Such an analysis focuses on the symbolic significance of food practices and demonstrates how food behaviour continues to be structured along traditional concepts such as gender and how women are obliged to play a central role in related decision making processes, particularly with regard to the family, and how this often symbolises the oppression felt by women in society (Lupton 1996; Caraher *et al.* 1999).

However such a perspective fails to acknowledge how *"food habits and practices are constantly changing and not necessarily by virtue of conscious resistance or political struggle"* (Lupton 1996:12). For example, with the decline in family formation, a growing number of men are living alone and are therefore required to shop and prepare their own food (see Healey and Baker 1996). There is also evidence that suggests that boys are as interested in cooking as girls although the extent such interest is sustained into married life appears less certain (Charles *et al.*1988; MORI 1993; National Food Alliance 1993; Demas 1995; Murcott 1995). However, with increasing numbers of women in paid employment in France and Britain gender roles might be expected to have evolved with greater male involvement with domestic food practices and the extent of any change remains to be established.

3.1.4 Developmental Perspectives

Many critics of structuralism question the extent that behaviour in relation to food, cooking and meal structures is enduring and slow to change and consider that structuralists fail to acknowledge the links between patterns of food production and the social and historical conditions that have shaped food consumption patterns over time (see Goody 1982; Mintz 1985; Mennel *et al.* 1992; Mennell 1996; Lupton 1996; Beardsworth *et al.* 1997; Parkhurst-Ferguson 2001; Pitte 2002; Jacobs and Scholliers 2003; Abramson 2007). Such macro-historians or developmentalists tend to privilege how, for example, the British diet *"continues to evolve, and developments are closely*

linked to key economic and social determinants" (Mintel 2003). This theoretical perspective prioritises how 'culinary cultures' develop and reflect broader processes of societal change and because this research seeks to identify both at the macro and micro level the factors that may be influencing both change and continuity in relation to domestic food practices, their analytical perspective is crucial.

Mennel (1996) stresses that there is considerable individual variation between households in relation to domestic food practices but diminishing contrasts between each social differentiation, and that while social class was not irrelevant, agreed with others of the declining importance of social class as an indicator of individual behaviour (Bauman 1989; Giddens 1991). Such a post-Fordist analysis highlights a collapse of normative regulation, identifies a trend of informalisation and that choice is increasingly a matter of individual autonomy. For example, Warde (1997) and Fishler (1980) prioritises the importance of distinctive lifestyles and individualised eating habits such as snacking to personal identity as the era of mass consumption declines. As will be discussed, ideas of collective versus individual responsibility are useful when comparing attitudes in France and Britain to diet and health. Furthermore, it has been suggested that declining confidence and growing anxiety around foodstuffs, nutritional advice and in people's abilities to select what to eat is an important influence on the development of food choice models in America, and also Britain but less of an influence in France (see Warde 1997; Fischler *et al.* 2008).

3.2 Cooking in France and Britain

3.2.1 Introduction: What is cooking?

Having examined key theoretical perspectives in relation to food, cooking and eating it is necessary to apply these and develop a deeper understanding of what such terms mean. Clearly, the act of cooking often remains at the heart of the transformation processes applied to many raw foods prior to consumption. However, choice of foods to be eaten, the transformational processes themselves, the social factors influencing cooking habits and how people acquire such skills all require closer investigation so as to be able to compare culinary cultures in France and Britain and assess the policy implications.

3.2.2 The omnivore's dilemma and the classification of food

No single food contains all the nutrients the human omnivore requires and so s/he has both the obligation and the freedom to choose from a huge variety of potential foodstuffs to survive [31](Pollan 2007). Fischler adds that the required selection of foodstuffs can be stressful and dangerous resulting in what he referred to as the 'omnivore's anxiety'.[32] Mennell *et al* (1992: 13) add that such anxiety and uncertainty is:

> *"...a powerful force behind the development of the many diverse systems of culinary rules developed in human cultures, the systems of rules on which structuralists have focused attention".*

Over other animals, humans have the advantage not only of memory but culture and this enables the knowledge and wisdom of previous generations to be passed down from generation to generation, not only in the form of taboos but also via recipes and culinary rules (Pollan (2007).

Theory has suggested that structural anthropologists such as Levi-Strauss (1963) proposed a system of binary opposition between what items are deemed edible and inedible and that this varies between cultures. For example the French are often mocked by the British for their eating of frog's legs which many British experience revulsion at the thought of eating such amphibians thus as a species, humans eat with their minds as much as their mouths (Fieldhouse 1995: Beardsworth *et al.* 1997). Murcott (1995) agrees that before something is eaten it first has to be classified as food and such cultural classification of items into non-food and food is done in a variety of ways. While some items are divided according to certain properties, many have to be transformed before they are regarded as food and cooking is one such means of transforming a non-food item to a food[333435].

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31 The human species, being omnivorous has a large range of items available to them from which they can gain essential nutrients and energy. Such nutritional versatility has been a significant factor in the evolutionary success of the species; enabled it to colonise and settle in a diverse range of geographical habitats and enjoy greater food security (Fischler 1988; Beardsworth and Keill 1997; Pollan 2007).

32 Rozin (1999) and Pollan (2007) refer to it as 'The Omnivore's Dilemma'.

33 An unripe fruit can be transformed from a non-food item to a food item artificially via human action such as when for example unripe fruits are made into a chutney or pickle (Murcott 1995).

34 Other 'natural' processes include putrefaction in cheese making as well as processes of fermentation, drying, smoking, salting, all of which can transform a non-food item into a food

35 A pig in a field is not a food until the raw flesh is transformed in a culturally sanctioned manner into cooked or processed meat and in so doing becomes pork

3.2.3 The cooking animal

The ability to use fire and cook foods is undoubtedly "*one of the distinguishing features of the human species"* (Murcott 1995:220) and has been described as *"the defining characteristic which makes human beings human"* and has usefully served to extend the range of possible foods that can be eaten for sustenance (Fernandez-Armesto 2001; 3). Cooking also makes digestion of food safer, easier, faster and increases both the nutritive value and the amount of energy humans obtain from food and has been key to human evolution (McGhee 1984; Tannerhill 1988; Muir 2003; Foskett *et al.* 2007)[36]. It is also suggested that humans cook for aesthetic reasons as cooking has *"remarkable effects on the flavor and appearance of food"* (McGhee 1984:608) and it is this 'civilising process' that requires further examination.

3.2.4 The Culinary triangle

Murcott (1995), like Levi-Strauss, points to how foodstuffs are from the natural world which represents human's animal side but that when cooked are transformed to the cultural realm of human experience and thus humans are *"cultured in the way animals cannot be"* (*ibid:* 228). Thus cooking serves as a mediating category transforming nature (raw) to culture (cooked) and reminds humans of their non-animal aspects (Ashley *et al.* 2004). Levi-Strauss (1965) formulated such thinking in terms of a 'culinary triangle' which attempts to demonstrate the transitions between nature and culture that food can undergo. Beardsworth *et al.* (1997:61) explain it as follows:

> *"Raw food, at the apex of the triangle, becomes cooked food through a cultural transformation. However, cooked food may be reclaimed by nature through the natural transformation of rotting. Of course, raw (fresh) food can itself be transformed from one natural state into another natural state through the process of rotting."*

Levi-Strauss considered that all food items could be positioned at one of the points of the triangle but could indeed be re-positioned to a different position if exposed to a transformation process[37]. The culinary triangle he developed is shown below.

[36] Wrangham (2009) argues that this enabled the energy formerly spent on digestion being available for further development of the brain

[37] For example, milk can be consumed raw but can also be cooked or indeed, as discussed above, via putrefaction, rotted to make cheese (see Murcott 1995; Ashley *et al.* 2004). However the processes of transformation differs in that

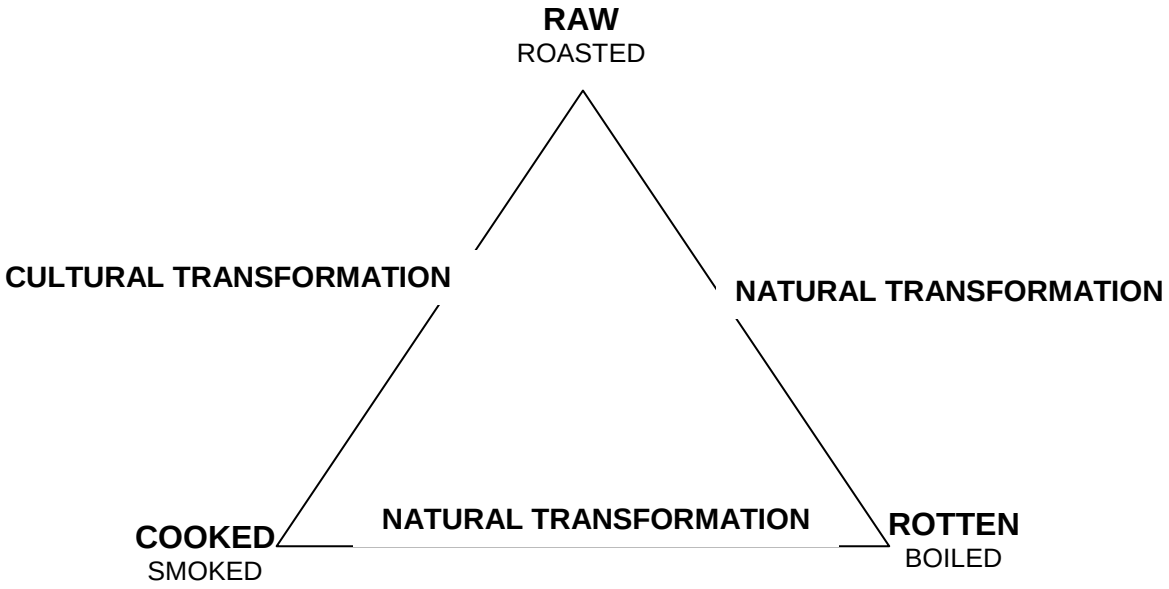

Figure 3.1 The culinary triangle

(Adapted from Levi-Strauss 1966)

3.2.5 Methods of cooking and social distinction

Levi-Strauss also developed distinctions between different methods of cooking and focused on roasting, boiling and smoking. Roasting, for example was considered to be on the side of nature due to the food item being directly exposed to fire thus requiring minimal equipment[38]. The 'Roast beef of Olde England' or the *Roti de boeuf* in France have often been harnessed as edible metaphors and symbols of national identity as they can be understood to confer strength, status and have been associated with the aristocracy, masculinity as well as special occasions (see Fischler 1988; Fiddes 1991; Murcott 1995; Beardsworth *et al.* 1997; Bell *et al.* 1997; Ashley *et al.* 2004). Foods boiled in a pot that only come into indirect contact with the heat source are not placed on the side of nature but rather on the side of culture and in contrast to roasted meats, would be used for everyday dishes. For example, Levi-Strauss (1997) explained boiled chicken (*poule au pot*) was for the family meal whereas roasted meats were for special occasions.

Levi-Strauss considers the cooking of raw milk, say for a dessert, undergoes a cultural transformation while the rotting of milk to make cheese represents a natural transformation.

[38] It was also noted that meat was often also served bloody and structural anthropologists consider the consumption of such roasted meats as having a particular symbolic dimension.

The endurance and symbolic significance of such rules and structures to the continued development of French and British culinary cultures remains important to this research. It may be that such structures continue to have relevance and protect domestic food practices from change or it may be that changes that have occurred in contemporary societies have rendered such rules and structures meaningless.

3.2.6 The transformation and preparation of food for the table

Dictionaries such the Oxford Dictionary of English (2005), Larousse Gastronomique (1988), Wikipedia and sources such as McGee (1984) and Symons (2000) all tend to describe the word 'cook' when used as a transitive verb to involve the preparation, making ready or culinary operation of subjecting food to the action of heat or energy to make it fit for eating. Such transfer of heat or energy they suggest is via the application of a cooking method such as boiling, baking, roasting, etc., which are all based on one or more basic principles of heat transfer (McGhee 1984, Foskett *et al.* 2007). In the broadest sense, Fieldhouse (1986: 63) suggests that the actual method of cooking selected depends on the *'types of food available, the state of material culture and the cultural needs and preferences of the society'*.

So while the application of heat is often at the *"core of cooking",* (Symons 2000: 90), many writers prefer to define cooking as that which cooks do and this more closely corresponds to the definition of the noun 'cook' which is described as someone who prepares food for the table (Symons 2000; Muir 2003; Short 2006). For example, rubbing fat into flour, whipping cream or microwaving food are all activities that a 'cook' may undertake [39] (see McGhee 1984; Fernandez-Armesto 2001; Muir 2003). Cooking is indeed about the transformation of nature (food) via a range of culturally acceptable procedures and Pollan (2007: 9) agrees that *"the alchemies of the kitchen transform the raw stuffs of nature into some of the delights of human culture"* and such a transformation he considers is humankind's *"most profound engagement with the natural world"* (*ibid:* 10). Similarly, Mrs. Beeton, one hundred years before Levi-Strauss, wrote that cookery was indeed an art and key to transforming nature into culture. She continued:

[39] Consider also the trimming of vegetables, preparing a trifle, drying meringues, making mayonnaise, dressing a salad, opening oysters, arranging a dish of 'cold smoked', cured or pickled fish or marinating meats

> *"The object, then, is not only to live, but to live economically, agreeably, tastefully, and well. Accordingly, the art of cookery commences; and although the fruits of the earth, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, and the fish of the sea, are still the only food of mankind, yet these are so prepared, improved and dressed by skill and ingenuity, that they are the means of immeasurably extending the boundaries of human enjoyments."* (1998:39)

Clearly the precise skills and practices associated with the transformation of nature into culture may well have changed in the intervening 150 years although it has also been argued that the underlying rules and structures remain. As such, it is necessary to examine exactly what food practices are currently employed in the home, assess the extent of change and further consider how France and Britain compare in their experience of any transition in culinary cultures.

3.2.7 'Cooking from scratch' and problems of definition

Not only is cooking referred to as a skill, an art and also a science depending on *"who is cooking, in what context and for what purpose"* (Davidson 2006; 212) but further problems of definition arose in the use of terms such as 'cooking skills', 'traditional/home cooking', 'proper cooking', 'cooking from scratch' 'convenience foods', 'ready or pre-prepared foods' and so on. The Health Education Authority (HEA) (1998) and The DoH (1996) used the term 'cook' to refer only to the preparation of fresh, raw foods while the NFM (2001) for example refers to cooking *'a meal from scratch using raw ingredients'* but also includes the use of *'convenience foods, such as ready-made microwave meals'*. Lang *et al.* (2001) also question how the term cooking was interpreted by the respondents of the HEA survey (1998, see also Caraher *et al.* 1999). For example they question whether re-heating in the microwave or the assembly of a meal from ready prepared ingredients would have or should have been recorded as cooking. Furthermore a DoH survey (2006) suggested that dishonesty or embarrassment might also confuse the figures on the number of people who claim to 'cook from scratch'[40]. The FSA (2007) were also recently surprised by their findings that

[40] The DoH survey (2006) found that nearly half of their 16 – 24 year old respondents from the south-east of England had *'passed off'* a ready meal as their own creation when they wanted to impress someone and that nearly 53% of young women and 45% of young men in the region admitted trying to impress someone with *'home made'* shop-bought food.

so many people recorded cooking 'from scratch' and wondered whether respondents may have forgotten the extent to which meals may have been homemade. [41].

Of particular relevance here is the research undertaken by Francis Short (2002, 2003a, b, c, d, 2006) who found there was no evidence among her English informants of using the term 'cook' to refer to the sole use of fresh, raw foods. Instead, she found that they understood the term 'cook' in a number of different ways, its meaning being almost entirely dependent on the occasion. For example she found the term being used for the application of heat to food but also the preparation of all food including pre-prepared foods. While on occasions her informants did describe *'proper cooking'* as meaning a higher use of fresh, raw foods and the application of greater effort, she also noted that terms such as 'pre-prepared', 'basic ingredients' and 'from scratch' tend to be used without reference to any specific degree of pre-preparation and lacked precise meaning. Furthermore, the use of 'pre-prepared' and/or 'convenience' foods were found to be a common part of everyday life and readymade food items such as olive oil, bread, biscuits, spaghetti, breakfast cereals, fruit juice, mustard and so on, were no longer perceived as 'pre-prepared' nor did people expect to prepare them 'from scratch*'.* The term cooking could refer simply to 'making something to eat' or 'feeding the family' or it could equally involve practical cooking tasks such as boiling, roasting, microwaving, preparing vegetables and so on (see Lang *et al.* 1993 & 1999b; Nicolaas, 1995; Adamson, 1996; Health Which?, 1998; Wrieden *et al.* 2002; Fort, 2003).

3.2.8 Cooking skills: change and continuity

While Lang *et al.* (2001) propose a *'culinary skills transition'*, in which cooking skills may be in decline, a key conclusion arising from Short's (2002) research was that whether cooking with fresh, raw foods or cooking with pre-prepared &/or convenience foods all require certain 'cooking skills'. Skills involved in such practical tasks tend to be complex and consist of mechanical abilities, academic knowledge and 'tacit' perceptual, conceptual, design, and planning skills (Wellens 1974, Singleton, 1978, Beechey, 1982; Hardy, 1996; Short 2002). Given that current domestic cooking practices appear to involve the use of both raw and pre-prepared foods, many writers, whilst accepting that

[41] The FSA (2007) considered whether perhaps if the main ingredient is fresh, people may 'forget' that a component of the meal, such as a stir in sauce was used and as such the meal should have been recorded as a 'partly prepared/partly from scratch' meal but in fact may have been regarded it as 'completely homemade'.

the precise nature of the necessary skills may have changed, question whether cooking with pre-prepared foods requires any less skill than cooking from fresh, raw foods and thus re-assert the continued need for cooking skills (Fieldhouse, 1995; Rodrigues *et al.* 1996; Stitt *et al.* 1996; James *et al.* 1997; Lang *et al.* 1999b; Caraher 2001; Short 2002; Stead *et al* 2004). Regardless of the foods being prepared, Short noted the continued need for perceptual skills of timing and judgement so that different foods would be ready simultaneously, abilities to understand the properties of food in terms of taste, colour and texture and how they will react when combined or heated. People who cooked were noted as also having menu design skills, organisational skills and multi-tasking skills so as to be able to fit food preparation around a busy schedule as well as creative skills to prepare a meal from whatever ingredients were available. Short's informants also demonstrated the skills necessary to prepare food to suit the tastes and preferences of others and also demonstrated academic knowledge of food hygiene, chemistry, history, geography and nutrition.

It appears then that domestic cooking practices and in particular, the transformation of basic/raw ingredients, may to some extent be changing as people increasingly rely at least in part, on the mechanical labour of others via the increased consumption of ready-prepared foods (Ritzer, 1993 & 2000; Lupton, 1996; Mintz, 1996; Lang 2001, Caraher 2001). So while some mechanical aspects of cooking may be increasingly redundant and reflect some sort of transition, 'cooking', in order to get food "*on the table and down throats",* embraces a whole range of skills many of which would appear still to be evident and needed (Short 2002 and Stead *et al.* 2004).

3.2.9 Cooking skills and their significance to food policy

Whilst the increased availability of convenience foods in both France and Britain suggests less need for many of the mechanical skills involved in cooking, the growing popularity of the food service sector also suggests less need for some of the required academic and tacit skills. It has been suggested that such changes represent progress with those responsible for cooking now having more control over the cooking that they choose to do and that perhaps the ability to cook no longer matters (see Mennell *et al.*1992; Mennell, 1996,). In addition, many feminist writers point out that such

'progress' might serve to liberate women from the kitchen and domestic drudgery (Oakley 1974 and 1990; Attar 1990).

However, it has been argued that the ability and willingness of someone to cook is one of the factors that can enable people to make informed decisions about their food choices, their control of diet and their ability to implement advice on healthy eating (WHO, 1990; Cannon, 1992; Demas, 1995; HEA 1998; Caraher *et al.* 1999; Lang *et al.* 2001). Without the skills to cook, many writers consider that consumers have little choice but to accept ready-prepared foods and thus become reliant on understanding food labelling provided on packets by the food industry if they wish to control their diet and health (Lang *et al.* 1993; Caraher *et al.* 1999). Fieldhouse (1995) agrees and considers that domestic food choices are *"circumscribed by the ability to prepare foods"* (*ibid:* 70) and that any reduction in such abilities will further reduce the ability to control diet (DoH, 1996; Leather, 1996). Benson and Finlay (1999) add that normalising cooking as a part of everyday life could offer more opportunities for health promotion. Furthermore, cooking skills have also been described as empowering, liberating and "*a vehicle by which citizens can engage with the social norms of a society in which food is central both for existence and identity"* (Lang *et al.* 2001: 7). Stitt *et al.* (1996: 10) go on to suggest that in Britain at least, *"de-skilled families are buying more ready-made meals from supermarkets"* because people no longer have the necessary skills to cook or the time that they are prepared to spend cooking and that the decline in cooking *'from scratch'*, will not only negatively impact on health but also damage life-enhancing family relationships (see also; Dixey, 1996; Mintz, 1996 and Shore 2002).

Many approaches towards food policy in relation to domestic cooking practices prioritise the view that more people would cook from scratch if only they had the necessary knowledge and skills, however the relationship between having cooking skills and actually cooking requires further consideration (see Nicolaas, 1995; HEA 1998; Caraher *et al.* 1999). Significantly Short's research suggests the possession of the practical or mechanical skills of cooking were less significant to behaviour in relation to cooking than the broader skills she identified[42] and that confidence, along with people's general attitudes to cooking, more greatly influenced the degree to which people find cooking to be an effort and this in turn influenced their ultimate cooking practices, including

[42] The tacit perceptual, conceptual and organisational skills coupled with skills of judgement, timing and planning.

whether to use 'raw' and/or 'pre-prepared' foods (Nicolaas, 1995; HEA 1998; Short 2002). Together, such skills and attitudes reveal an intricate domestic culinary culture and Lang *et al.* (1999b) agree that the choice not to cook from 'basic' 'raw' foods is not always related to lack of skills but to broader issues of food culture and suggested that too little attention has been given to what people think about cooking and cooking skills and how their attitudes, opinions and beliefs impact on food choices and behaviour.

It would appear then that the ability to cook can play an important role in helping people consume a healthier diet if they so wish, however any policy development regarding domestic cooking in France or Britain needs to take into account that while cooking skills are important, they do not operate in isolation and the cultural attitudes of the public also play an important role in both the application of cooking skills and food choices (Lang *et al.* 1999b; Caraher 2001)

3.3 The acquisition of cooking skills

The main sources of cooking knowledge in both France and Britain appear to be from the family and especially the mother with consistently over 70% of respondents in both countries stating this source. While women were particularly likely to cite the family, there was some variation according to age, class, income and ethnicity (HEA 1998, Caraher *et al.* 1999; NFM 2001; Seb/BVA 2003). For example, the HEA survey found that in the UK, men were more likely to learn to cook from their spouses than vice versa although almost half the younger men (16-19 year olds) cited learning to cook in classes at school compared to only just over 2% of the 55-74 year olds[43]. Younger males also mentioned learning from mothers, fathers and friends while learning cooking from wives or partners was the only influence more frequently cited by older males. Overall it appears that men were more likely to have learnt from wives/partners than school or books which suggest that many men do not learn how to cook until later in life.

In France however, a significant 30% of the over 50 year old women surveyed said they had either taught themselves how to cook or learnt from books and other media (Seb/BVA 2003). Interestingly, the survey reports that many of these women in turn

[43] Bearing in mind when this data was collected emphasises how the school environment appears to have been a useful forum for passing on cooking skills to all youngsters, including boys.

appear not to have passed on their skills to their children either[44]. Evidence suggests that this inter-generational transfer of cooking skills is indeed under threat (Oakley 1974 & 1990; Murcott 1998a; NFM 2001) and it has been proposed that as daughters migrate away from their familial towns and villages to larger cities they have to teach themselves and become more reliant on the media or local friends for information on cooking (De Certeau *et al.* 1998; Jeffries 2002). Significantly, young persons that had learnt cooking at home were far more likely to 'agree' that they were confident and competent cooks.

3.3.1 Learning to cook at school

In addition to the decline in the inter-generational transfer of cooking skills, the NFM (2001) reported that schools currently play a small role in teaching children to cook and therefore Britain's young persons may be becoming more reliant on convenience food and readymade meals. Indeed, Stitt *et al.* (1996; 33) reported how David Blunkett MP and then Opposition spokesman for Health stated in June 1993 that:

> *"Parents should ask, not just whether their child can read and write and cross the road safely, but whether the child is learning to take control of their daily food. A culture whose people cannot cook is a much impoverished culture"*

Survey data suggests that the vast majority of men and women agreed that it was important to teach girls and boys how to cook at school[45]. Almost 20 years after cooking classes were abolished in English schools, *Licence to Cook* has been established as an interim measure to teach cooking skills and the *School Food Trust* (SFT) has established a network of out of school cookery cooking clubs under the *Let's get cooking* programme with £20 million of lottery funding. Both these were established by the Department of Children, Schools and Families to facilitate the transition to the re-introduction of compulsory cooking in to the curriculum in 2011, although this now looks doubtful (HM Government 2008; Caraher *et al.* 2010). There has also been a raft of food and cookery initiatives launched by various charities, NGOs and the food industry

[44] For example, 35% of the sample aged 25 to 34 did not consider that the family was their primary source of learning cooking skills and knowledge.

[45] The HEA Survey found that between 95% and 99.2% of men and women respectively considered it important to teach both girls and boys how to cook and such findings have been mirrored in previous surveys (MORI, 1993; OPCS, 1995).

(see 2.2.1)[46]. With the lack of government spending on cooking in schools, such initiatives are inevitable however they are often criticised for being short term, optional and lacking coordination and a coherent pedagogical approach.

Until recently, the French were little concerned about the lack of teaching cooking skills at school (Stitt *et al.* 1996; Téchoueyres 2003). However a large majority of parents surveyed considered that it would be beneficial if future generations were taught cooking at school (Seb / BVA 2003) and there is increased policy debate on the subject[47].

3.3.2 Learning to cook via the media

The traditional cookery book remains the most popular way of accessing recipes and the average member of the British public owns around eight such books (NFM 2001). Cookery books in France are also becoming more popular and a range of monthly publications are also well liked. Similarly TV cookery programmes in France are growing in popularity however still tend to be broadcast during 'day-time' TV and watched particularly by the housebound. Of course, social variables play a significant role in how people engage in various sources of cookery information[48] and Keynote (2007) found that almost 32% of their respondents in the UK said that following a television or further education cookery course or buying new cookery books had or could change their cooking and eating habits with men more likely than women to agree with such a statement. In addition, younger respondents were more inclined to be influenced by such sources than older ones and they also found there to be considerable variation disparity according to social class[49]. However, it remains unclear to what extent such sources of information actually influence domestic food practices

[46] These include *Food for Life* established by the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF), *Focus on Food* cooking busses the Academy of Art's *Adopt a School* and *Can Cook Will Cook* as well as purely industry financed programmes such as those promoted by Flora margarine and Sainsburys' *Active Kids Get Cooking* scheme which both stress their links to the *Change4Life* programme (Caraher *et al*.).

[47] 81% of the French persons interviewed considered that future generations should be taught cooking at school (Seb / BVA 2003) and there is also wider media and policy discussion of the value of teaching cooking skills at school (INPES 2004).

[48] Such sources of guidance in cooking are particularly important for higher social classes and when older while more commercial sources of cookery information were more important for lower social classes (Caraher *et al.* 1998b; HEA 1998; Keynote 2007)

49 For example, they found that half of social group A agreed that TV cookery programmes, cookery courses or new cookery books had influenced cooking and eating habits, compared with only 13.5% of those in social group E.

and it has been argued that 'celebrity chef' shows in particular tend to be consumed as entertainment rather than anything "culturally deep" (Caraher *et al.* 1998b, Lang *et al.* 2001)

3.4 The influence of social variables and 'lifestyle' on cooking habits

It is important to examine further survey data on what foods are actually prepared in French and British homes and consider the impact of a range of social variables and lifestyle choices in relation to food behaviour as well as how, why and when people cook. However as Rolland-Cachera *et al.* (2000) point out, little work has been carried out comparing European countries' nutritional behaviour and furthermore individual country's survey methods, populations and intake data expression tends to be varied (Nicklas *et al.* 2001). As noted, difficulties also arise from how terms such as 'cooking from scratch' and 'cooking with pre-prepared foods' are used however it is necessary to cautiously proceed.

It has been argued that cooking demonstrates differential gender involvement with wives as food servers, refuelling an active breadwinner reflecting the continued patriarchal structure of society with the "proper" or "structured meal" symbolising woman's role as homemaker (Murcott, 1982 &1995; Charles and Kerr, 1984 &1995; Mennell *et al* 1992; Brannen *et al.* 1994;, Fieldhouse 1995; Charles, 1995; Dixey, 1996; Warde, 1997, Beardsworth & Keil, 1997, HEA 1998). Furthermore, despite between 70 and 75% of women over eighteen in both France and Britain now in employment, women continue to bear a far greater responsibility for cooking (Rozin *et al.* 99; NFM 2001; Mintel, 2003; Mintel 2003b; Amalou *et al.* 2004; INPES 2004; Warde *et al.*2005b; FSA 2007)[50]. Pettinger ***et al's.,*** (2006) comparative research also found that women in both countries continue to report having most responsibility for food shopping and preparing the meals and also that the gender division was more defined among their English sample.

[50] For example the FSA found that in the UK 77% of women took all/most of the responsibility for household food shopping compared to men and the vast majority (85%) of those responsible for all or most of the shopping were also solely or mainly responsible for the cooking. Lake *et al.* (2006) support such findings and in their study, 79% of the women stated that they were mainly responsible for their household's shopping, 72% claimed to be mainly responsible for preparing and cooking the food and that more than twice as many women compared with men stated that they alone were responsible for food preparation and cooking

However it has been suggested that the increase in female employment in both countries has resulted in women spending substantially less time cooking than twenty five years ago and there is some evidence of restructuring with men now spending more time food shopping and cooking than in the past (Tansey *et al.* 1995; Askegaard *et al.* 1998; Hubert, 1998; Lang *et al.* 2001; Poulain, 2002, Mintel, 2003;, Amalou *et al.* 2004; Pettinger *et al.* 2004, Drouard 2004, Warde *et al.* 2005a & b; Keynote 2007)[51]. However this often seems to reflect a rise in speciality cooking, cooking for special occasions[52] and overall women were significantly more likely to describe cooking as an everyday chore which they did not enjoy (NFM 2001). The increase in single male households also helps explain why men might now elect to cook more and it appears that for the majority of men, cooking is something they may undertake occasionally whereas many women continue not to have such choice (Dixey 1996; Kemmer 1999; Lupton 2000; Lang *et al.*; Swinbank 2002; Stead *et al.* 2004; Warde *et al.;* Lake *et al.* 2006).

Confidence has been seen to be an important influence on actual cooking practices and any policy regarding domestic cooking should understand who is confident to cook and how confidence can be encouraged. Confidence can be seen to be not only gender related, but also related to age, socio-economic group and income (HEA 1998). With reference to gender, men's levels of skills and confidence appear significantly lower than women's[53]. Given the increase in young males living alone, begs the question as to how adequately they will be able to cater for themselves and if they rely on increasingly prepared foods and how this will impact on their health. With reference to age, it has been found that older women were generally seen to be more confident in using a wider range of techniques and that confidence in using cooking techniques increased with income and even more so with social class and educational achievement (HEA Survey 1998; Caraher *et al.* 1999). Warde *et al.* (2005b) however, found that while education was a significant variable in relation to time spent cooking in

[51] A survey in the UK showed that 33 per cent of the women questioned expressed the belief that cooking and preparing food is too time consuming (Novartis 2000). Similarly, the SEB (2003) found that 60% of their French respondents would cook more often if they had more time, a figure that increased among those under 50 and/or if 2 or more children were present in the household

[52] Mintel (2003) noted two peaks among their UK male sample, namely that 27% were keen to try out new recipes and 30% of their 25-34 year old males enjoyed getting the barbecue out

[53] For example, Caraher *et al.* (1999) found that nearly a quarter of their male respondents did not cook or lacked confidence to cook from basic ingredients, compared to only 7 per cent of the women and that almost 13% of the males felt not knowing how to cook a food as a factor limiting their choice compared to 5.4 per cent of women.

both France and Britain in 1975, it was no longer so in 2000. Significantly, almost 26% of young persons in some regions of Britain reported never cooking a proper meal for themselves because they lacked confidence and 'don't know how' (DoH 2006).

Research by Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS) (2003) in France found that 63% of their respondents cooked and prepared a meal for themselves, family or guests either everyday or almost every day and a further 15% one or two times per week. The FSA (2007) in the UK also found that 63% of their respondents said they ate a completely homemade meal[54], 'once a day/on most days', with a further quarter (24%) saying they ate this type of meal a few times a week. However the NFM (2001) found that only around a third of their UK respondents claimed to prepare a meal from scratch using raw ingredients every day, although more did occasionally. While any conclusion is difficult, the Nestle findings are more in line with comparative research carried out by Pettinger *et al.* (2004 and 2006) who found that about two-thirds of their French respondents cooked a meal from raw ingredients on a daily basis but less than a quarter of their English respondents had done so. Overall, time spent cooking in France and Britain increases with age and those who have children spend more time cooking than do those without (Warde *et al.* 2005b). Completely home-made meals in both countries were more likely to be prepared or consumed by women, older respondents (50+) and those in higher socio-economic groups while totally prepared meals were more likely to be consumed by younger people (between 16-25) and those living alone and young couples with or without young children, and lower socio-economic groups. However, within such broad age groups there is also considerable variation and Mintel (2003) noted that cash-rich empty nesters, typically over 50, were also receptive to purchasing premium ready meals (see also HEA 1998). Around one in ten UK consumers claimed they ate totally prepared meals[55] on most days, although more than double this number did so a few times a week and almost half did so at least weekly (see Volatier, 1998; Rozin *et al.* 1999; Scali *et al.* 2000; NFM 2001; Henderson *et al.* 2002; Mintel 2003b; Pettinger *et al* 2004; INPES 2004; FSA 2007). The NFM (2001) concluded that not only does the majority of the British public eat convenience foods but they eat them frequently albeit with considerable variation according to age, gender and life stage.

[54] Such as a roast dinner, a casserole or a 'meat and two veg.' type dish.

[55] Such as burgers/fish fingers/nuggets and oven chips, pizzas, pasta dishes and ready meals

3.4.1 Lack of time, convenience foods and the everyday scheduling of modern life

Comparative European research into food habits undertaken by the IEFS (1996) identified perceived lack of time as a barrier to domestic food preparation across Europe. However, they found that convenience in relation to food was more important in the UK than France and while there was variation between socio-demographic groups, age and gender, cross-country differences appeared greater. More recent research also suggests that whereas in Britain, 'eating well' is primarily about time saving, especially among men, the unmarried and the young, in France, the social aspect of eating and not being obliged to eat quickly is far more important. (see Volatier 1999; NFM 2001; Fischler 2002; Mintel 2003; Pettinger *et al.* 2004; INPES 2004; Stead *et al.* 2004; Keynote 2007). The British population consumes more convenience food than any other European country (Schlosser 2001) and have been described as having the "fastest" food habits in Europe with increased 'eating on the hoof' (Stead *et al.* 2004). Further evidence of the increasing popularity of convenience foods in the UK comes from Mintel (2003b) which reports a 24% increase in the purchase of convenience and prepared foods between 1990 and 2000. In addition, convenience meal options, such as ready meals, and what Mintel consider 'ethnic foods' such as pizza and pasta, have shown a 98% and 90% growth at constant prices, respectively, during this time. Their 2002, report also shows that sales of chilled ready meals had almost doubled in real terms between 1997 and 2002, to reach an estimated £1.12 billion. Keynote found that with the increased availability of convenience meal options, there are now fewer meals being eaten together, with different members of the family increasingly engaging in a culture of lone snacking. Such a trend towards greater individualisation of diet, informalisation, a collapse of normative regulation and a weakening of cultural constraints would appear to be having a significant impact on culinary cultures in Britain (see Fischler 1979: Warde 1997). Certainly, the enjoyment of food was scarcely mentioned across the British surveys and it appears that around half the respondents, particularly among those under 25, considered they lacked time, inclination and/or confidence when it came to food and meal preparation. Busy lifestyles were the principle reasons given by such groups for their preference for individualised eating habits and snacking and their prioritising of convenience over conviviality and the enjoyment of 'quality' foods.

Mintel (2003) reveal that when it comes to either of the two main meal occasions of the day, the majority of UK households spent comparatively little time over meal preparation and consumption, especially during the week when convenience solutions were found to be the norm due to 'time poverty'. Key Note (2007) found that just 13.9% of their respondents agreed that they very much liked spending time in the kitchen and almost as many (13.5%) said that they could not be bothered with food and would prefer not to cook. A further 14.2% said that they hated cooking, but would do it if they had to and 15.3% said that their life was so hectic that they relied on convenience meals and snacks. Interestingly, two other UK surveys, the NFM's (2001) and the National Opinion Polls (1997) found a higher overall number respectively saying they liked cooking (67%) or found it enjoyable (40%) although almost half (48%) admitted that they would rather be doing something else. 'Leisure cooking' in the UK, including cooking more adventurous foods for friends and family has increased in popularity but mainly among the young, affluent and those at the pre-family and family stage (Mintel 2003b). The NFM also found that over half of their respondents cook a meal for guests at least once a month although Warde *et al.* (2005a) suggest that for the middle class, especially for those without children, sociable dining has shifted from the home to restaurants. Interestingly both the NFM and SEB (2003) found a significant number of their respondents claimed they would like to be better at cooking and indeed would cook more often if they had greater knowledge about cooking. This was particularly evident in those under 34 years old.

Britain fares less well in relation to maximum working hours and holiday entitlement than France and Osborn (2001) considers that the Anglo-Saxon convenience and fast-food culture found in the UK may be more advanced than in the rest of Europe but that the gap, including with France was narrowing. Certainly, the time allocated to meal preparation in France is also declining and among those surveyed, half spent less than 20 minutes preparing a weekday meal (Seb / BVA 2003; Drouard 2004; INPES 2004) and Poulain (2002) confirms the increase in France of those buying time saving food products and individual food portions[56]. However, as in the UK, more time is made available for 'leisure cooking' and while in France too there may be greater reliance on

[56] This includes fresh ready cooked meals, ready prepared fresh salads and vegetables, dressings, soft butter and quick cook rice as well as individual portions of food such as soups and dairy desserts along with ready prepared luxury fresh produce such as fois gras and smoked salmon.

ready prepared and ‘fast’ foods during the week, evidence suggests that the same individual will, at the weekends, often purchase foods from the market and enjoy preparing them in a traditional manner. While cooking in the home in France may be decreasing, it appears that cooking remains a pleasure and a priority when time permits (Amalou & Blanchard 2004; Drouard 2004). For example, TNS (2003) found that 65% of their French respondents liked cooking meals during the week and this figure rose to 77% at weekends and to 84% when cooking for guests. The most significant reason cited for the enjoyment of cooking was that it was convivial, followed by it being a pleasure and thirdly so as to be able share food with others.

The use of pre-prepared foods and the concomitant adaptation of cooking skills would appear to reflect the demands of increasingly complex and busy everyday living patterns and the associated response of an innovative food industry (Ritzer 1993; Lupton 1996; Lang 2000; Caraher 2001; Millstone *et al.* 2003; Drouard 2004; Stead *et al.* 2004). However, while modern convenience foods may well be in response to the perceived shortage of time and the need for labour-saving convenience foods, Warde (1999: 518) concludes that such foods are now *“as much a hypermodern response to de-routinisation as it is a modern search for the reduction of toil”*. He explains that because people now lead complex lives and they often find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time to prepare a meal at home from scratch and that it is now a problem of timing rather than simply a shortage of time. He suggests:

> *“...the emergence of convenience food reflects the re-ordering of the time-space relations of everyday life in contemporary society…*[and that]… *many people are constrained to eat what they call convenience foods as a provisional response to intransigent problems of scheduling everyday life”* (518).

Interestingly, Jeffries (2001) points to how a Parisian commuter living a *'métro, boulot, dodo'* (Tube, job, sleep) lifestyle are constrained in what they eat by work, travel and other demands on their time and similarly face difficulties in scheduling their everyday lives (see also Drouard 2004). Warde (1999; 518) suggests *“the impulse to time-shifting arises from the compulsion to plan ever more complex time-space paths in everyday life”* and clearly such activities militate against extended periods of time spent cooking or eating long, leisurely meals (Jeffries 2001).

3.5 The 'proper', structured meal and eating habits

Structural anthropologists consider food is about cultural classification and that food preparation methods play an important role in that they transform and re-define the food and transfer it into the cultural realm. However, via the application of cooking methods, food can also be converted into another human invention, the concept of a meal. Douglas (1997) believed the foods chosen, methods of preparation and the frequency foods are consumed, encapsulate fixed messages about both social occasions and social relations and noted that when '*deciphering a meal'*, similar, universal overarching structures appeared to inform most types of meals eaten in Britain and definable structures have also been found to influence meals in France (see Bellisle *et al.* 2000; INPES 2004; Michaud *et al.* 2004; Amalou *et al.* 2004 and Outram 2005). Douglas's research in Britain also found that a meal may also demand such things as a table, certain rules of engagement such as seating arrangements and a ban on engaging in other activities such as simultaneously reading or watching TV. Furthermore she considered the meal demanded certain rules in relation to social interaction and these are reflected in the type of meal being served. She identified rules governing how foods could be combined and structured and how less significant meals and snacks could be unstructured and included cereal products such as cakes and of course, the '*taking of the biscuit'* (see Douglas and Nicod 1974) and as such were easily recognisable [57] (see also Murcott 1995).

Drawing on Douglas' work, Murcott (1982, 1983, 1983b) critically examined the constituents and prescribed cooking techniques associated with what she has found to be, the culturally and socially important 'cooked' or 'proper' dinner in Britain. Along with Charles and Kerr (1990), they found there to be strict rules that must be adhered to in relation to what makes a 'cooked' dinner 'proper' and that people can precisely articulate what these rules are in relation to its composition, cooking techniques employed and how it is served. They noted how there were also strict gradations in the status of meat with a joint of roasted meat representing the pinnacle of the hierarchy

[57] She noted unlike snacks, significant meals such as at the weekend, must include a range of contrasts (texture, cold and hot, spiced and bland etc.) and must also include meat, vegetables and cereals and that these require careful sequencing and ordering.

followed closely by steaks, chops and poultry which could be grilled but not fried[58]. Of significance to this study is how they found that fresh foods appeared to be always more valued than convenience foods.

Such writers also found that a 'proper meal' had to contain potatoes and a boiled green vegetable all served on one plate and that the Sunday variant was larger and demanded more varied cooking methods[59] so as to mark the day as special and that the meal had to be served with gravy which served as *"an amalgam of the cooking mediums of the other items"* (Murcott 1995:230). As well as clearly identifiable structures, Charles and Kerr's (1990) found, as indeed did Murcott and Levi-Strauss, similar indicators of social status in relation to the constituent food items of a meal and also found that there were cultural expectations concerning the precise food items most appropriate for different members of the family and although complex were expressed with *"surprising unanimity"* (p. 36). While they also noted that foods of high social status were associated with celebratory eating and were often a key constituent of a 'proper' meal, their results also demonstrated that the distribution of such foods within the family were unequal and reflected the relative power and status of the different family members[60]. They concluded that *"the consumption of food therefore conveys messages about the status of those that consume it…with the most powerful consuming the most and the best"* (p. 42).

3.5.1 The 'de-structuration' of meal patterns and eating habits

It is necessary to question whether in the twenty first century such universal and definable meal structures and the meanings embedded within remain as fixed and as easily 'decipherable'. Certainly evidence suggests that there is a trend towards simpler meals and quicker eating habits in the UK, and to some extent France, due to changing lifestyles however there would appear to be significant variation within and between the countries (Amalou *et al.* 2004, Mintel 2003b, NFM 2001). The 'traditional' French food

[58] Fish, offal and stewing meat occupied a position of medium status but if cooked all in one pot or quickly fried rarely counted as a proper cooked dinner. Similarly, sausages, beef burgers and similar composite meat products occupied the lowest position and were not recognised as a proper meal.

[59] Murcott found that both the meat and the potatoes had to be roasted and a greater number of vegetables, of which at least one must be green, were needed and they had to be cooked via a different method, normally by boiling.

[60] Whilst there was some variation between families, especially in relation to occupation of the male, they found men to consume more high status food than women and children, and children consumed more low status food than adults.

model, based on the notion of meals spread over the day, formed by several dishes and shared with others appears largely to remain a significant part of everyday life in France (see Bellisle *et al.* 2000, INPES 2004, Michaud *et al.* 2004, Amalou *et al.* 2004 and Outram 2005)[61] and the midday meal continues to be *"a ritual occasion assigned to a specific time and place and protected against chaos and intrusion"* (Fischler 1999: 539). In contrast, the modern meal in the UK is being restructured (HEA 1999) and in particular, the structured midday meal, especially those eaten at home, is now a much rarer event[62] (Mintel 2003). Key Note (2007) found that 55% of their sample bought a sandwich or similar for lunch typically from a staff restaurant or sandwich shop. They considered that lunchtime, rather than a pleasurable opportunity for social interaction, is increasingly either a rushed break or carried out at the same time as working ('desktop dining') [63] and the NFM (2001) noted a quarter of their respondents did not stop to eat lunch at work.

In relation to the main meal of the day, namely the evening meal, Mintel (2003) reported that just 22% of UK adults have at least two courses. However, there is considerable variation within the UK and for many, the structured meal remains an important feature of everyday life. Certainly evidence suggests that it is premature to conclude the 'death of the family meal' (see Warde *et al*. 2005a) and research indicates that particularly among families with children under 10 and among those adults aged over 55, eating together, eating main meals at the table, having at least two courses for their evening meal, eating at regular times, a disinclination to snack and a desire to follow a 'traditional' diet including roast dinner on Sunday and cooked breakfasts on the weekend remains popular (NFM 2001; Mintel 2003). The NFM found that three out of 5 respondents said their family always sits down together for Sunday lunch and Mintel reported that almost half of their respondents agree that they have a roast on Sunday. Mintel also found most members of families with young children eat together most

[61] For example, ninety percent of the French consume three main meals a day and the principal place for the eating of these three meals remains the home, including the midday meal (67.7%) (INPES 2004).

[62] Mintel (2003) indicate that just 17% of their UK sample ate a cooked meal at midday and 60% of adults opted for a sandwich or light meal.

[63] Key Note found that while overall, two-thirds of male and half of female workers had a lunch break every day, almost one in ten were too busy to stop and instead ate on the job and while there was both regional and age related differences, such patterns of 'desktop dining' which avoided any interruption to the productive process of work were increasing.

days[64], particularly at weekends although eating a 'traditional' family meal together was not always possible.

In France, structured meals of set courses continue to be very much the norm across social groups with almost 90% of the population consuming two or more course at the midday meal and almost 70% eat two or more courses during the evening meal although there is a slight trend towards fewer courses[65] (INPES 2004). Such a trend, combined with increased snacking in France has led some theorists, most notably Poulain (2002), to announce the weakening or 'de-structuration' of French eating habits. However, any such transition is questioned by a number of writers and although there is some acceptance that traditions may be loosening, they question the extent and significance of any such change (Fraser 2000; INPES 2004; Fischler *et al's.,* 2008). Furthermore concerns that perhaps it was the French children and adolescents that were abandoning traditional French food model were further investigated by Michaud *et al.* (2000). They analysed data from food surveys published in the last 10 years in relation to three key aspects of any possible hypothetical breakdown in the structure of meals, change in the rhythm of daily meals and change in relation to their significance. Comparing data on the behaviour of children and adolescents, they concluded that:

> *"The results indicate that it is difficult to confirm the hypothesis of the collapse/breakdown (déstructuration) of feeding French children and adolescents whatever angle discussed. All surveys available are rather reassuring about the rhythm and composition of daily meals. Any trends are probably more gradual adjustments due to changing our way of life rather than any intentional and sudden rejection amongst young persons from the eating habits of their parents".*

It has been proposed that such continued attachment to the French food model and eating traditions at least partly further explain the French paradox (Fraser 2000; INPES 2004; Michaud *et al.* 2004; Fischler 2008). However, evidence suggests there has been

[64] This was particularly true among those over 44, women, ABs and the married although pressures of modern living and the social priorities of teenagers resulted in 15% of households comprised of five or more members rarely or never getting together to share a meal.

[65] Lunch was found to consist of three dishes (38%) or two dishes (30.3%) while the four-dish midday meal, still common in 1996 (25.2%), has become less common in 2002 (19.9%). The evening meal is mainly structured around two dishes (38.9%) or three dishes (30.3%) which is the opposite order that was recorded in 1996 (INPES 2004).

a long-term diminution in the duration of mealtimes [66] perhaps partly explained by shorter lunch breaks due to earlier finishing times for the working population. However, comparing more recent data, between 1996 and 2002, INPES (2004; see also Warde *et al.* 2005b) found that there had been almost no change in the duration of mealtimes[67] and Fischler (2002) noted that 62% of the French surveyed felt they spent more time at the table than before. In relation to Britain, Warde *et al.* (2005a) found that due to the increase in people eating away from home or dropping a meal, there has been an overall decline in the amount of time people spent eating at home although, of those meals eaten in the home, on average, people spend as much time over each meal in 2000 as they did in 1975 (Warde *et al.* 2005b).

Further evidence in relation to eating habits found that more than half of Mintel's (2003b) UK sample usually ate their main meals at the table although there was considerable variation[68] and the HEA (1999) found that a third of their sample reported that they normally ate their meals in the living room, in front of the television. In France, it appears that watching television during the eating of a meal might be more prevalent. For example, between 1996 and 2002 there had been a slight increase in those watching television during breakfast, now one in six persons, and during the midday meal, now one in three. The figures for those watching television during the evening meal had remained constant with half of their sample claiming to do this (INPES 2004, Michaud *et al* 2004). However, it has also been found that whilst they may be watching TV they were more likely to report eating a meal as the principle or focal activity, whereas for example American respondents were most likely to report watching TV as their focal activity, although might at the same time be eating (Rozin *et al's.* 2003).

[66] Data varies and for example, Szalai (1972) reported that around 1970, the average French person spent 1 hour and 38 minutes a day eating and snacking meanwhile The Times (2008) reported that the length of the average French meal was 1 hour 22 minutes in 1978 and had fallen to 38 minutes in 2008

[67] Detailed research by INPES (2004) reveals the average meal periods in 2002 were sixteen minutes for breakfast, thirty-eight minutes for the midday meal and forty minutes for the evening meal: identical to the periods observed in 1996 for the two main meals, although the duration of breakfast was one minute longer in 2002.

[68] This was notably more evident in family households and those with higher socio-economic status perhaps reflecting their greater likelihood of having a designated eating area in the home such as a dining room or kitchen/breakfast room.

3.5.2 Snacking and the further destructuration of meal habits

Snack foods have been defined as those foods eaten outside normal mealtimes (Mintel 2003b; Chamontin *et al.* 2003: Pettinger *et al.* 2006) and data from Mintel and the FSA (2007) suggest that snacking had become an important lifestyle trend over the last 20 years in the UK. While the FSA found the single most popular snack was fresh fruit (claimed by 40% of the sample), 48% claimed to have eaten biscuits, cakes or savoury snacks during that period. Sales of chocolate, crisps and savoury snacks have been rising[69] and the UK European Snack Association (ESA 2000) claim that crisps represent 60% of all savoury snacks sold in the UK and it has been suggested that snacking in addition to eating regular meals is becoming the norm among many social groups[70].

Pettinger *et al.* (2006) found that the French consumed considerably less crisps and energy dense snacks than their counterparts in England where half of their English respondents had eaten crisps at least weekly. Pettinger *et al.* (2000) had earlier reported that among their sample in southern France, snacking was rare but when they did snack they chose bread, cheese, yoghurts and fresh fruit rather than cakes, sweet biscuits or confectionery. In addition, findings suggest that French children aged between nine and ten ate significantly fewer snacks than their British counterparts who ate appreciably more snack foods both as part of or instead of their meals than their French counterparts (Outram 2005). She concluded that the traditional French meal pattern, including a more nutritious school lunch, discouraged snacking throughout the day while the British children actually ate meals consisting of 'snack foods' that then left them hungry, leading to further snacking throughout the day. However, surveys in France show that the sale of snack products is also rising (Volatier 2003).

[69] Mintel reports report that sales of chocolate had increased by over 16% between 1997 and 2002 and over the same period, sales of crisps and snacks rose by almost 12%.

[70] Especially among the young, men and for those studying or working part time as well as the unemployed (see Mintel 2003b, Hoare *et al.* 2004, FSA 2007).

Chapter 4 : The development of culinary cultures and drivers of change

4.1 Introduction

Having considered theory and practice in relation to food, cooking and meal patterns in France and Britain, this chapter sets out to analyse how people practiced and experienced cooking in the past and how this informed the development of culinary cultures. Whilst the last chapter borrowed heavily from the work of structural anthropologists, this chapter also engages with the work of macro-historians and the developmentalist's perspective so as to further evaluate whether French and British culinary cultures might be in a period of transition. As such, it is necessary to compare the development of their culinary cultures and consider more recent developments within the global food industry and how such powerful drivers of change may have further shaped these culinary cultures.

4.2 The historical development of French & British culinary cultures

Throughout much of rural Europe during the Middle Ages people shared a similar diet and for example the vast majority of Britain and France's populations relied on boiling staple crops to produce various *bouilles* or broths, soups and porridges (Claudian and Serville 1970; Mennell1996; Pitte 2002). However, the act of land enclosures in England in the fifteenth century[71] resulted in increased trade and availability of beef and mutton which middle-ranking independent farmers, artisans, traders and even some of the English peasantry were able to enjoy unlike their counterparts in France. Many modest households had facilities to cook beef and traditions such as roast beef, steamed puddings and beer were beginning to establish themselves (see Bloch 1954; Mennell 1996; Pitte 2002; Rogers 2004). As trade in foodstuffs increased more generally so did access to a wider variety of food, at least among the upper classes of both nations, and while cooking remained plain, a more elaborate cookery was beginning to emerge across Europe as evidenced in the fourteenth century French and English cookery manuscripts such as Viander of Taillevent and The Forme of Cury (see Pullar 1970; Mennell 1996; Symons 2000).

[71] This transformed many of the strip fields and commons of the feudal village into fields for livestock.

It is argued that from the mid sixteenth century onwards the courts of Renaissance Italy marked a significant *"transitory stage in the development of French gastronomy"* among the upper and middle classes and that a distinct and powerful French tradition of cookery emerged (Oliver 1967:77: Mennell 1996). The '*ancien regime'* of France with its aristocracy, exclusive courtly society and absolutist monarch, promoted conspicuous consumption and elaborate displays of haute cuisine *"dedicated to the glory of the king"* (Csergo: 501). Such expression of divine power was perhaps best demonstrated by Louis XIV (1643- 1715) at the height of the Versailles Palace but extended until Charles X's abdication in 1830 (see Mennell 1996; 2000; Parkhurst-Ferguson 2001). Such a model of 'good taste', manners and national pride was then emulated by those in a position to do so (Mennell 1996).

It has been proposed that the degree and type of social and political differentiation plays a key role in the development of differentiated cuisines (Goody 1982; Mennell *et al.* 1992; Mennell 1996; Symons 1998; Parkhurst Ferguson 2006). Certainly, with regards to Britain and France, the exclusive courtly circles of France, although smaller, were according to Elias (1969), more elaborate, while in England the boundaries were less strict, with a more open aristocracy. Furthermore, the absolutist court society was halted in the mid seventeenth century by the English Civil War, unlike in France where it continued to flourish for another century and a half. Even after the 'Restoration', the English Court had less influence than that of the Versailles Court and the English ruling class appear to have ensured a more pronounced distinction between 'court' and 'county' and maintained a more rustic, economic and country character to English food (see Grigson, 1974; Mennell 1996).

Despite the growing influence of London and other urban centres during the eighteenth century, 'country' traits, including food customs showed resilience and the English gentry appeared to like to merge civic and country tastes unlike the French elite who remained fearful of the 'rustic' (Porter 1982). This rural/urban contrast is further illustrated by the English nobility who visited London for the 'season' and then returned to country estates where they would be involved in hunting, farming and the production, processing and preservation of foodstuffs. Even though England was more urban than

France[72], the prestige of country life remained and cooking continued to be domestic in nature and rely on seasonal produce from the land and this can be seen to have continued into the middle of the nineteenth century. For example, this is when the invention of the English breakfast emerged[73] as a celebration of Englishness or rather Anglo-Saxonness in opposition to French eating customs. Such a large morning meal was only enjoyed by the English upper classes, which after such a meal might go hunting on their estates where much of the food had come from and then enjoy a picnic lunch of cold meats and preserves also from the estate – all of which would be served plain and not sauced (O'Connor 2006). Meanwhile, in eighteenth century France, the aristocracy were more influenced by the evolving fashions of the urban centres and particularly Paris where costly ingredients were available which could then be transformed via plentiful labour and elaborate sauces and this in turn contributed to the growing distinctiveness of a French culinary culture (see Mennell 1996).

The sexual division of labour in the household appears to be another key factor in explaining the extent to which an *'haute cuisine'* might develop (see Grigson 1974; Goody 1982, Mennell *et al.* 1992, Mennell 1996, Short 2002). For example, in France and Britain, food would normally be prepared for the aristocracy and courtly society by servants and male professionals and a more elaborate cuisine emerged. However, among the influential country estates in Britain, it was women that were more likely to be involved in such household tasks and this is reflected in the dominance of a more domestic style of cooking and cuisine. Such an explanation is further discussed below.

[72] In the eighteenth century, London was growing faster and was already much bigger in relation to both population and geography than Paris. Although the French population was four times greater than England's at this time, by 1750 only 2½% of the French population lived in Paris while 11% of the British population lived in London. The French rural population was far greater but rural life was unimportant to the French elite and London was developing as a centre of conspicuous consumption (see Wrigley 1967; Burnett 1983).

[73] A simpler version of the English breakfast only gained wider popularity in the twentieth century (see O'Connor 2006).

4.2.1 Early cookery books and representations of distinctive culinary cultures

Whilst cookery books had little impact on the vast majority of Britain and France's rural poor[74] they did chronicle and increasingly influence the development of culinary cultures and the requisite cooking skills (see Mennell 1996, Parkhurst-Ferguson 2001). For example the publication of *La Varenne's Le Cuisinier francois* (1651) characterised the French culinary revolution of the mid seventeenth century and demonstrated a clear break with the use of medieval spices, mixtures and combinations of sweet with savoury, in favour of a *"cuisine of impregnation"* and the use of native herbs for seasoning. The emergence of such an elite, distinctive and classical French cuisine, including stocks and butter based sauces, *"delicate little made dishes"* as well as ideas of ordered, set courses which could not be rustic, further distanced itself from the diet of the French peasantry (Mennell 1996: 102; see also Davidson 2006; Pinkard 2009).

Such developments in French haute cuisine, typically prepared by male professional chefs and served by male servants in court were in sharp contrast to the more practical female dominated domestic style of cookery and simpler country recipes in England. Cookery books such as *'This is the Boke of Cokery'* appeared in the sixteenth century and were not exclusively aimed at nobility and their servants, but *"housewives or gentle women concerned with the practical tasks of running households-tasks in which they themselves were directly involved"* (Mennell 1996: 84). Until the 1730s, most English cookery books were written not by professional chefs but by educated men for women of the aristocracy who wanted fashionable recipes or for housewives of the gentry who wanted books related to household management including information on the preservation and conservation of foods (Davidson 2006). However, for a brief period at the beginning of the eighteenth century cookery books in England were written by professional chefs working for the aristocracy and royalty. They rejected the mundane aspects of household management and borrowed heavily from the French 'court style' of cuisine, the baroque aesthetic and writers such as La Varenne. In France, cookery books became ever grander such as La Chapelle's second edition of '*Le Cuisinier modern'* (1742) and French chefs extolled the virtues of the first '*nouvelle cuisine'*. Meanwhile in England, court cookery began to decline after 1730 and while the

[74] They had little effect due to difficulties of access, the preference for writing in Latin and low literacy rates, (especially in France).

'*nouvelle'* style of lighter and simpler cookery found favour among the English governing elite, its popularity remained limited. Women cookery book writers now began to dominate and the best seller of the mid-eighteenth century was Hannah Glasse's 'Cookery; Made Plain and Easy' (1747) (Grigson, 1974; Mennell 1996; Rogers 2004; Davidson 2006). Such books emphasised economy, plainness and hostility to the extravagances of French cookery[75] and were designed to help the mistress of the house teach 'ignorant' servants how to cook thus relieving her from the chore of supervising her domestics[76] (Davidson). However, in reality, such books increasingly offered bastardised, short-cut versions of the fashionable French cuisine and with shortages of trained cooks and servants, English styles of cookery, especially baking, continued. Books began to reveal the preference for 'traditional' *English country cooking* of pies, tarts, cakes and puddings along with a continued emphasis on preserving, thrift and 'making do'. These not only reflected how the rural gentry preferred to rely upon self sufficiency from their country estates but also reflected a rejection of "*foreign culinary pretensions"* in favour of plainer, simpler foods. It has been argued that such a theme has continued to influence the development of distinctive British culinary cultures (Mennell 1996: 86; Davidson).

4.3 Food and cuisines as symbols of national identity

The symbolic importance of foodstuffs and cooking styles or cuisines to any sense of nationhood and the degree to which they remain fixed is central to the work of many structural anthropologist's and such theory is mobilised in this analysis (see Levi-Strauss 1969, Douglas 1972, and Barthes 1973).

The term *'cuisine'* can be seen to loosely refer to the typical ingredients selected, their preparation and cooking methods (recipes) along with condiments and certain principles of flavouring and styles of eating (Farb and Armelagos1980; Fieldhouse

[75] There was however considerable copying of French recipes but these were simplified, made cheaper and distinctively English

[76] Interestingly, in France too, a few books appeared which were addressed to women, although still written by men, such as Menon's popular *La Cuisiniere bourgeoise* (1746) which was designed to teach *'female professionals employed in middle class households how to prepare economical and fashionable meals'* (Davidson 2006; 319).

1995; Warde 2009). Fieldhouse elaborates that a national cuisine is what people think of as the *"normal or typical food of a country"* (*ibid:* 54) and refers to culinary traditions which serve as an expression of group identity rather than individuality. Ashley *et al.* (2004) agree that food contributes to the mundane sense of belonging to a nation and forms a significant part of a common culture shared by other members of the nation. However, the significance of cuisine to national culture and identity varies among nations and according to time and while it has been argued that Britain, unlike France, no longer has a clear notion of a national cuisine, it does share with France a strong cultural attachment to certain foods and eating habits which are important to the formation of national identity (see also Warde 1997; Ashley *et al.* 2004). A nation's diet plays a part in defining cultural identity and helps bind a population together in the way that it articulates feelings of inclusion and exclusion (Anderson 1983; Smith 1991; Bell and Valentine 1997).

The consumption of red meat for example, and the symbolic properties contained within such food, especially that of strength and masculinity (see Fischler 1988, Beardsworth and Keil 1997) appear significant to many nations (Fiddes 1991, Bell and Valentine 1997, Ashley *et al* 2004). For example the beefsteak in France has been described as:

> *"a deeply nationalised foodstuff... [and]... an edible metaphor for the national family, offering a symbol of consensus across the social classes* ".(Ashley *et al.* 2004: 5).

Structural anthropologists explain how such value and transference of meaning in relation to foodstuffs was harnessed by both the French and British state during various crises as a symbol of national identity and its patriotic meaning continues to be mobilised [77]. However as in the case of the 'Roast beef of Olde England', any meaning in relation to such a piece of meat can only be fully understood in association with allusions of other signs that have to be excluded in order to produce it[78]. Clearly exclusion appears to be as important as inclusion to identity and the social boundary which separates one group from another and is critical in defining that group vis-à-vis

[77] During the First World War, the Norman producers of Camembert cheese lobbied hard to get their cheese into the trenches and by the end of the war, Camembert-makers were sending a million cheeses a month to the front ensuring that the cheese was fixed in the national memory (Boisard 2003).

[78] This was also the case during France's withdrawal from empire in the 1950s and the symbolic mobilisation of the beef steak which had to exclude any sign of *"collaboration or colonial defeat"* (Ashley *et al* 2004: 6).

other groups as opposed to any cultural reality within any such borders (see Ohnuki-Tierney 1993). Such depictions of 'other' nations were clearly evident for example during the case of 'mad cow disease' in 1996 and the subsequent ban on imports of beef from the British Isles[79] (James (1997).

The extent to which a sense of cultural and national identity is articulated by a common understanding of such symbols and the extent to which such discourses remain relevant plays an important role in the development of a nation's culinary culture and may act to protect against the imposition of food practices from 'outside'.

4.3.1 Cultural apparatus and France's culinary discourse - nineteenth century

The development of cultural apparatus such as books, state institutions and elites play a vital role in the construction of a shared sense of national identity (see Goody 1982; Smith 1991; Mennell 1996; Parkhurst Fergusson 2001). The construction of a French national cuisine, Drouard (2003) argues, is dependant not only on cooks and practitioners, but also upon books and publications written by gastronomic critics and gourmets all serving the cause of *'la gastronomie francaise'* (see also Davidson, 2006). Certainly it appears that while an identifiable French tradition of cooking can be traced back to the sixteenth century, it was not until after the French Revolution that the concept of a powerful French national cuisine was fully articulated by the aristocracy and later, governments, national elites and institutions and more recently, tourist organisations (Mennell 1996). The Napoleonic and Restoration period in France is considered the age of the 'culinary institutions', 'great chefs', the 'restaurant revolution[80]', 'gastronomy' and the gastronome. Mennell considers that gastronomes were not merely gourmets but "*theorists and propagandists about culinary taste"* (p. 266) and the output of such writers as Grimod de La Reyniere and Brillat-Savarin's much celebrated '*Physiologie du Gout'* were important works and were followed in the

[79] Germany, followed by the rest of the European Union (EU) and then the entire world banned all exports of British beef related products. This led the tabloid press in Britain to advise its readers to burn German flags, boycott Belgian chocolates and engage in other xenophobic activities (Ashley *et al.* 2004). Furthermore, the meat and livestock industry joked that BSE actually stood for *'Bloody Stupid Europeans'* (Bell and Valentine 1997: 167).

[80] Before 1789 there were less than 100 restaurants in Paris, soon after the Revolution the number increased to five hundred (Mennell 1996).

nineteenth century by a proliferation of gastronomic literature (see Zeldin 1977; Mennell 1996; Flandrin 1999; Symons 2000; Burnett 2004; Parkhurst-Ferguson 2001; Drouard 2003; Davidson 2006; MacDonogh, 2009)[81].

While Britain has promoted a more democratic approach to cookery, French chefs and writers have promoted mystique, aloofness and an artistic detachment from the sophisticated palates of the patrons they serve. Innovative chefs sought to improve upon the cuisine of the past, were highly respected, often honoured like statesmen and some died like martyrs[82]. Chefs and writers along with various elites and institutions, have been credited with successfully consolidating, communicating and popularizing the distinctive national character of French cuisine and the totality of such influences enabled a well articulated gastronomic and culinary product to become a cultural one and indeed "*a prime touchstone of national identity"* (Parkhurst-Ferguson 2001: 24; see also Davidson 2006). Cuisine was transferred from the kitchen into the broader cultural arena via the intellectualisation of a culinary discourse which could then be positioned in general cultural circulation. Parkhurst-Ferguson believes that reliance on oral transmission alone would have caused the practice and status of French cuisine to remain precarious and Goody (1982) agrees that the ability to read about food is vitally important in the transmission of a shared understanding of a defined cuisine.

While French national cuisine may have established an '*international culinary hegemony'* at this time, the idea of a fixed, distinctive and popular 'British cuisine' appears neither to have ever been so clearly articulated nor to have attracted such popular recognition (Mennell 1996: 134). It has been suggested that because Britain lacks any obvious culinary anchor or institutional base is why any discourse about 'gastro-nationalism' has not been able to be communicated, and thus sustain a clear sense of any British cuisine or coherent culinary culture (Panayi 2007; Lane 2010).

[81] For many, Careme, known as 'The King of Chefs and the Chef of Kings' (see Kelly 2004), epitomised nineteenth century gastronomy and defined the national character of French cookery which was further developed by Escoffier a century later (see Oliver 1967). A proliferation of smaller books written by *menageres* (housewives) for women also appeared at this time

[82] For example Vatel in 1671 and more recently, Bernard Loiseau in 2003 (see Davidson 2006)

4.3.2 Cultural apparatus and Britain's culinary discourse – eighteenth & nineteenth centuries

It was against the background of intense Anglo-French rivalry that saw the creation of Rule Britannia (1740), God Save the King (1744) along with the rejection of delicate creations of French foods as the emergent nation rallied round roast beef as a national symbol of liberty (see Rogers 2004). Powerful institutions and patriotic artists such as Hogarth and Fielding further articulated notions of *'culinary nationalism'* with the former establishing *'The Sublime Society of Beefsteaks'* while Fielding wrote the *'Roast Beef of England'* and the most celebrated way of cooking beef became 'Beef Wellington'. John Bull came to represent the personification of the roast beef eating yeoman and Marr (2000) considers that the French perceived the English not merely as beef-eaters, but the dripping object itself, *'les rosbifs'* .

Women writers such as Hannah Glasse (1747), Eliza Acton (1845) and Mrs Beeton (1861) presented a discourse aimed at women in charge of domestic households and prioritised economy and *'cookery made plain and simple'*[83]. It has been argued that such a joy-less and repressive representation was rooted in Protestantism and represents a distinctive, popular and enduring style of cookery (see Driver 1983; Mennell 1996). However, after the French Revolution and the collapse of the aristocracy, many French chefs fled to Britain where they found work in the growing number of restaurants, clubs, hotels as well as aristocratic households. The influence of French cuisine was also beginning to be expressed among the growing middle classes who wanted to demonstrate their awareness of global Empire and reflect their knowledge of the increasingly fashionable French style of cookery (see Driver 1983, Mennell 1996, Burnett 2004). The 'keeping up of appearances' was an important feature of nineteenth century Britain particularly at times when business people were trying to strike a balance between access and display of the growing wealth of the nation and the risk of looming insolvency (Grigson 1974).

[83] During the nineteenth century, not all books that appeared in English were by English female writers. For example, Francatelli, Queen Victoria's chef and Alexis Soyer wrote several popular books.

4.3.3 Political, economic, social and cultural change in the nineteenth century: Continuities and discontinuities of community & culinary practices

Domestic food practices among the vast majority of poor people in early nineteenth century France and Britain appear to have little changed since the Middle Ages (see Mennell 1996; Csergo 1999). Even the rupture in political authority in France as a result of the French Revolution in 1789 appeared to have little impact on eating and cooking practices compared to the influence of the economic and social upheavals underway in nineteenth century Britain (see Mennell 1996). For example, Symons (2000: 287) considers that:

> *"The French Revolution treated gently the vast population of relatively independent peasants on their tiny plots in contrast to the brutal dispossession in the UK by means of enclosures and clearances, so that French farms and gardens were a key contributor to the now definite superiority of that cooking."*

The process and spread of industrialisation and urbanisation in France was much slower and disrupted traditional rural life much less than in Britain[84]. France remained a more agricultural society and the peasantry were left to go about their way of life, including rural culinary traditions, much as before which lessened any *"discontinuities of community"* (Mennell 1996: 224). Meanwhile Britain witnessed a transition from a *"small agricultural society to a large, industrial population which lived and worked in towns rather than villages"* (Burnett 1983: 15). In particular the continuation of the 'Enclosure Acts' turned largely self sufficient British peasants into agricultural labourers who then drifted towards the growing cities of Britain's Industrial Revolution in search of factory work. British domestic food practices were massively disrupted and by the nineteenth century, waged labourers increasingly had to purchase food although wages failed to keep up with the prices (Burnett 1983). Women (and children) were progressively pulled into urban industrial work and not only did they no longer have access to any fresh home-grown foods but *"there was little time for the preparation of slow-cooked vegetable broths that had previously supplemented the diets of the poor"* (Lawrence 2008: 174; see also Driver, 1983). With long working hours and limited access to cooking facilities, workers became reliant on quickly prepared foods or convenient

[84] Male agricultural workers in England represented 35% of the population in 1811, 28% in 1851, then only 12% by 1911 and 6 ½% by 1951. In contrast, French agricultural workers in 1856 represented 53% of the population, by 1901, 43% and by 1954, 26% and even by 1968 it was still four times greater than in England (Mennell 1996).

foods sold by street vendors (see Tannahill 1988, Burnett). A malnourished and dispossessed proletariat emerged and towards the end of the nineteenth century, following the victories of free trade, cheap calories in the form of sugar were made available from the colonies.

The impact of such industrialisation may help explain the faster decline in Britain's cooking habits and how in particular British cuisine had been *'decapitee'* (beheaded) (Chevallier 1997). Lane (2010: 514) considers that even as far back as the mid eighteenth century *"the UK was found to lack an indigenous culinary culture"* and it has been suggested that subsequent attempts to resurrect it have failed because of weak national and regional culinary legacies. Postgate (1966: 15) describes the *"absence of any British cuisine at all"* while Davidson (2006) considers that unlike the French, it seems less important for the English to define and therefore protect any sense of 'national culinary heritage'. Perhaps this lack of culinary anchor helps further explain how industrialisation was to have such a devastating impact on British eating habits. Certainly from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, regionalism of the British diet, distinctive local foods and traditional dishes began to disappear resulting in the lack of any coherent national or regional culinary cultures (Driver 1983; Chaney 2000). Lawrence considers that *"as the first nation to industrialize, is a large part of the answer to why we have been so much more susceptible to junk food than others* (*ibid:* 174). The impact of all such factors on diet is reflected perhaps by the fact that at the start of The First World War *"only one man in three of military age in Britain could be described as fit and healthy"* (Driver 1983: 11).

4.3.4 The Glory of France: The reconstruction of regional cuisines in the nineteenth century

There has been much discussion of French national cuisine, however France possesses many discrete regional cuisines although these only achieved gastronomic status in the nineteenth century. Regional cookbooks appeared in the 1830s and crucially at around this time, the state appears to have played an increasingly important role in promoting regional cuisines as symbols of a shared and united French national identity. The significance of such 'regional cuisines' to any continuity in domestic food practices and culinary cultures in France is clearly important.

After the French Revolution governments faced the problem of how to encourage a sense of national identity and unity. Csergo (1999) suggests that while France remained essentially centralist, it was forced to adopt popular, pro-regionalist policies in order to reflect the new cultural diversity of this largely rural, post revolutionary period. Significantly, authorities were faced with having to define the new nation and this included how to represent it geographically[85]. The State marshalled the support of various energetic institutions, associations, culinary professionals and regionalist movements to create a geographical solidarity and present regional foods as symbols of a shared memory[86]. Gastronomes began to catalogue regional specialities and write about gastronomic tourism and this was given further impetus by the appearance of the first descriptive restaurant guide in the early nineteenth century and a new wave of regional culinary literature[87]. (Csergo 1999; Abramson 2007; Davidson 2008). Such developments led Csergo (1999: 504) to consider that:

> *"The popular images of France were shaped by compilations of regional culinary specialities and were an indication of the status that would be accorded to such things in both the popular imagination and symbolic representations of national identity".*

However, the Third Republic (1870-1940) still faced a countryside that remained heavily Bonapartiste and as such tried to buy favour by offering further support for agriculture and small towns. Csergo (1999: 508) suggests that *"gastronomic primacy shifted, at least symbolically, from Paris to the provinces"*, and that the Third Republic based many of its rituals on food, both in Paris but also in the regions[88]. Furthermore, with the positive reconstruction of regional cuisines and at a time of growing urbanisation and industrialisation, agricultural workers that had been attracted to cities like Paris in the 1920s and 1930s were able to reconnect and celebrate their provincial roots via social

[85] Administrative boundaries were redrawn to create a new geography and theme parks, gardens and local museums were used to inform people of such.

[86] The appearance of the first culinary geographies such as the Carte gastronomique by Lois Cadet de Gassicourt in 1808, whimsically illustrated 'typical foods' from different towns and regions and enabled people to visualise the culinary wealth and diversity of the regions at a time when maps were rare and access to them limited (Pitte 2002).

[87] The popularity of such texts resulted for example in '*La Cuisiniere de la compagne et da la ville ou la nouvelle cuisine economique'* by Audot being reprinted 41 times between 1833 and 1900 and in 1901 '*L'Art du bien manger'* appeared and was considered to be the first extensive survey of French culinary culture.

[88] For example it held numerous banquets for local elected officials which celebrated regional identities within a broader national framework. Such events reached their height in 1900 when 21,000 mayors from across France were invited to Paris for a banquet at the time of the Exposition Universelle. The mix of *haute cuisine* with regional specialities is regarded as having marked the summit of political and culinary unity in France (see, Pitte, 2002; Csergo 1999).

activities planned around food and after the introduction of paid holidays in the 1930s city dwellers could further indulge their curiosity[89] (Davidson 2006).

4.3.5 *Terroir*, tourism and the institutionalisation of culinary heritage in early twentieth century France

Abramson (2007: 35) suggests that it was the late nineteenth century regionalism followed by calls for the *'retour a la terre'* (return to the soil) between the two World Wars that were responsible for defining food through *'terroir'* and was *"key both for rallying nationalist sentiment and stimulating the tourism industry".* She considers it was the various institutional processes at work in relation to regional produce, cooking and the desire to redefine a united national identity that were responsible for the popularisation of the term *'terroir'*. The term terroir[90] represents how both physical and human elements are harnessed to create local identities and quality products which in turn are supported by state intervention. It remains highly relevant in the imagination of the French public and food (and wine) have become symbolic of both *'terre'* (earth, soil) and *'territoire'* (territory, area) and represents a relationship between locality and taste in relation to quality (Abramson 2007; Fischler *et al.* 2008).

While in many cases the constructs of such regional specialities and cuisines relied on *'myth'* they are nonetheless important in evoking and articulating people's sense of regional identity, local patriotism and supposed local memory. After all, they are rooted in fairly discrete climatic and physical conditions which serve to produce a range of regional culinary identities underpinned by regional specialities as chronicled in the grand '*Tresor gastronomique de France'* which appeared in 1933. (see Crang 1996; Bell and Valentine 1997; Davidson 2006; Abramson 2007).

[90]By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the concept of *terroir* was central to the definition of '*Appellation d'origine controllee'* or AOC (Controlled Denomination of Origin) wines. In particular it was used to distinguish Bordeaux wine from 'cheap' imports and refers to exact locational details, climate, sunlight, topography, etc., as well as local artisanal traditions. Legislation has since been passed by the French National Assembly, so that other regional wines, and from 1989 regional food products, might benefit from an AOC (see Pitte 2002, Abramson 2007; Bell and Valentine 1997).

4.3.6 The authenticity and coherence of culinary cultures

While food habits appear to offer some sense of belonging to a shared culinary culture, questions remain about the endurance, vulnerability and authenticity of culinary traditions, national cuisines and diets. Structural anthropologists prioritise how food habits and culinary cultures are relatively stable and enduring and they suggest individuals gain a sense of belonging via the consumption of certain symbolic foods and styles of preparation shared by other members of that community (see Beardsworth and Keil 1997). Although what constitutes culinary cultures appears to be partially engineered via powerful elites, the values attached to food items and learnt via socialisation have been shown to give meaning to individuals within a society particularly when such national identities are constructed in opposition to their 'others'(James 1997) [91]. Such emblematic dishes are frequently articulated and appear to act to maintain fixed cultural identities and it has been suggested that what defines a national diet is "*the collective imaginings of the people"* (Ashley *et al.* 2004:76)[92]. Culinary traditions and the commodification of regions appear to be a significant way in which food can be used in the construction of nation and community even when they may be fictitious or exaggerated (see Crang 1996; Bell *et al.* 1997; Ashley *et al.* 2004; Abramson 2007).

However, if such traditions are *'a powerful invented discourse in the presentation and representation of food and national or local cultures'* (Bell *et al.* 1997: 177), James argues that inevitably such stereotypes tend to promote an imagined past, lack coherence and as such are vulnerable. Furthermore, in relation to any notion of national identity and culinary tradition there remains considerable regional, local as well as individual variation thus further undermining the validity of any homogeneous national, regional or even local cuisine (see Fieldhouse 1995; Bell *et al.* 1997; James

[91] For example, such a sense of national belonging via the consumption of an 'iconic' dish is well captured by Self (1995: 32) who considers that *'if you eat a full English in the morning – you feel English'.*

[92] Such articulation of fixed cultural identities via the use of stereotypical foods is also much in evidence in popular advertising and the media A recent TV commercial encouraged viewers to buy a certain brand of French car and used certain typical and immediately recognisable foods as symbols for different countries (and their cars) and filmed such foods under car-like crash conditions (YouTube 2008). While the German sausage, Swedish crisp bread and Japanese Makisushi all performed badly, the baguette, metaphor for France, absorbed the shock of the collision. Of course, the end of the advert claimed that *'the safest cars are French'.*

1997; Ashley *et al.* 2004). It is also necessary to consider that while there may be deep cultural attachment and defence of 'traditional' foods in the face of *'foreign muck'* (Ashley *et al.* 2004: 83, see also Mennell 1996; Warde 1997) and iconic dishes such as 'fish and chips' or *'steak frites'* are seen as national in character and excluding anything *'foreign'*, people are enjoying foods that originated from other countries, then naturalised such as the potato made into chips. While attachment to culinary traditions may frequently act as powerful expressions of group identity, they are not fixed in time and reflect the unique historical development of a country. Certainly, writers from the developmental perspective highlight how domestic food practices and habits constantly evolve and absorb attitudes, taste preferences and cooking styles from other nations and localities and reflect aspects of trade, travel and technology (see Mintz 1985, Visser 1986, Mennell 1996, Bell and Valentine1997, James 1997, Short 2002, Mintel 2003, Ashley *et al.* 2004; Seymour 2004). Increasingly, national, regional and local cuisines are less limited by geography and nationhood and the globalised nature of cultural artefacts and commodity exchange has led some to believe that culinary cultures are becoming more similar throughout the developed world. Whilst a nation's geography may be fixed it remains a *"fluid cultural construct"* (Ashley *et al. 2004:* 89) and with increasing globalisation the ability of national borders to contain national or regional identity must be further questioned and it may be that there are no truly national foods in an increasingly borderless world (see Bourdieu 1991).

In Britain, food and eating habits appear less rooted in local traditions and more open to a plurality of foreign influences (Panayi 2007). Some commentators describe how in comparison to France, Britain has enthusiastically embraced a food revolution, new global markets and an eclectic mix of foreign influences and is now more culturally diverse, creative and has developed more exciting ways of doing and eating things (Grant 1999; Marr 2000; Blanc 2002; Cartwright 2002; Rogers 2004). While such influences have undoubtedly created an increased variety of ingredients and tastes, it has been suggested that *"it has also created unfocused eclecticism which lacks a clear base and direction"* (Lane 2010: 501). Britain has been described as being in a state of culinary chaos, overwhelmed by choice and lacking the rules and structures to guide the preparation and consumption of the foods now available from around the world (Driver 1983; Blanc 2002).

De Certeau *et al.* (1998: 85) also discussed how in France local conditions no longer dictate choice of dish or how it is cooked. In addition, they described how the combination of increased female employment, urbanisation and professional mobility had disrupted family life and resulted in not only less time for cooking but had also interrupted the familial and community oral transmission of traditional recipes and culinary cultures (see Jeffries 2002). Complex and time consuming regional recipes, reliant on local produce often prove less suitable for modern urban life and tend to refer to an outdated social status of women. As a result, they argue that there is declining coherence of traditional regional cuisine and *terroir.* However, Davidson (2006: 315; see also Blanc 2002) believes that *"French cooking is a monument"* and although their culinary traditions are based upon a strong, universal culture of food which had offered protection against globalising tendencies, it is also *"in a permanent state of renovation"* and thrives on innovation and the integration of new products and cross-cultural trends in cookery.

Both countries' are increasingly exposed to similar, global drivers of change and domestic food practices appear to be changing. The extent of change remains to be resolved and whether France's efforts to protect their culinary heritage risks preserving a tradition that increasingly lacks coherence among the public and which may serve as a catalyst for its downfall, remains to be seen (Blanc; see also de Certeau *et al.* 1998). It may be that the structuralist analysis over the sociology of food and eating, based on fixed codes and structures, is being undermined by a process of 'destructuration' in Britain, but also in France, and if so adds further support to the analysis offered by the developmental perspective.

4.4 Globalisation and drivers of change

4.4.1 Globalisation of culture

When considering the development of culinary cultures, structural factors and the power and universality of such macro influences require further investigation. Firstly then, the process of globalisation has been defined as:

> *"a process in which the world appears to be converging economically, politically and culturally. Globalization is seen by many as a fundamental change where national borders become irrelevant, a process accelerated by developments in information and communication technology".* (Needle 2004: 44)

Of course globalisation is not a recent phenomenon but it has been suggested that the speed of global integration between nations has greatly accelerated in the last fifty years and that globalisation now refers to a borderless world which is converging culturally as the constraints of geography recede (Wallerstein 1979; Giddens 1990; Hall *et al.* 1992; Waters 1995). While initially globalisation referred largely to a political-economic process, increasingly it has been linked to a process of cultural globalisation which has also been referred to as the McDonaldisation of Society and/or Culture (Robins 1991; Ritzer 1993; Fischler 1999). It is argued that large multinational corporations have emerged which compete in oligopolistic markets, exploit economies of scale and target consumers around the world that share increasingly similar habits and tastes as a result of global homogenisation and standardisation (Robins; Needle). Hall *et al.* consider that global marketing has contributed to global consumerism where cultural identities and traditions have been eroded so as to produce greater cultural homogenisation. Furthermore, it has been suggested that cultural products are commodified and offered to global markets seeking novel but standardised imitations of former local specialities (Levitt 1983; Hall *et al*.)

Certainly in Britain 'Indian cooking' appears to reflect little of India's ethnic traditions produced as it is in large British factories as well as in being sold in every town centre's Indian restaurants, takeaways and supermarkets. Similarly, products such as Camembert cheese that derive from Normandy have become not only the most popular cheese throughout France but developed into a globally recognised and internationally traded commodity. Over the past 150 years, Boisard (2003) claims it has been industrialised, homogenised, delocalised, pasteurised and ruined[93]. A local art has been transformed into a global science which eradicates risk and has ensured that a competitively priced and profitable product has come to dominate the supermarket shelves in France and around the world. Global agri-business is able to transform natural raw materials, adapt regional specialities, standardise them and then sell the

[93] Ninety per cent of Camembert is industrially produced with the five largest industrial plants producing about 1.5m Camembert a day via a workforce of less than 500 employees (Boisard 2003).

resultant homogenised products for mass consumption in the global market place (Fischler 1999).

4.4.2 Globalisation and the food supply chain

Many writers consider that the transformation in the food supply chain since the 1950s has significantly influenced how people connect with food including how it is cooked and eaten (Mennel 1996; Lang *et al.* 2001; Pollan 2007). Tansey *et al.* (1995) indicate that there are now six societal interests world-wide that influence the food system and these are globalisation, increasing urbanisation, longevity, technical change as well as changes in attitudes and values. It appears that due to demographic change and demand for an increased range of food coupled with aggressive development, marketing and supply of new food products has resulted in a massive and highly concentrated agri-food industry which attempts to respond and further influence production and consumption. As noted above, such an industry sources its supplies globally and now links the farm and the food processing industry via the retail industry to the consumer (Tansey *et al.* 1995, Atkins *et al.* 2001, Pollan 2007, Lang *et al.* 2009). Notably, partly as a result of rising affluence and socio-cultural change more generally, there has been increased demand in countries such as Britain and France for an increasing range of pre-prepared foods as well as products from the food service sector (Lang *et al.* 2009). The food industry appears to be a highly specialised, influential and economically significant industry in many countries[94].

4.4.3 The food retailing industry in France and Britain

The vast majority of consumers in both France and Britain buy their food from shops and increasingly from supermarkets[95] (INPES 2004; Abramson 2007; FSA 2007). It is within such physical and economic environments that people make decisions about

94 According to the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit (2008), in the United Kingdom alone, the food and drink supply chain, ranging from farming to food retailing and restaurants employs 3.7 million people and contributes 7% of GDP. This constitutes a major part of the economy and significantly, food manufacturing is now the single largest manufacturing sector in the UK.

95 Drawing on two recent and large scale surveys, INPES (2004) found that in France 79.7% of those surveyed had shopped in a supermarket in the previous fortnight, followed by corner shops (40.1%) and street markets (32.0%) and that between the two Health and Nutrition Barometers (1996 and 2002), French attitudes to food shopping had not changed significantly. Similarly, the FSA (2007) found that almost two-thirds (63%) of their respondents used large supermarkets for most of their shopping and a further 30% used the smaller, local shops of the supermarket chains for most of their shopping. As in France, the number using supermarkets was very similar to that seen in previous years.

what food to buy and it is argued that such environments circumscribe the choices people can make when purchasing food and thus have an important influence on the development of culinary cultures (Swinburn *et al.* 1999; Clarke, 2000; Vorley, 2003; Story *et al.* 2008; Hawkes 2008). Although France was slower than Britain in adopting *'the bland homogeneity of the supermarket culture'* (Fearnley-Whitingstall 2004), today, the growth in supermarkets and hypermarkets (a selling space greater than 2,500 square meters) in France holds all European records[96] . According to Defra (2008) just four firms in the UK account for an estimated two-thirds of all food retail sales and sales are still further concentrated in France[97] (Millstone *et al.* 2008; Hawkes 2008). Such is the concentration of power across Europe that in 2007 the European Parliamentary President announced an investigation in to alleged abuse of such power (The European Parliament 2007).

While the overall structure of the industry is similar in both countries, important internal differences exist. In particular, the retail sector is more regulated in France and limits on supermarket expansion have been imposed to protect smaller shops and hypermarkets are banned within the city limits of Paris although smaller, 'metro' type formats are gaining ground (Myers *et al.* 1996; Wrigley 2002; Abramson 2007). Meanwhile in Britain, increasing liberalisation, including the Sunday Trading Act (1994) has enabled British supermarkets to increase sales via Sunday opening and now twenty-four hour shopping is permitted unlike in France where shopping hours are shorter as a result of more restrictive state regulation however local independent shops are closing in France as they are in Britain (De Certeau *et al* 1998; Satterthwaite 2001; Oddy 2003)[98].

However, Blythman (2004: 77) points to how there remains an increased availability of 'local' and home produced foods in 'mainland' Europe and that:

[96] In the last 30 years, the total number of supermarkets in France jumped from 200 to 5,000 and the number of hypermarkets or '*grande surfaces'* from 1 to over 1,200 (Referensigne TNS-Secodip. 2003).

[97] Based on European sales, Carrefour is the largest European food retailer (second globally) and Tesco the second largest (third globally) in 2007 (Perkins 2001; Wrigley 2002; Millstone *et al.* 2008; Hawkes 2008).

[98] For example, in France, 1,000 of the 37,000 bakers closed down in 1994 alone and small grocers have faced a similar plight (De Certeau *et al* 1998; Satterthwaite 2001). Satterthwaite also reports that in Lyon, France's second largest city, shopkeepers generally had lost 50% of their trade by 2000 and the city centre had lost 8% of its markets due to out of town centre developments.

> *"Europeans expect that the lion's share of produce in their shops and markets will be home produce, coming from identifiable native regions, or at least sold under a generic national label."*

In particular, she considers that even within supermarkets, the French use the label *'pays'* or local as symbols of pride and quality and contrasts this with the difficulty in finding British, let alone local food products in British supermarkets. Not only do French supermarkets have to satisfy consumer demand for such products but they are also legally obliged to access a proportion of their fresh produce from the regional wholesale market unlike in Britain where there is greater reliance on food imports and centralised distribution centres.

Although the significance of supermarket shopping in both countries cannot be denied, Pettinger *et al.* (2008) found that their English respondents tended to do their shopping *'under one roof'* of a supermarket more often than the French who preferred to use specialist local shops and street food markets. In Britain, street and farmers markets were each used by around one in ten for some of their food shopping and significantly more by the A & B socio-economic groups (FSA 2007). In contrast, 32% of those surveyed in France by INPES (2004) had purchased food from food markets in the previous fortnight and the results demonstrated little difference between those with the highest and lowest educational qualifications. Furthermore, the usage of markets in France had increased from 1996 among the 50-59 year-olds compared to the closure of many British street markets, although this is somewhat offset by the growth in farmers markets from one in 1997 to an estimated 550 in the UK in 2008 although largely in the more affluent areas of the country (Defra 2008). Indeed, Jeffries (2001) commented that *"the country's* (France's) *thriving street markets show that the French care more about eating fresh food than their neighbours across the Channel".*

4.4.4 The Fast Food Industry

While Britain may lead Europe in their consumption of fast foods, other nations such as France appear to be closing the gap and it has been suggested that since the nineteen sixties there has been increasing convergence of England's and France's culinary cultures due primarily to the spread of fast food in France (Mennell 1996; Schlosser 2001).

The UK market for fast food and home delivery/takeaway was estimated to have a value of £6.8 billion in 2002 and sandwiches and the like dominated the fast food market and were estimated to grow by 22% by 2007, compared to an estimated 13.5% growth in fast food sales in the same period overall (Euromonitor 2003). In France, while actual burger outlets were predicted to remain the largest single food service sector in 2007, like the UK, the growth in sandwich sales had progressed faster (Gira Foodservice 2003; Donegan *et al.* 2002). INPES (2004) also highlights the significance of sandwiches, pizzas and pies within the sector and how such products are eaten more by young and/or working people.

However, there is evidence of France's 'surrender to burgers' as reflected by profit figures showing that France is leading the field for 'McDonalds' in Europe with revenues increased by 11% to €3 billion (£2.3 billion) in 2007 which is more than it generates in Britain and second only to the US itself (Poirier, 2008; The Times, 2008). Ever since the first 'McDonalds' opened in France in 1979, they have been successful and have effectively conquered the insular French market, seeing off rivals such as 'Burger King', 'Wendy's' and Belgium owned '*Quick'* (Law and Wald 1999; Fraser 2000; Donegan *et al.;* 2002; Poirier). Such writers describe how there are as many McDonalds in Paris (70) as there are in London, but with only a third of the population and how the newly designed 'high profit' French model of McDonalds is seen as a blueprint for its future European development.

4.4.5 Eating out

Whilst the kitchen has been central to the idea of the home, increasingly, eating is less identified with domesticity. Routines of everyday life in France and Britain have been deeply influenced by industrialisation, urbanisation, feminisation of the workforce, higher standards of living and education, the growth in car ownership and easier access to a wider range of leisure activities. In response, people are eating more of their meals outside their home including in restaurants, fast food outlets, hotels as well as at schools and at work[99] (Fischler 1999; Warde *et al.* 2005b). Defra (2007) calculated the

[99]In the UK, between 1995 and 2005-06, while real terms expenditure on all food and drink increased by 14 per cent this was largely due to increased expenditure on eating out. For example, household expenditure on food in real terms has only increased by 1.3 per cent since 1995 while expenditure on food and drink eaten outside the home rose in real terms by 55 per cent from £7.36 to £11.41 per person per week at 2005-06 prices (Defra 2007). Millstone *et al.* (2008) suggest that the growth rate on expenditure on eating out in the UK was 33% between the years 1985 and 2005.

proportion of total household food expenditure spent on eating out in the UK, excluding alcoholic drinks, to be around 27% each year from 2002-03 to 2005-06. A similar pattern of eating outside the home is apparent in France and for example, Gira Foodservice (2003) reported that in France in 2002, almost 27% of total food expenditure was accounted for by the foodservice sector and they forecast this to grow to about 29% by 2007. Millstone *et al.* (2008) agree that broadly speaking both countries now spend about a third of their total food budgets on eating out and estimate this will continue to grow and reach current USA levels of almost half the amount spent on food being spent on eating away from home by 2030. Interestingly they show that the average French person spent more money than their UK counterpart on food and associated alcohol consumed away from home in 2005 and the figure to be rising sharply and that the French on average, ate meals out on 80 occasions in 2005, compared to 84 in the UK. This suggests that while the French eat out slightly less often than those in the UK, when they do, they tend to spend more and according to Millstone *et al.* spend it in larger restaurants.

Eating out in restaurants is more expensive than eating at home and it remains a treat for the majority and in the UK at least, was a more frequent occurrence for those who are working, in socio-economic groups A, B and C1, and among those without children although there are clear regional differences and participation rates suggest that it is becoming a less exclusive social practice (NFM 2001; Mintel 2003; Warde *et al.* 2005a; Defra 2007; Millstone *et al.* 2008). For young adults (those under 35) who *'cannot be bothered to cook'*, dining out or indeed dialling out for a meal holds a particularly strong appeal and they were also more likely to have grown up in a culture where a wide variety of food options were readily available on the local high street (Mintel). They suggest that for young adults, time-poverty rather than affluence is the dominant motivating factor for what they term 'utilitarian' eating out although demand still peaks among the more affluent groups. In relation to takeaway meals, including burgers, fish and chips and kebabs, Defra (2007), found that just under 60% of their respondents said they ate such foods a few times a month however, almost a quarter claimed they ate this type of meal at least once a week. As in France, households with children present are more likely to eat in fast food establishments and the NFM (2001) also found fast food and takeaways to be particularly popular among the young and single, those with children aged between 5 and 10. Defra noted that men aged under 35 and of

C1 to E social grades appeared the most frequent consumers of takeaway meals. Such 'utilitarian' eating out may also help explain why the British are recorded as eating out slightly more often than the French while spending less and in smaller establishments.

It appears that globalisation of the French economy along with increased urbanisation has encouraged many workers to adopt more Anglo-American working practices including having a quick lunch, so that they can return home earlier. Lunch time eating away from home is further influenced by French law in that French employers who do not provide catering facilities on site have to provide daily luncheon vouchers *('ticketrestaurant'*) to all employees and this widens participation in restaurant usage as part of everyday work routines[100]. It also tends to bolster the tradition and importance of lunch within French culture and is often credited with sustaining the French restaurant industry (Jeffries 2001; The Times 2008). The 'ticketrestaurant' vouchers, normally for a value of between €6 and €12, generates significant tax breaks for employers and has also been blamed for the French fast-food boom because while €9 will pay for approximately two thirds of a restaurant meal, it will pay for an entire fast food meal. However, while restaurants such as 'McDonalds' are now busy during weekday lunchtimes they are busier still at weekends with social and family groups (The Times 2008). However, it has been suggested that social groups engage with such restaurants differently than the British or Americans and Fischler *et al.* (2008) noted that not only were the French more likely to visit 'McDonalds' in social groups but that they would purchase a wider range of foods which they would spread out on the table to be shared among the group. On average the French were found to spend longer in such outlets and were less likely to visit alone, collect their food and engage in solitary eating in their cars (dashboard dining). It appears that the French do not disapprove of 'fast food' rather it is the snacking between meals that is disapproved of and how the mealtime remains sacrosanct, not the type of food[101].

[100] While a Luncheon voucher system exists in Britain it is now much less widespread than in the past.

[101] In EuroDisney for example it was also noted how the French were not prepared to eat hamburgers or any other food outside of established mealtimes. As such, *'at precisely 12.30pm, these Europeans tended to queue up outside the park's restaurants, abandoning all other attractions. At other times, the restaurants remained empty'* (Fischler 1999; 545).

4.5 The further development of culinary cultures in an era of globalisation

It is tempting to conclude that given the globalising tendencies within the food supply chain that the foods available and food habits more generally are becoming more similar throughout the industrial world. Certainly in France, there is concern about the declining coherence of regional foods and cooking and that a 'food revolution' is occurring in France, as it has in Britain (Gentleman *et al.* 1999). The contemporary food system has also been held responsible for the erosion of local cultures and the perceived erosion of France's culinary traditions is interpreted by some as an attack on the French national identity (see Bové & Dufour, 2001; Rogers 2004). Alongside such trends, governments and citizens are alarmed by the rise in diet-related diseases and obesity, concerned about the impact of such a system on the environment and on food security. While uniform global brands such as 'McDonalds', 'Coca Cola' and even *'President'* Camembert cheese may dominate, there also appears to be a fascination with ethnicity and the 'local' and *'terroir'* (see Hall *et al.* 1992) and while France appears fascinated by American popular culture it still likes to define itself against the forces of 'globalism', and thinks of itself as gloriously different, a bastion of European culture (Marr 2000). Gentleman *et al.* suggest that France is indeed grappling with deeper questions about its future identity, and that America is currently just a handy target. They go on to report how Jean Baudrillard once said that France;

> *"wants to be an alternative, to show that if nobody resists America any more, at least we will. But because we are not sure what model to embody, we tend to offer simply inertia."*

As discussed, the developmental perspective emphasizes how domestic food practices and culinary cultures are inevitably shaped by history. However the extent to which they accept, reject or modify such influences on their culinary cultures reflects their own histories and cultural traditions (Mintz 1985; Mennell 1996; Panayi 2008). For example, it has been suggested that a significant difference between France and Britain is that Britain has a relatively weak and ill defined cuisine and as such its culinary culture is more permeable to external factors (Ashley *et al.* 2004). While Britons' undoubtedly share cultural attachment to certain 'traditional' dishes there has also been popular acceptance not only of French food but, over time also Italian, Chinese, American and

Indian food[102]. However, such imported culinary 'traditions' have had to undergo significant modifications, hybridisation and then naturalization before finding *"a crucial place at the very centre of Britain's national diet"* (Bell *et al.* 1997: 174). Significantly James (1997) considers this a process of *'food creolisation'* and that it does not represent Britain's eagerness to accept multicultural influences, culinary diversity or any diminution of British food traditions (see also Mennell 1996). Instead, it is argued that Britain's ready acceptance of such things as a cook-in-sauces, pot noodles and other 'exotic' ready and takeaway meals from the food industry is merely a means of quickly and easily enlivening plain British food and demonstrates some fundamental culinary markers of British food culture where food is more about necessity than pleasure as well as saving time and money. Whilst Mennell's thesis concludes that there is a diminution of traditional British food habits, James proposes that this acceptance of creolized foods simply represents old food habits in a new form and reflects continuity of British food traditions and it has been suggested that such food habits *"sit very comfortably alongside the imperatives of minimal effort and low cost, which are prioritised in a culture in which food is not considered important per se."* (Ashley *et al.* 2004: 88-9)

In France there is unease both at America's influence and the hegemony of the English language, in an era of American-led globalisation. In response, legislation has been passed to protect the French language and entertainment industry, and the notion that French culture, including culinary culture is something fragile and in need of support has gained ministerial backing most notably from the former Minister for Culture, Jack Lang. (Gentleman *et al.* 1999). Nevertheless, Fantasia (1995) suggests that while France was considered able to resist culinary colonialism, the spread of American fast food habits now rivals that in Britain. However, it was only in France where a 'McDonalds' restaurant was attacked in 1999 (Bové and Dufour 2001). The organiser, Monsieur Jose Bové, was imprisoned for criminal damage however he had:

> *"tapped into a deep well of public discontent and a feeling of powerlessness on subjects ranging from genetically modified foods to the power of the American economy"* (Anon 2000).

[102] For example, chicken tikka masala or CTM is now more popular than fish and chips (Hardyment 1995).

The sentiment expressed by this co-founder of a small farmers' union captured the imagination of the French people and his anti-globalisation politics, critique of industrialised agriculture and focus on the connection of French cooking to French soil (*terroir*) proved to be a popular discourse against the prevailing logic of globalisation (Jeffries 2001; Boisard 2003). Such was the public support for his defence of French food in the face of *'malbouffe'* (bad food) that he was released from prison after just six weeks (Bové *et al.*). Other imported culinary traditions such as couscous, which is as popular in France as chicken tikka massala is in Britain, are still rarely practiced in the home. Such North African preparation techniques or indeed those from other ex colonies such as Indo-China, appear to have hardly penetrated the more robust and insular French domestic cooking habits where culinary traditions and a tendency to *'follow the flag'* have persisted to a greater extent than in Britain (Mennell 1996; Jeffries 2001; Pettinger *et al.* 2004).

4.6 A comparison of contemporary attitudes and behaviour to food, diet and health

Pettinger *et al.* (2004) consider that the French and English populations can be differentiated overall in their attitudes and beliefs to food choice. For example, the IEFS's (1996) research of the then fifteen member states of the EU, found that among such European citizens 'Quality/Freshness' was the most important influence on food choice although it was far more highly rated in France than the UK. More recent research in France suggests that French consumers continue to put product quality ahead of shopping convenience and price when choosing where to shop for food and even within supermarkets, prioritise product label and brand rather than price[103] (INPES 2004; Pettinger *et al.*). The French have also been found to be more prepared to make time for cooking and shopping, such as waiting in a queue to get fresh produce, than the English (Gibney *et al.* 1997; Pettinger *et al.*). In the UK (and the USA), quantity and price, rather than quality have been found to be priorities (Rozin *et al.* 1999, Rozin *et al.* 2006) and while the French family is also concerned about price they spent on average 13.6% of their income on food eaten at home in 2004 compared to just 8.3% in the UK (Belasco 2008; Fitzpatrick *et al.* 2010). In relation to the selection, preparation and

[103] This is more marked among young people and those from higher income and qualification categories

consumption of *'quality'* food research suggests that this gives the French considerably more pleasure than UK citizens (Jeffries 2001; Fischler 2002). For example Fischler found that 80% of his French respondents identified with the *'gourmet eater'* profile (someone who considers eating to be one of the greatest pleasures in life, who often talks about cooking and pays careful attention to the quality of the food they eat), while nearly half of the British respondents did not identify with this profile at all[104].

In relation to food choice research suggests that those in the UK (also USA) prefer to be offered a larger choice[105] and higher levels of micro-variety than those in France (see Stearns 1997; Rozin *et al's.* 2006; Fischler *et al.* 2008. Americans and those in the UK also more greatly appreciate how food should be modified to meet individual tastes which *'contrasts with more collective food values in France and other European countries'* (Rozin *et al's.,* 2006: 304). Fischler (2002) also found that the French were the most intolerant of dinner guests who dislike a particular type of food and expressed a personal preference as opposed to respecting the notions of giving and sharing and even communion around the table. For example, while nearly all respondents in the UK found it perfectly acceptable if their dinner guests state they are vegetarians, this was not so readily accepted in France. It is also the French (and Italians) who are most opposed to people paying only for what they have eaten when it comes to settling the bill in a restaurant. Rather than such an individualistic attitude, it appears that they prefer to split the cost evenly and thus show that they are paying for their part in a shared experience. Fischler argues that in the UK (and the USA) food and eating, both in and out of the home is a far more personal matter than many countries in Europe, including France.

It is argued that the British demonstrate a more functional relationship between food and their bodies than the French (see Mennell 1996; Stearns 1997; Rozin *et al.* 1999) and Fischler (2002) notes how those in the UK chose metaphors such as '*factory*' *('because when we eat, food is transformed, distributed and stocked in different parts of*

[104] Interestingly, Fischler (1999: 532) discusses how when the French space programme was developing *'space food'*, they ruled out *'functional food concentrates'* and focused on ensuring that food products were as *'tasty as possible'* because *'culinary pleasure was important for maintaining the morale of people forced to work in extreme conditions.'*

[105] In particular, they found the British were more likely than the French to prefer an ice cream parlour offering a choice of 50 flavours than one offering 10. Similarly, when they asked respondents when invited to a restaurant whether they would expect to find a large choice on the menu with numerous different dishes or a small number of suggestions from the chef, the UK sample was twice as likely to expect a large number of choices as the French sample.

the body') and '*car*' *('because, a body needs food to function, like a car needs petrol/gas'*) (see also Pettinger *et al.* 2004) while the French were significantly more likely to choose metaphors such as 'a tree' *('because the body is a living being that requires food from the soil, sun and air to grow'*) or 'a temple' to describe their bodies and paid more attention to the sensory as opposed to nutritional properties of food *(*see also *Rozin et al.* 1999 & 2003).

Overall taste and enjoying a meal are the most important dimensions of eating for 41% of those surveyed in France while eating to stay healthy is a deliberate aim for only one in five persons (INPES 2004). Gibney *et al.* (1997), found more UK than French respondents reporting trying to eat healthier as an important influence on food choice and Rozin *et al.* (1999) also found the French to be particularly unconcerned about diet and health compared with other European/North American populations.[106] Whilst it is tempting to conclude that the British public have done more to improve their diet than the French in this area, it may also be due to differences between how the French and those in the UK perceive 'healthy eating'. Clearly taste and healthfulness are culturally relative terms and for example, Fischler (1999) points to how in Britain, cheese is considered by most people to be high in saturated fats and thus potentially harmful to the body while the French see cheese as rich in calcium and important to a balanced diet. Such differences in perception tends to be supported by IEFS's (1996) research, when European respondents were asked to describe 'healthy eating' in their own words. While those in the UK prioritised eating less fat, salt and sugar and eating more fruit and vegetables the French respondents were more likely to describe 'healthy eating' as about balance and variety and about 'fresh/natural food' which was ranked fifth 5th in the UK (see also Fischler 2002; INPES 2004; FSA (2007). It appears that the French tend to emphasise a few basic guidelines in relation to diet and health rather than strict rules regarding increasing or decreasing the consumption of certain foods and indeed Fischler (2002) found that of the six countries surveyed, the French were the least likely to *'think that, by following the nutritionists' advice, they can avoid or*

[106] In France, INPES (2004) found that on average, those questioned now ate fruit and vegetables 2.4 times per day, only slightly higher than the results published in 1996 (see also Amalou & Blanchard 2004). Comparable data for the UK from The National Diet and Nutrition Survey compiled by Hoare *et al.* (2004) reported that on average, men consumed 2.7 portions of fruit and vegetables per day, and women 2.9 portions and overall, 13% of men and 15% of women met the five-a-day recommendation. This represents an important increase since 2001 and it appears consumption has since further increased to the equivalent of 4.0 portions per person per day (DH 2005; DEFRA 2007; FSA 2007)

keep at bay certain diseases and stay in good physical shape to a ripe age'. He found that despite those in the UK (and the USA) worrying more about complying with scientific-medical advice they found achieving a healthy diet harder than the French respondents and the Americans were the least likely to classify themselves as *'healthy eaters'* (Rozin *et al.* 1999). Fischler found that it is not the quality of the food that is questioned but the individual's lack of control for self-improvement which is blamed for poor health. It is suggested that those in the UK (as well as Americans) prioritise the notion that it is the individual's responsibility to make the 'right' choices in relation to their 'nutrition' (as opposed to their food). Meanwhile the French, and other predominantly non Anglo-Saxon European nations, appeared to attach cardinal importance to the collective and social aspects of eating (Fischler) whereas the greater individualism in the UK further ensured that food was rarely a medium of spiritual communion (Jeffries 2001). Fischler found that the French were more likely to agree that their state of health was outside of their control and that dietary behaviour was deeply influenced by customs and culture and as such could adopt a more relaxed attitude towards food and eating.

It appears that France is more about the pursuit of abstract ideas such as beauty and pleasure than Protestant notions such as rigour, conscience and duty (Wadham 2009). Certainly evidence has been presented that the French appear to have a more philosophical passion for food and are simply more complacent while countries such as Britain appear to share a predisposition towards greater *'medicalised Puritanism'* and self discipline in relation to food and their bodies. (Fischler *et al.* 2008: 23).

Chapter 5 : Methodology and research design

5.1 Introduction to methodology

How social research is conducted reflects basic assumptions and different guiding parameters. The two most important research traditions are said to be quantitative and qualitative and each *"produce different research designs, because they follow in their theoretical structure different ontological and epistemological prescriptions"* (Sarantakos 2005: 29). However, there appears to be no essential starting point or order in relation to discussing ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions because as Guba *et al.* (1994: 108) suggest *'the answer given to any one question, taken in any order, constrains how the others may be answered'*. Nonetheless, it was decided to first explore the very principles that underpin social research and in particular, how questions of ontology and epistemology combine to help shape the overarching philosophical or paradigmatic framework of research and how in turn such paradigms underpin decisions of methodology. Following on, the justification both for employing comparative research and for the choice of France is discussed and the selection of the research instruments are considered along with the rationale for the overall research design including the two distinct phases of interviews. Issues of administration, sampling and analysis are discussed before concluding with a critical review of the extent to which the design of this research can be said to have collected reliable, valid and/or credible and dependable findings. Ethical considerations are considered throughout the chapter however an overview of how an ethical code was translated into practice can be found at the end of the chapter.

5.1.1 Research Questions

The overall aim and objectives of the research were presented in the 'Introduction' however it is now necessary to discuss the research questions which were developed as a result of the preceding chapters and were used to further direct the research process.

It was imperative that the design of the fieldwork prioritised the gathering of data on how individuals actually engaged with domestic food practices in the home, the extent of change over time and to gain an understanding of respondent's feelings and thoughts in relation to such practices. This led to the development of the following two research questions:

1. **How did people practice and experience cooking in the past?**

   historical overview, development of culinary cultures, similarities and differences in French- British experience.

2. **What food practices are currently employed in the home?**

   who purchases and prepares food, how, where and why, what skills are utilised and how are they acquired, what are the occasions and locations for cooking.

The next two questions were designed to deepen understanding of the key drivers of change and assess those structures which might be responsible for continuity in relation to France and Britain's domestic food practices and culinary cultures. They were:

3. **What are the factors that influence change in relation to domestic food practices?**

   at the micro level - the significance of technology, gender roles, family structures, working and leisure patterns.
   at the macro level - the food industry, economic/cultural globalisation and the MNC, commercialisation of eating

4. **What factors contribute to continuity in relation to domestic food practices?**

   attitudes to food and cooking, cultural identity, education, government (in)activity, policy decisions.

The final research question required the findings to be compared and to promote the development of an explanatory framework so as to validate the findings and address the title.

5. **How do Britain and France compare in their experience of any transition in culinary cultures?**

5.1.2 Research Methodologies & Theoretical Paradigms

Methodology is concerned with the nature of research design and asks how it is possible to gain knowledge of the world and thus directs the methods of research to be employed (Sarantakos 2005). Sarantakos goes on to explain that "*methodology is a research strategy that translates ontological and epistemological principles into guidelines that show how research is to be conducted"* (p. 30). Thus it is important for the researcher to grasp how beliefs about ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (the relationship between the researcher and what can be known) and methodology are used to gain knowledge of the world. Ontological, epistemological and methodological principles which share a similar nature can then be combined into a set of basic beliefs which are frequently referred to as a philosophical approach, theoretical perspective or paradigm (Denzin *et al.* 1994; Guba *et al.* 1994; Oakley 2000; Sarantakos 2005).

Social scientists tend to regard ontological and epistemological approaches towards knowledge as forming two fundamental but contrasting theoretical paradigms and these are often referred to as 'positivism' and 'anti-positivism' (Crotty 1996). The positivist paradigm develops out of the ontological position of realism, shares an objectivist and empiricist epistemology and is associated with a quantitative research methodology and methods (Guba *et al.* 1994; Oakley, 2000; Sarantakos 2005). In contrast, what is often simply referred to as anti-positivist research, shares an interpretative philosophy or paradigm although the terminology tends to lack precision[107] prompting Crotty (1998: 1) to comment that:

> *"the terminology is far from consistent in research literature and social science texts. One often finds the same term used in a number of different, sometimes even contradictory ways."*

Whilst there does appear to be a range of overlapping philosophical approaches within 'anti-positivism'[108], the study of the social world such as undertaken in this research

[107] Such a paradigm has also loosely been referred to as interpretivist, interpretivism, constuctivist and even constructivism (Schwandt 1994; Burr, 1995 Oakley, 2000;)

[108] For example, Sarantakos (2005) refers to interpretivism as an epistemology and considers the *'only two well-known and popular qualitative paradigms'* (p. 43) to be symbolic interactionism and phenomenology. Other social science texts include paradigms such as critical theory, feminism and postmodernism although it is not always apparent whether such

demands that terms such as objective and rational become more relative and that the construction of meaning relies on interpretation (Denzin *et al.* 1994; Crotty 1998; Sarantakos 2005). As such, a broadly interpretivist-constructivist framework is often used by those undertaking qualitative research because it shares an "*emphasis on the world of experience as it is lived*" (Schwandt, 1994:41). In relation to epistemology and ontology, such a framework stresses that any notion of objective knowledge or truth is the result of perspective and clearly rejects the suggestion of a single, objective truth waiting to be discovered and considers the best way to understand social phenomena is in the natural world (Rudestam *et al.* 1992).

Oakley (2000: 24, see also Gage 1989) usefully summarises the characteristics of two opposing approaches to research which she refers to as the *'warring paradigms',* namely "*(logical) 'positivist'/'scientific'/'quantitative' versus 'naturalist' 'interpretivist'/'qualitative'.*. On the 'positivist'/'scientific' side she includes terms such as *'empiricism'* and *'objectivist'* while on the *'interpretivist'* side she includes terms such as *'constuctivist'* and *'subjectivist'.* However, of the greatest significance to this research is the emphasis on two clearly contrasting accounts of how it is that people 'know' and construct meaning and a sense of reality.

5.1.3 Comparative research

Before putting the '*warring paradigms'* and debates about methodologies into motion it is essential to further consider and justify the guiding methodological stance of this research which was first outlined in Chapter 1, namely that it is a comparative study of culinary cultures in France and Britain.

Comparative research has a long tradition within the social and behavioural sciences which enables two or more things to be compared with a view to discovering a gap in knowledge about one or all of the things being compared that had not previously been identified. Cross cultural research prioritises how different cultural settings or geographical environments shape people's behaviour and is a useful approach with which to identify, analyse and explain similarities and differences across socio-cultural settings (Raaji 1978: Hantrais 1995). Within the broad area of comparative research,

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approaches fit neatly into any clear ontological or epistemological position and have anyway been rejected for this research (Jackson, 1995; Guba *et al.* 1994; Blaikie, 1995).

terms such as cross cultural or cross national comparative research are used fairly interchangeably, however the term cross cultural is preferred for this research because within any country there are different cultures and sub cultures and it is important to be sensitive to differences both between and within countries.

It has been suggested that cooking skills and culinary cultures in many parts of the world are increasingly being influenced by powerful structural and socio-cultural factors operating at a global level and that the subsequent impact on diet requires policy response (Mennel 1996; Lang *et al.* 2001; Pollan 2007). As such, cross cultural comparative research appeared highly pertinent for this research as it would afford greater insight into social phenomena such as those related to domestic food practices across socio-cultural settings and explore both the universality and uniqueness of certain forms of behaviour (Sobal 1998). Observing similarities and differences both within and between different cultural groups would help expose what factors within contemporary society are more universally accepted but also provide insight into how the specific socio-cultural conditions, institutional arrangements and wider political and economic environments may act either to encourage acceptance of changes to their respective culinary cultures or indeed serve to block or impede the impact of such changes to culinary cultures. Such an approach would offer the opportunity to observe more deeply a range of social and cultural variables such as a country's customs, traditions, lifestyles and institutions, compare how they impact upon the phenomena under investigation, and then search for, and explain patterns of similarity and difference by referring to the wider social context (Raaij 1978).

In addition to investigating the interplay of such mechanisms upon the phenomena, it was also the aim of this research to investigate and evaluate policy responses used for dealing with problems associated with changing dietary patterns such as rising levels of obesity. Cross cultural comparative research offers the possibility to first identify and then assess to what extent policies adopted in one country might be transferable to another country or cultural setting and/or highlight possible directions that policy might take that had not previously been considered.

5.1.4 Why France?

Having decided that a cross cultural comparative approach could offer considerable advantages in developing deeper understanding of how and why culinary cultures might be changing within Britain by comparing such phenomena with the evolution of culinary cultures of another country, it was then necessary to identify a country with which Britain could be compared. Evidence has been presented that suggests the drivers of change are increasingly global in nature and that countries as widespread as Zimbabwe, Greece, Japan and Finland have reported changes to cooking habits, diets and culinary cultures. The 'nutrition transition' (Popkin 2001), the increasing McDonaldisation of Society (Ritzer 2000) and *'burgerization'* (Millstone *et al.* 2003) have already been cited as contributing to the growing rates of obesity and diet related diseases in many parts of the world and this suggests that many counties could have been chosen for comparison. However, as indicated in the 'Introduction' it was considered advantageous to select a country which shared a range of geographic, climatic, economic, social, historical and political similarities with which culinary cultures interacted. Rather than selecting two very different countries with vastly different traditions and customs, it was felt important to compare changes to Britain's culinary cultures with possible changes and continuities to culinary cultures within a country that shared broadly similar economic and industrial structures as well as geography. If two countries with vastly different structures and/or geographies had been selected, the interplay of such frameworks on their respective culinary cultures may have been so overpowering as to have lacked relevance to the British context and while such contrasts might have been interesting it was felt that what was learnt from the comparison of two such countries would more likely be unique to their particular environment and any policy responses that were identified in one country might be less applicable or transferable to a country such as Britain.

While certain non-European countries might have satisfied many of the criteria mentioned above, proximity to Britain was a key consideration due partly to issues of access but more importantly, because of potential historical, political, economic and cultural similarities. Those countries of Western Europe, while often exhibiting many internal differences, also share many similarities and in addition were more likely to have produced broadly comparable data sets, reports and other useful research

findings. France was always a key contender for selection partly because of it being Britain's closest geographical neighbour but also because the researcher has lived, worked and holidayed there over a period of forty years. Not only would such factors, including the ability of the researcher to speak French, greatly facilitate access to the population there but such knowledge and understanding of French society and culture would enhance the ability to more deeply observe the phenomena under investigation. Another advantage for selecting France was that many detailed and useful surveys had already been undertaken in relation to dietary habits and attitudes to food and health and some comparative research had also been initiated. Furthermore, international researchers, including Mennell, Fischler and Rozin, had suggested the need for further comparative research on France and Britain to be undertaken.

Significantly, and as discussed in Chapter 2, while there are many historical similarities between the two nations, including how both countries have been exposed to a range of powerful, often global influences, cultural conditions appear different in each county and this appears to be a factor that has contributed to the development of very different and distinctive culinary cultures (Mennell 1996; Pettinger *et al.* 2006). The extent to which people and cultures in each country accept and/or reject key influences upon their culinary cultures will provide an important insight into the workings of each country's institutional arrangements along with the machinations of their overarching political, economic and socio-cultural frameworks. Such a comparative study needs to establish how it is that these neighbouring countries have had such fundamentally different attitudes to food and eating. It is then possible to compare the similarities and differences between how each country has been influenced by many of the global phenomena present within the food system as well as the extent to which each country's domestic food habits have been influenced by broad socio-cultural trends in a period of late modernity. Another advantage of selecting France for this cross cultural comparative research is that France has one of the lowest rates of obesity and CHD in the developed world (Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006, IOTF 2008; Millstone *et al.* 2008) and this research can examine whether the food policy environment in France could usefully be duplicated or adapted in Britain.

5.1.5 Comparative research and the selection of a methodological approach

Heidenheimer *et al.* (1983) considers that because comparative research offers considerable flexibility there is no single best methodological approach, although they suggest that secondary analysis of quantitative data is relatively widespread in comparative research. In the early stages of this research it was also very useful to be able to compare a range of official government reports and data produced by various market intelligence agencies so as to establish a framework of understanding. However, to select a quantitative methodology for the collection of primary data for this comparative research would demand drawing on the philosophical underpinnings of positivism for its research design. The overall stance of the paradigm is both reductionist and deterministic (Hesse, 1980; Oakley 2000) and social scientists who prioritise a quantitative methodology usually seek to verify, explain and predict the interconnections between social events and establish causal laws of human behaviour via what is considered to be the generation of hard, 'value free' and generalisable data that is largely numerical, measurable and can be analysed statistically to establish the significance and links between predefined variables. (Haralambos 1990; Guba *et al.* 1994; Oakley 2000; Sarantakos 2005). The quantitative researcher starts from a hypothesis, then operates a 'top-down' approach and privileges empirical data collection via research methods such as surveys, experiments and statistical records which are considered capable of eliminating bias.

Such an approach, which aims to converge on the 'true' state of affairs or how things really are and assumes it is possible to discover an objective truth which has meaning independent of the researcher appeared to be at odds with the focus of this research. After all the aim of this research was to compare and make sense of individual's everyday experiences in relation to domestic food practices in France and Britain and as such the notion of any single, objective and fixed reality which is 'out there' and waiting to be discovered or indeed that any real world exists independent from people and their perceptions were rejected in favour of a relativist ontology. People's food related activities differ widely and it was therefore important to select an epistemological approach that would promote the construction of meaning. As such, an objectivist epistemology was dismissed however a purely subjectivist approach was also rejected. Given the comparative nature of this research, constructionism which prioritises the

belief that it is not possible to separate the natural world from that of the social, appeared particularly pertinent. After all when individuals are exposed to phenomena, it is their cultural background that helps shape how they might construct meaning from what they see or experience. As such, and in this comparative study, research participants need to be studied from different cultures and environments within each country because such factors are likely to have played a role in influencing how they have made sense of and interpreted the changing world around them.

For the collection of primary data for this comparative research neither did it seem appropriate to gather 'hard', replicable data and adopt a 'scientific' approach of measuring quantity, frequency or intensity when the aim was to understand the 'why' and the 'how'. A broadly anti-positivist paradigm which adopts an interpretivist-constructivist framework and a qualitative methodology appeared much more relevant for this research. Instead of starting from a hypothesis, the research needed to generate understanding via discovery and adopt a bottom up approach. A qualitative methodology would prioritise an inductive approach that encourages the collection of rich, deep and trustworthy data collected in the field via such methods as observation, in-depth interviewing and case studies which stress meaningfulness and credibility rather than validity in relation to the research findings (Oakley, 2000).

Having selected a qualitative approach, it was then necessary to decide upon a research strategy that would generate understanding and explanation of both the similarities and differences in people's domestic food practices. It was also necessary to explore how the development of specific culinary cultures interacts with institutional and industrial structures at the national and regional level, so as to be able to firstly understand and compare the extent of transition in culinary cultures within and between France and Britain and secondly, to help identify possible directions for food policy to follow in Britain which may not have previously been considered

5.1.6 Rationale for the development of two phases of research

The preceding chapters have reviewed a range of literature in relation to the development of culinary cultures in France and Britain and explored at a national and global level factors that may have influenced change. Large scale surveys and comparative reports have also been studied in relation to changes regarding who cooks

what, where and how, as well as comparing eating habits in France and Britain more generally. How people learn to cook has also been compared along with policies aimed at encouraging people to engage with food, cooking and healthy diets. Given that the philosophical approach adopted for this research privileged the view that reality can only be understood via people's accounts of it and that only via interaction with them, can data that reflects *'real life'* be collected, it was apparent that primary data had to be gathered from the perspective of the individual. The research strategy demanded a bottom up approach and it was felt that initially it was essential to hear what ordinary people were actually doing in the home in relation to their everyday food practices and engage with them about the reality of their culinary cultures. The purpose of this phase of the research was to discover from the perspective of the general public how they prepared food in the home or how it was prepared for them, the factors that influenced such decisions, whether they had learnt to cook and if so. Such engagement with the general public would also offer the opportunity to enquire about their perception of their culinary culture and seek their views in relation to any perceived evolution in relation to cooking and eating habits. This phase of the research is subsequently referred to as Phase 1.

As with much qualitative research, the research process remained fluid and iterative and revisions were made in light of the fieldwork, the emerging data and its interpretation. Mason (1996, 9) suggests that *'research design cannot necessarily be completed before the research has begun'* and for example, during Phase 1 of the fieldwork it became apparent that such a phase of research was unable to adequately explore policy development in France and Britain in relation to food, cooking and healthy diets. As such, a second phase of research was required and it was necessary to plan this with 'experts' working professionally within the broad policy domain with direct experience of either cooking or of others who cook/don't cook so as not only to be able to elaborate upon the emerging data from Phase 1 of the research, but also to enquire of them their views in relation to current and future policy direction with particular reference to the teaching of cooking skills. This phase of the research is subsequently referred to as Phase 2.

5.2 Phase 1 research

Phase 1 of the research required an insight into people's domestic food practices and a range of research methods were considered including observation, in-depth interviewing, case study and self compilation of diaries (Schwandt 1994; Oakley 2000). Observation was ultimately rejected mainly because it would be necessary to visit people in their homes and while covert observation would be unethical, overt participatory observation would disrupt and disturb the natural setting of the home under scrutiny. The installation of video cameras in people's kitchens would similarly disrupt how people naturally live their lives and because cameras are normally fixed, would fail to capture much of the 'action'. Furthermore, the research was not limited to culinary practices in the home but sought to explore attitudes, values and beliefs in relation to broader issues in relation to culinary cultures and change. The case study approach was deemed too narrow in focus and would provide data that had limited transferability and would not adequately address the research questions and similarly, the compilation by respondents of diaries was also ruled out.

With the overall aim of the research in mind, and the need to investigate the why as well as the what, it was decided that the first phase of the research would adopt one to one in-depth interviews aimed at discovering what food practices actually occur in the homes of a cross section of people living in France and Britain. It also needed to explore people's attitudes, experiences and beliefs in relation to domestic food practices, how these inform behaviour and to what extent various factors might act as drivers of change, or indeed, continuity. A summary of the overall research design for Phase 1 and Phase 2 can be found in appendix 2.

5.2.1 The development of the interviews

Interviews range from the highly structured to the more open conversational type although the former, tend to produce more quantitative data and were deemed inappropriate. While open conversational type interviews can promote deep insight, it can be difficult to focus the 'conversation' and ensure relevant topics are covered. Most interviews fall somewhere between such extremes and are often referred to as 'semi-structured' interviews and typically include broad topic headings and prompts, rather than precisely structured questions (Hobson 1998). Such an approach appeared ideal for this research as it could contain both general background questions along with more

specific prompts so as to ensure the respondents discussed key areas and that comparable data could be collected. It also offered flexibility as well as sensitivity to each individual encounter.

Key themes had emerged from the review of literature which needed to be further examined in order to address the research questions. Broad interview questions and prompts were duly developed and sequenced into an interview format which was first piloted with a work colleague and then via a tutored and tape recorded interview with a fellow PhD student. This led to the decision to promote greater narrative and a more conversational style of interview so as to more deeply explore key themes. Questions, prompts and the sequence were altered and a more coherent structure was developed and such reflection helped enhance the validity of the data collected (see Appendix 3).

Personal details of those to be interviewed were required and an appropriate form was developed (see appendix 4). A 'Consent Form' which explained the overall aim of the research, details of the researcher, a request to record the interview and the approximate likely duration of the interview was also developed. In addition, it explained the purpose of the interview, informed participants that they could refuse to answer any question and explained issues of confidentiality and anonymity (appendix 5). Such forms along with the interview schedules were then translated into French by the researcher, scrutinised by a fluent French speaker in Britain and further refined by a native French speaker who lived in Nantes where she taught English in a state school (see appendices 6, 7 & 8 respectively).

5.2.2 Population

Having established *'knowing what to ask'* and *'how to ask it'* it was necessary to *'know who to ask'* (Burton 2000). It was clearly necessary to gain access to a variety of members of the general public living in both France and Britain.

It was agreed to start the fieldwork in France and the initial selection of the population was influenced by the fact that the researcher had spent two years living in France, mainly Nantes, and it was decided to take advantage of the support and access to the population there. Similarly, with the researcher now living in London, it was agreed that the researcher could similarly take advantage of the support and access to the population there. However after the completion of the French interviews followed by the

initial five London interviews and some preliminary data analysis, doubts emerged as to the validity of collecting and comparing data drawn from a sample living in a provincial city in France, namely Nantes, with that of the capital city of Great Britain. For example, it was apparent that in Nantes, more people found it easier to return home from work for lunch and also that Londoners more frequently cited the influence of 'ethnic' cuisines and the cosmopolitan nature of shopping and eating and such behaviours appeared likely to be specific to comparing a provincial city with a capital city. For greater validity in such comparative research it was essential to more closely compare 'like with like' and while interviewing participants from Paris was considered it was decided to locate a comparable city and sample population to that found in Nantes with one in Great Britain.

The Commission of the European Communities lists over 8,000 municipalities in Western Europe that are involved in the 'European Twinning Scheme'. When towns are twinned various factors and similarities are taken in to account including geographical location, size, population, make up of population, industry/business/farming, historical background, amenities, educational facilities, organisations /associations /societies and so on. Nantes was found to be twinned with Cardiff and certainly both share a similar history such as being important regional ports with Cardiff as the capital city of Wales and Nantes, historically the capital of Brittany (although now the administrative capital of the Department of Loire Atlantique). Both also share fiercely independent traditions, have over time enjoyed varying degrees of autonomy and suffered periods of marginalisation and neglect. More recently *'Nantes Atlantic Development'* has been likened to the *'Cardiff Bay Development'* in that both are economic and cultural development strategies designed to attract businesses, improve the coastal regions and urban environments and rejuvenate the urban landscapes. Their municipal areas are of a similar size; both have large universities, cathedrals, similar infrastructures and are both connected to their capital cities via major, if long, rail, road and air links. Both have also developed regional cooking styles based on their local products which tends to reflect a poorer, more peasant based style than in some regions and correspondingly their culinary cultures tend to enjoy a lesser reputation. As such, Cardiff was selected as the city from which a more comparable sample could be drawn.

5.2.3 Sampling

There are two basic types of sampling, namely random sampling and non-random sampling. With random sampling, all members of the population have a chance of being selected whereas with non-random sampling, members of the population do not all have a chance of being selected and typically some form of judgement is involved to select members of the population. Random sampling methods have the advantage of permitting social explanations such as empirical generalisations about the whole population that it represents (Mason 1996) however although random sampling *" is useful for much social research, it does not fit all research situations"* (Bauer *et al.* 2000: 22). Furthermore, random sampling requires a sample frame listing the details of all the population members which was neither easily available nor indeed appropriate in qualitative research such as this. Having accepted that a non-random sampling method would best suit this research, it was then necessary to decide which specific technique of selecting a sample from the desired population would be most appropriate. Some form of judgement of who to include and who to exclude from the research had to be made and for example it was immediately decided to exclude anybody with a professional interest in cooking or any self-declared *'foodies'*. More significantly, at the beginning a quota sampling method was developed which sought to take into account relevant variables such as gender, age, marital and family status, socio-economic group, ethnicity and so on and this was then used to develop a sampling frame to guide the selection of a diverse range of individuals from both countries that could take part in the research. However it became evident that this would require a very large sample size which could lead to '*data dungeons'* (Bauer *et al.* 2000: 34) and most importantly, the sample selected would be far from representative of anything in particular. Whilst it was clearly necessary to reduce the number of variables it was still important to draw broadly comparable participants from both countries which represented both genders, a mix of people living alone or with family as well as those that had or had not received higher education. As such a revised frame was then developed to help guide and monitor the selection of comparable participants from Nantes, London and then Cardiff (see appendix 9). Although initially useful, further judgement was used to include individuals that further promoted variety and diversity within the sample (see Cohen *et al.* 1989; Hammersly 1990; Miles *et al.* 1994; Mason, 1996; Bauer *et al.* 2000) because although social variables might represent one dimension of diversity, Bauer *et al.* consider it is equally important to capture other dimensions which represent how people

actually relate to objects in their own lives. Whilst such variety is initially unknown, this research aimed to construct a research corpus via the on-going reflection and selection of a broad mix of largely comparable data sources.

5.2.4 The sample and administration of the interviews

A total of 29 persons were finally selected and interviewed for Phase 1 of the research and the sample consisted of:

- 15 French persons from Nantes
- 14 British persons (5 from London and 9 from Cardiff)

The interviewees were interviewed individually in their homes, in the homes of their friends or family and in the case of the Cardiff respondents, most were interviewed at their place of work. On meeting the respondents, the appropriate 'Information and Consent' form along with the form to gather 'Personal Information' were provided and collected when signed. A brief discussion followed to clarify any issues, a quiet environment was sought although not always available and the recording equipment set up. All interviews lasted between 30 minutes and one hour and averaged about 40 minutes. All French persons were interviewed in French and all British respondents interviewed in English. Immediately after each interview some field notes were written which described the interview location and environment, whether there had been any interruptions, brief information on how the interview proceeded and any other relevant details. This was at times useful when wanting to understand the background context of the interview which was at times helpful in the process of analysis.

Appendix 10 provides a brief profile for each phase 1 interviewee giving details of their nationality, gender, age, life stage, number of people who lived in their home, their occupation and whether they had received higher education. Each respondent was also coded according to certain criteria in order to ensure accurate identification of each respondent whilst maintaining anonymity.

5.2.4.1 The Nantes Sample

The interviewees from Nantes were selected from acquaintances, their relatives and/or friends/work colleagues and a total of 15 persons agreed to be interviewed and their details mapped on to the quota sampling frame to help ensure that the respondents selected represented a broad mix of social characteristics in relation to gender, age, life-stage, family situation and household type/size. Occupations were varied and whether they had received education post 18 was also recorded. The biggest group were in their 40s (6/15), although their ages ranged from 23-75. Just over half were professionally employed (7/15), such as teachers, architects and IT workers although the sample included housewives, a retiree, an unemployed person, an electrical engineer and so on. All considered themselves to be French, although two were born in Algeria, one of whom had Algerian parents and lived in Algeria until attending university in France at the age of 24. All but one lived within Nantes city itself and those that worked, worked in and around Nantes.

5.2.4.2 The London Sample

The five London interviewees were also selected from acquaintances, their relatives and friends and shared certain broad characteristics to those interviewed in France. While there was a mix of gender and family circumstances, the sample was slightly older being aged between 50 and 60, all had attended higher education and all were professionally employed such as teachers, an architect, a nurse and an information manager. Again, due to the 'snowball sampling' technique and to correspond with the Nantes sample, two couples were interviewed individually and these closely matched the couples interviewed in France in relation to aspects of employment and family circumstances. All were interviewed in their own homes.

5.2.4.3 The Cardiff Sample

The largest British sample consisted of nine people who were interviewed in Cardiff. Unlike those from Nantes or London, these interviewees were accessed with the help of three separate colleagues who had working relationships with people in Cardiff and as such were unknown to the interviewer. In addition, all interviews occurred at their places of work. Individuals were successfully selected from a variety of social backgrounds and an attempt was made to ensure that those interviewed in Cardiff broadly contrasted with

those already interviewed in London. The ultimate aim was to ensure that the overall British sample was broadly similar in social background and characteristics to the French sample already interviewed whilst accepting the richness of data that would emerge from diverse individuals within socially contrasting groups. The sample included a mix of gender, were of necessity younger than the London sample with an age range of 31 to 60. The majority lived 'within family' and with children. Less than half (4) had attended higher education and these persons were largely professionally employed. Of the remaining five, two were employed as secretaries, two were engineers and one was a junior manager. They identified themselves as British or Welsh although two claimed (continental) European parentage or grandparents and one grew up in Northern Ireland. All but one worked in central Cardiff, although many lived in the Greater Cardiff area or nearby valleys.

5.2.5 Data Analysis

Unlike in quantitative data analysis, "*there is simply no consensus as to how qualitative analysis should proceed*" (Sarantakos 2005:344). Furthermore, Sarantakos considers that unlike quantitative research, where analysis is conducted after data collection, in qualitative research, analysis usually takes place both during and after the data collection and this was very much the approach adopted for this research. However all qualitative data analysis is based on the interpretation of data from an interaction with a data source, such as in this case between the interviewer and the interviewee (Miles *et al.*1994; Sarantakos 2005).

Data for phase one of this research was generated via asking people about their everyday domestic food practices and the interviewees provided rich, personal accounts which were all recorded. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim and notes added to explain any interruptions or special occurrences. The repeated listening and reading of the interviews enabled the researcher to immerse himself in the data and begin to develop his understanding of what was being said. However, the process of collecting and engaging with the data was iterative in that at the same time as transcribing and initially analysing the data, further interviews were carried out. Content analysis on the transcribed interviews was undertaken so as to promote the *"careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases, and meanings"* (Berg 2007:304). For

example, the initial French interviews and responses to each interview question or topic of enquiry was studied and via the use of a simple word processing package, informative 'chunks of data' or analysis units were 'cut' from the interviews and 'pasted' under the relevant interview question or topic of enquiry. As Julien (2008) suggests, this summarising and grouping of data helps identify and expose certain themes and patterns within the data. Interviews were then carried out in London and later Cardiff and after their transcription a further stage of content analysis was required. The initial interview question and/or topics of enquiry which had been used as headings to arrange the data from the French interviews proved no longer adequate to fully reflect the data being collected. Such headings were then refined so as to more adequately encompass the patterns and themes in the data that were increasingly apparent. The continued process of content analysis and refinement of subject or category headings resulted in the organising of the data around 14 main headings and these facilitated some initial comparison within and between the French and British respondents (see appendix 11). Such engagement with the data along with further examination of the field notes and personal information sheets also led to the writing of a one page biographical profile of each interviewee which as well as briefly describing each interviewee's defining social characteristics, summarised their overall attitudes and experiences in relation to cooking, eating and their culinary cultures (see appendix 12). This made an important contribution to the early stages of the analysis[109] (Richards 1998).

Miles *et al.* (1994) consider qualitative data analysis '*as consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing/ verification'* (*ibid* : 10). Such an approach has directed the analysis for this research in that the initial data reduction process described above was concerned with the identifying, summarising and grouping of data around themes or headings while the data display activity needed to be concerned with the *'organised, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing' (ibid:* 11). However, it became apparent that the continued

[109] The French interviews were simultaneously translated in to English by the researcher as they were transcribed and then checked by a qualified French speaker. To further verify accuracy, some interviews were also transcribed by a bilingual secretary and checked against the same interviews that were transcribed by the researcher. There was some slight variation in language used as there is no single best way of interpreting and then translating one language in to another but there was little significant variation in the translations and as such the researcher felt confident to continue to translate the recorded French interviews with the help of the qualified French speaker and only the occasional reference to the bilingual secretary.

searching within the entire corpus of data so as to conceptually organise and compare patterns within the interview data was going to be very time consuming. It was also necessary to move to a more sophisticated approach to data analysis and as Tesch (1995;116) suggests, the selection of *'analysis units'* of data or segments of text should contain just one main theme or idea which can then be categorised and coded.

The use of computer-aided data analysis (CADA) software was introduced to facilitate the storing, coding, retrieving, displaying and comparison of data units and help in the overall development of more robust qualitative analysis (Richards and Richards 1998; Sarantakos 2005). In addition, QSR's 'Non-Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing' (NUD*IST) was available to the researcher and considered highly appropriate. While critics of such computer software warn against the risk of the researcher becoming distant from the data, it was felt that much time had already been spent deeply immersed in the data and the researcher had developed an holistic understanding of it.

5.2.6 Computer software and the organisation of the interview data

The interview transcripts were imported into NUD*IST and exposed to a further process of content analysis which encouraged deeper reflection upon the key ideas within the data and the realisation that the initial 14 headings discussed above were no longer adequate.. Such reflection, along with further reference to the actual research questions and overall focus of the research led to the development of six 'tree nodes' so as to ensure that the data would be organised in a way that not only captured the essence of what was being said but represented it in a way that would help structure the data in a manner appropriate to the research focus. The six tree nodes were as follows:

1. Domestic food practices
2. Influences on personal domestic food practices
3. Learning to cook
4. The significance of cooking
5. Eating outside the home
6. Culinary cultures and change

Each of these tree nodes was then further divided so as to reflect the themes emerging and used to code data from the interviews which were relevant to the focus of the research. For example the first tree node, namely, 'Domestic food practices' was further subdivided into:

i. 'eating/cooking habits'

ii. 'frequency of cooking'

iii. 'gender roles'

iv. 'location of eating in the home'.

However, further refinement and coding of the data was possible and for example the first sub-heading, 'eating/cooking habits' was then subdivided into:

a. 'planning a meal'

b. 'use of convenience foods'

c. 'eating/cooking alone'

d. 'breakfasts'

The development of such tree nodes represented interlinked, emerging hierarchies of ideas which could easily be displayed and further refined and were useful in the development of thinking which moved beyond simply summarising and describing to a stage where the researcher was able to better understand underlying structures and begin to build explanations (see Miles *et al*.1994). With each change, it was possible to create 'memos' where one could record one's own thinking of why it was decided that such an analysis unit would be better grouped under a different category of data or indeed that the unit represented more than one key idea and thus needed to be recorded under more than one heading or node. Finally, a total of 64 nodes were hierarchically developed under the six tree nodes. Computer software also offered other advantages to the cyclical process of analysis such as:

- the ability to scan through the de-contextualised data under each node or heading
- the facility to jump back to the original interviews and re-contextualise the data
- the ability to re-study how each interview had been coded

5.2.7 On-going analysis and the presentation of phase 1 data

It was decided that the clearest way to present, compare and analyse the data would be first to present the data from phase 1 of the research, then to present the data from phase 2 of the research and then to provide a comparative analysis, firstly of culinary cultures and then of policy debate. Such a chronological approach would ultimately lead to the development of the overall conclusions.

Initially, it was important to present an overview of the interviews obtained in France and Britain and the six tree nodes outlined above were used almost verbatim to structure the presentation of these interviews (see Chapter 6). It was possible to use QSR NUD*IST to re-visit the relevant data and employ a further process of content analysis to the 'chunks of data' previously selected and coded under each sub-heading and this led to further refinement in thinking and categorisation of the data which is used in the final presentation of the phase 1 data (see Peetz & Reams, 2011). The computer programme also enabled one to verify that the selected 'chunks of data' were drawn from and represented the full range of interviews.

A range of quotations first from the French respondents followed by a range of quotations from the British respondents were simply presented under the sub-headings of Chapter 6 and no attempt has been made to further analyse what has been said, make reference to theory or offer any comparative commentary. However, as Silvermann (2003) suggests when using content analysis it is possible to combine both latent and manifest strategies when combing the data and this helped shape the narrative that linked the selected quotations. For example, at the latent level it was possible to identify any broad patterns in behaviour or attitudes which were shared among a group of interviewees such as those that might share similar social characteristics for example, young, single, women or indeed middle aged Welsh men, professionally employed, with shared responsibility for home and family. Analysis of the

influence of such social variables is summarised at the end of Chapter 6 and as Julien (2008) suggests, employing content analysis at the manifest level makes it possible to simply count and describe those that expressed similar views and consider the significance of any generalisations. However, it was also important to remain vigilante to contrasting patterns of behaviour within and between social groups, highlight the diversity of the individuals and their views and this is also reflected in the overall narrative (see Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

5.3 Phase 2 research

Phase 1 research had successfully gathered deeply personal accounts from around 30 individuals' on both sides of The Channel in relation to their domestic food practices and privileged the discovery of their 'real world' experiences. It had also explored their views on the drivers of change and continuity in relation to their culinary cultures. Preliminary analysis was then undertaken and it became increasingly evident that a second phase of primary data collection aimed at exploring relevant food policy development in France and Britain would be necessary and an overall plan was therefore developed and submitted via the 'Transfer Paper' and finally approved.

Phase 2 of the research needed not only to collect data that would contribute to addressing the research questions and overall focus of the thesis but it was also important that interpretations of the empirical data emerging from phase 1 of the fieldwork were "*tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their 'confirmability' – that is, their validity" (*Miles *et al.* 1994:11). Phase 2 of the research offered the opportunity for such interpretations of people's domestic food practices to be taken back out into the field and exposed to scrutiny by those with the expertise to comment upon their credibility and dependability. The second phase of the research also had to explore policy development in both France and Britain in relation to food, cooking and the promotion of healthy diets and to compare findings between the two countries.

It had earlier been decided that a relativist ontology combined with an epistemology that privileged constructionism would best serve this research. Such decisions prioritised a broadly anti-positivist paradigm which adopted an interpretivist-constructivist framework of analysis and a qualitative methodology. Such decisions were re-examined for phase 2 of the data collection process and a quantitative methodology considered but

ultimately rejected. This was partly because while relevant large scale consumer reports and surveys had proved useful in the preceding chapters, this research remained concerned with understanding how people experience everyday domestic food practices, the extent to which people's beliefs and behaviour are influenced by the changing world as they see it and how this influences their culinary cultures. Furthermore, phase 2 of the research needed to seek expert views on policy direction in relation to how to encourage individuals to cook and/or select a healthier diet. As such, it appeared inappropriate to gather numerical data with which to measure quantity, frequency or intensity when the aim of the research remained to understand and compare how people in France and Britain actually experience phenomena and what policy intervention might successfully encourage attitudinal and/or behavioural change. Rather than attempting to quantify policy intervention, a key objective of this second phase of research was to compare policy development in each country and, for example, consider the extent to which policy in France might be applied in Britain.

5.3.1 Methods of Data Generation

Having decided to remain within a qualitative tradition, the next step was to select an appropriate research method. A multi method approach can be useful in demonstrating greater rigour and validity to research findings (Denzin *et al.* 1994) and while observation (participant or otherwise) had resolutely been ruled out at an earlier stage, methods such as accompanied shopping trips, diaries, maps, drawings and photography are all methods employed in research on food and domestic life and required consideration. It was felt that personal diaries or some sort of collection and collation of photographs might well provide insight into people's domestic food practices however, phase 1 had largely accomplished this. While the purpose of phase 2 was partly to expose such findings to scrutiny, another aim was to explore the policies that had been introduced in each country in relation to food, cooking and the promotion of healthy diets and such data would be best gathered from persons with 'expert' professional knowledge of the subject area. As such, it was decided that a second and complimentary round of semi-structured interviews with 'experts' drawn from a range of professional backgrounds would be the best method by which to further examine the emerging issues from phase 1 of the research and how to gather data on policy implementation in relation to the promotion of cooking skills and healthier diets.

5.3.2 The development of the interviews

A draft interview schedule consisting of 12 questions was developed via reference to the reviewed literature, the findings and preliminary analysis from phase 1 interviews and the need to explore relevant food policy development in France and Britain (see appendix 13). After piloting, an interview schedule with just five broad questions with prompts was developed (see appendix 14) and translated into French with the assistance of a French language teacher in Britain and a native French speaker and a French teacher of English in Nantes (see appendix 15). At the same time, a letter of introduction was developed for the potential British interviewees (see appendix 16). and a shorter interview request letter was developed for the potential French interviewees (see appendix 17) and a separate accompanying 'letter of introduction' was also formulated (see appendix 18) [110]. A 'Consent Form' in English (see appendix 19) and in French (see appendix 20) was similarly prepared.

5.3.3 Population

It was essential to access and question people that represented a range of related policy areas and that the selected professionals from each country were in a position to have knowledge of people's cooking practices, be aware of any barriers or drivers of change in relation to the development of culinary cultures and have knowledge of relevant policy implementation. In particular the experts needed to be drawn from the opinion formers, the 'movers and shakers', the analysts, the observers and so on and individuals who had international experience, and in particular knowledge of the relevant debates in France and Britain were to be prioritised. Discussion with such key 'experts' would assist in the clarification of policy responses and their implications however it was recognised that access to such persons would not only be difficult but that such persons would each tend to prioritise their own 'agenda'. As such it was necessary to access individuals that represented a range of relevant expertise, backgrounds and opinions.

[110] There was inevitably some variation in the exact content of the letters depending on how the researcher had come to contact the individual.

5.3.4 Sampling

Initial brainstorming generated a list of potential groups of professionals that included health workers, dieticians, school meal providers, teachers such as those of cookery, cookery project workers, chefs, food writers, social workers, academics, campaign workers, food retailing persons, restaurant/pub managers and so on. This list was further refined and a sampling frame developed which represented key groups within the policy domain and included suggestions of comparable groups from both countries. A minimum of one person from each category in both France and Britain could then be selected to ensure that a range of relevant and comparable data could be collected. Appropriate contact details were established where known and a 'snowballing' technique was also employed whereby various individuals, including those already contacted, suggested other possible individuals and these were scrutinised to see if they satisfied the selection criteria. As such, the composition of the sample was an on-going process and the subsequent interviewing was not only costly to undertake but took over a year to complete because it was essential to ensure an appropriate range of individuals participated in the research. The sample frame containing the different professional groups and categories from which the 'experts' were selected along with the coded details of each individual that was interviewed can be seen below while an explanation of the coding and brief biography of each respondent can be seen in appendix 21.

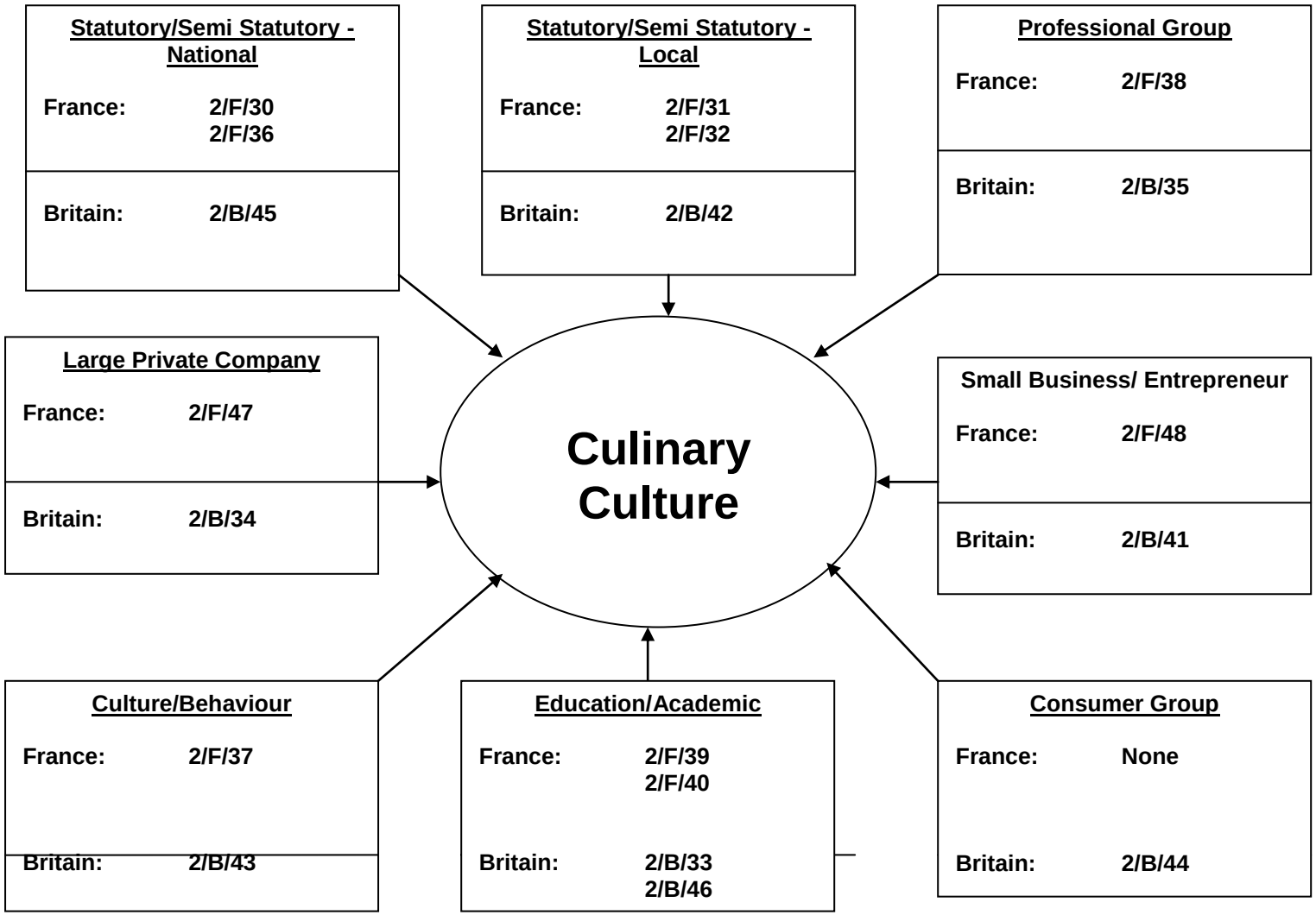

Figure 5.1 Sample Frame (Phase 2)

5.3.5 The Sample

A total of 19 individual 'experts' (10 in France & 9 in Britain) were finally interviewed and while some were relatively easy to access, others remained elusive. For example in Britain individuals from large and small businesses were relatively easy to recruit which was not the case in France. While respondent 2/B/34 who held a senior position within a global food service company in Britain (see appendix 21) willingly agreed to be interviewed, persons from a directly comparable organisation in France were not prepared to be interviewed. Ultimately a person who worked in France at a senior level for a multi-national hotel and resort company, respondent 2/F/47, was interviewed instead[111]. Within the small business/entrepreneur category it was decided to interview a French chef and entrepreneur operating in Britain (2/B/41) and a British chef and entrepreneur operating in France (2/F/48). While respondent 2/B/41 proved relatively easy to recruit and was a high profile chef and successful restaurateur, trying to find a British chef operating in France who would agree to be interviewed proved more difficult. Finally a less high profile and less established British chef with a restaurant business in France agreed to be interviewed. It appeared that in Britain, business was very much aware of the debate on domestic cooking skills, relevant policy direction and indeed involved in policy or relevant interventions. This was not so apparent in France.

In contrast, it was far easier to recruit individuals from the statutory/semi-statutory categories in France whether at a national or local level and such individuals tended to come more directly from government funded health, diet and nutritional policy areas. This was less the case in Britain where individuals came from a broader range of 'quangos' and agencies that were less directly accountable or wholly funded by government. This appeared to reflect not only differences in approach to the role of government but perhaps also, differences in policy approach. The most difficult category from which to locate suitable 'experts' in both countries was that of 'consumer groups'. While an individual was eventually interviewed in Britain no such individual was interviewed in France despite approaching several organisations and individuals and ultimately trying to enlist the support of a BEUC, a pan-European consumer group with particular interests in France.

[111] The company for whom respondent 2/F/47 worked was listed at No. 25 in the Top Global Consumer Goods and Services Companies by Datamonitor while the company for which respondent 2/B/34 worked was listed at No. 3. Both were ultimately drawn from large multi-national companies involved, at least partly, in providing serviced meals to consumers.

As noted, there is not an exact match of people interviewed in France and Britain however it must be emphasised that those interviewed in each country appeared to reflect comparable expertise and policy engagement relevant to their particular country. It might also be argued that more respondents would have enhanced the research and while constraints of time and money were an issue, more importantly it was felt that saturation point in relation to the data collection was reached.

5.3.6 Conduct of the interviews

Most respondents chose to be interviewed at their place of work although one, (2/B/42), chose to be interviewed at a noisy coffee shop near to his work, one (2/F/30), was interviewed when visiting City University, one, (2/B/45), asked to be interviewed at her home and one, (2/B/44), requested that the interview schedule be sent in advance and that the interview be conducted by telephone[112]. All respondents signed the consent form, agreed to have the interviews recorded and all respondents in Britain chose to be interviewed in English, including the French chef with a business in Britain (2/B/41). Of the respondents in France, all chose to be interviewed in French other than the British chef with a business in France (2/B/44) and respondent 2/F/39 who was tri-lingual and kindly suggested the interview took place in English. The average duration of the interviews was approximately 45 minutes. After each interview some field notes were written which described the environment in which the interviews had taken place and included an overview of how the interview proceeded including any interruptions.

5.3.7 Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed and the French interviews were simultaneously translated into English with the accuracy being verified as for Phase 1 interviews. The discussion and application of data analysis theory discussed above in relation to phase 1 data was valid for phase 2 and certainly the preparation of precise transcripts once again encouraged deep engagement with the data and the use of content analysis served to identify patterns in the data and produced some initial generalisations and explanations that were an important stage in the process of interpretive analysis.

[112] The telephone interview was the shortest at just under 20 minutes while most lasted about 40 minutes while the longest lasted over an hour (2/F/32).

Unlike in phase 1 no attempt was made to summarise and organise the data by using a word processing package to 'cut and paste' analysis units from the interviews into folders. In phase 2, the interview transcripts were immediately imported into QSR NUD*IST computer software as a means to more efficiently start organising, reducing and displaying the data (Miles *et al.* 1994). With reference to the research questions, the overall focus of the research and via the use of content analysis it was again possible to systematically examine the transcripts, identify patterns and themes in the data that could then be organised and coded under draft headings or 'free nodes' (Berg 2007). Memos to explain the emerging thinking behind such conceptualisation of the data were created and ultimately, the following four key tree nodes were established:

1. Policy Areas
2. Culture and food
3. The state of food education
4. Influences on cooking

So as to better reflect and organise the themes that were emerging from the interview transcripts, hierarchies of sub-headings were established which were designed to assist in the grouping and display of inter-linked data which would help direct further analysis. For example, the 'Policy Areas' heading was broken down into the following six sub-headings:

i. 'Government –general'
ii. 'Diet/health interventions'
iii. 'School context'
iv. 'Cookery inititiatives'
v. 'Professional development – catering'
vi. 'Role of industry'

All such sub-headings were each further broken down into:

a. ‘Comments from respondents living in France’

b. ‘Comments from respondents living in Britain[113]’

A total of 79 nodes were finally established to represent the data from phase 2 of the research and best reflect the overall focus of the research.

5.3.8 The on-going analysis and presentation of phase 2 data

In order to present an overview of all the phase 2 interviews, the four tree nodes were used as a framework with which to structure and present the data found in Chapter 7. The use of the computer software made it easily possible to visit the data displayed under each heading and sub-heading and again, via a process of content analysis, further identify, refine and ultimately present within the thesis, a balanced, structured and relevant cross-section of quotes, first from the British and then from the French interviewees. These are initially presented under the sub-headings as they appear in Chapter 7 with no attempt at comparison. A narrative was then developed to link the selected quotations and attention is drawn to the position and context of the interviewees. For example it might be that those experts with a professional interest in nutrition share views on policy to promote healthy diets and such views might contrast with the views expressed by experts with a business or professional interest in food and in turn these might differ from the views held by academics in the field. While it was possible to highlight any broad attitudinal patterns shared among any interviewees, views and attitudes were often divergent and variations within and between data sources are also reported as well as the individual beliefs of the interviewees. Any such patterns and variations in the data are briefly summarised and analysed at the end of the chapter.

5.3.9 Comparative data analysis

Having presented the data from Phases 1 & 2 of the fieldwork, it was necessary to return to the focus of the research as articulated by the research questions. This demanded that contemporary changes in relation to domestic food practices, eating

[113] Further sub headings were then established to represent when respondents in Britain discussed the French context and when respondents in France discussed the British context.

habits, culinary cultures and the factors responsible for driving any such changes were critically analysed and compared. It was also necessary to focus on the learning and promotion of cooking skills and broader diet, health and food policies both within schools and within the broader environment and undertake a comparative analysis between France and Britain. To build up such a comparative analysis it was possible to draw upon the data previously presented in chapters 6 & 7 but also to scan the raw data stored in NVivo under the various nodes and headings as well as re-visit the original interview transcripts themselves. Such findings were further summarised and compared with existing theory and research and finally comparisons between France and Britain could be made. It can be noted that chapter 8 presents the comparative analysis of French and British culinary cultures and chapter 9 presents the comparative analysis of policy debate between the two countries which ultimately leads to a discussion of the policy implications, the development of an explanatory framework and the development of an overall conclusion as presented in chapter 10.

5.4 Evaluation of Research

Before concluding this chapter it is necessary to consider the quality of the research undertaken and whether the findings generated are 'good' and if the conclusion generated can be justified. Many authors consider that unlike qualitative research, quantitative research has a well established tradition regarding the assessment of research quality and apply such criteria as reliability, validity and representativeness (see Altheide *et al.* 1994; Miles *et al.* 1994; Gaskell *et al.* 2000). However, qualitative researchers have argued that to claim objective truths, validity, reliability and generalisability for their research is to claim the findings as established fact and that therefore such terms lack appropriateness. Nonetheless such researchers have not shied away from issues of quality and accountability and as such have strived to establish certain criteria when interpreting what happens in the real world and it is argued that to some extent such rules offer functional equivalence and parallels to quantitative terminology (Lincoln *et al.* 1985; Guba *et al.* 1994; Miles *et al.;* Gaskell *et al.*). As noted before, the exact terminology within different aspects of qualitative research methodology does vary between writers however their work in this area could be summarised as follows:

Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research
Credibility/Authenticity	Internal Validity
Transferability/Fittingness	External Validity/Generalisability
Dependability/Auditability	Reliability
Confirmability	Objectivity/Replicability

Table 5-1 Terminology used in the evaluation of research

5.4.1 Reliability, Dependability & Auditability

This area is concerned with consistency over time, and across methods and researchers. For example, reliability has been described as a process to ensure that if other researchers use the same methods of research on the same material then they would produce the same results (Haralambos *et al.* 1995). That is a research instrument should measure a phenomenon consistently when applied repeatedly or by different persons and Bauer *et al.* (2000) give the example of an intelligence test that upon repeated application to the same person should give the same IQ score no matter who administered it. The criteria of reliability are highly valued by those engaged in positivist research and flow from an ontological position of realism and share an objectivist epistemology that considers that meaningful reality exists (Cohen *et al.* 1989).

This research, which is qualitative in nature and shares a relative ontology and constuctionist epistemology, is concerned with researching attitudes and beliefs in relation to actual domestic food practices within a social context and such feelings are likely to be highly individual, dynamic and transactional and therefore such a concept of reliability makes little sense. However, it is necessary to establish rigour in the research process and ensure that an auditable trail is produced which allows for an observer to "*reconstruct the process by which the investigators reached their conclusion"* (Morse

1994: 230). In this research, the research questions, design of the research and research instruments and procedures are considered to be clear and transparent. The data was accurately collected, recorded and transcribed, and the stages of data analysis, meticulously described. Finally, the use of computer software also ensured an auditable trail of how the data was stored, managed and manipulated.

5.4.2 Measurement and Internal Validity, Credibility and Authenticity

The underlying issue here is whether the research findings make sense, are credible both to those that have been studied and those that read the research and whether an authentic picture has been established of what was being studied (Miles *et al.* 1994). It appears that like reliability, the term 'validity' was *"formulated and essentially owned by positivism"* and used to justify quantitative research methods (Altheide *et al.* 1994: 487). However, the concept of validity itself is made up of many components and also includes 'hyphenated' variations and qualifications. For the purpose of this research it is perhaps necessary to be aware of three broad components, namely measurement validity, internal validity and finally external validity which is discussed later (Seale *et al.* 1998). Measurement validity is the extent to which a research instrument captures what it is designed to measure and those involved in positivist research consider that something that is measurable can produce a valid result and would try to eliminate any bias, ambiguity, or misunderstanding (Clegg 1990). Internal validity then is concerned with the extent to which causal statements are supported by the study and both measurement and internal validity are more closely associated with randomised sampling methods, large scale surveys and experiments where the results can be quantified. There is also clearly a relationship between reliability and validity because for example the reliability of the research instrument also plays a vital role in establishing validity and as Gaskell *et al.* (2000: 340-341) point out, *"with an unreliable ruler it would be difficult to make a useful (valid) contribution to cartography".*

However such an objectivist interpretation of validity is increasingly criticised and such critics suggest not only might the answers to a questionnaire have been completed by someone other than the person who the researcher intended but also that the questionnaires can be poorly worded, interpreted and/or answered. As such the answer given might be 'true' but it might not be measuring what it was intended to measure and

be an over simplification of a complex issue. This would then represent a partial truth and such methods are acknowledged even by many positivists as offering low internal validity (Altheide *et al.*1994). In contrast, the interview schedules for this research were designed and piloted so as to provide the opportunity to verify whether each selected respondent had understood the questions unambiguously as well as being able to fully explore their responses. As such, it could be argued that they elicit more holistic and truthful answers and thus promote high internal validity. In addition, each interview was meticulously transcribed and reported verbatim ensuring a context-rich, 'thick' description that has been carefully coded and systematically reported. Such an approach helps avoid "*the selection and editing of sound bites judged to support the writer's prejudices"* (Gaskell *et al.* 2000: 346) and provides the reader with considerable insight into the natural social context of the research participants and the choice of whether to accept the interpretation or not (Altheide *et al.*).

Another key method by which internal validity can be said to have been increased is via triangulation. In both phases of the research, contrasting participants were purposively sought so that they might approach the subject from different perspectives and produce contradictions and rival explanation which would challenge earlier interpretations of the data (Gaskell *et al.* 2000). Phase 2 interview schedules were also intentionally designed to triangulate the narrative that had been generated from Phase 1 via being taken back out in to the field and exposed to scrutiny by experts who were asked to comment on its plausibility and authenticity. It is argued that such a processes of triangulation and verification of the findings can *"add rigor, breadth and depth to any investigation".* (Denzin *et al.* 1994: 2)

Of course, objectivists would suggest that issues such as interviewer bias would reduce internal validity however qualitative researchers retort that the distance between the researcher and the respondent in survey research, who they might never have met, might also reduce validity. Yet again there is disagreement within 'the warring paradigms' with one side arguing that if one counts and measures sufficiently it is possible to arrive at a truth while the other side are more aware of *"human social interaction and identity"* and aim only to "*reproduce faithfully and democratically whatever it is they think they have found"* (Oakley 2000: 25). This research has attempted to demonstrate that its findings are credible through the harmonisation of analytic and data generation methods, research aims and ontological and

epistemological approach (Mason, 1996). Furthermore, the research approach, methods and purposive sampling techniques along with the categorisation and coding of data were rigorously planned and refined and the research aimed to remain true to the phenomena under study. Finally, the findings are considered to be coherent and plausible with every effort being made to present a rich and clear picture of what has been discovered.

5.4.3 External Validity, Generalizability and Transferability

External validity refers to the extent to which the findings can be generalized to populations or to other settings and how much the sample data is representative of a larger group. For example, it is suggested that if the sample is large enough, chosen mathematically and the distribution of some criterion is identical in both the population and sample then one can have greater confidence that the findings are 'representative' of the whole population that it represents, thus it 'fits' and is transferable to other contexts (Lincoln *et al.* 1985; Miles *et al.* 1994; Mason 1996; Bauer *et al.* 2000). While those involved in positivist research, often use large scale random sampling and prioritise the generation of statistical generalisation such an approach is rarely appropriate for those involved in qualitative research.

Certainly for this research such a method of sampling was neither possible nor desirable. As discovered, it proved extremely difficult to develop a sampling frame that could be said to be representative of a population's unknown, everyday domestic food practices. Furthermore, the aim of this research was to generate data from a variety of character representations from which knowledge and theory could be developed and as such any theoretical or analytical generalisation had to be based on rigorous analysis so that reasoned judgement could be used as a guide to what might occur in another situation (Kyvale 1996). Gaskell *et al.* (2000) suggest that corpus construction offers functional equivalence when systematic sampling is not an option. They stress the need to maximise the variety of character representations in the population rather than measure their distribution and that sample size matters less if further data reveals no new observations and the researcher can be confident that saturation has been reached. Corpus construction is clearly an iterative process and as has been noted with the phase 1 sample, it was necessary to add additional individuals so as to broaden the diversity and characteristics of the group and move towards a point of saturation.

Transparency remained paramount and the characteristics of the sample were fully described and narrative sequences were examined both in a contextualised and a decontextualised manner. In addition, limitations to the finding's generalisability were acknowledged and considerable 'thick description' in relation to the presentation of the data given so as to facilitate the reader's ability to assess the potential transferability of the findings. After all, not only must the methodology and findings be comprehensively presented but it also needs to be considered how appropriate it is for the researcher alone to make claims of generalisability or whether it is also for the reader to draw their own conclusions about the applicability of the research to other situations.

On completion of phase 1 of the research, a further round of interviews was embarked upon among almost 20 carefully selected 'experts'. This second phase of the research aimed not only to enhance the range of character representations from which data was drawn but also to help verify the narrative that had emerged from phase 1 and to ask respondents how well such findings were consistent with their own experience and could be said to 'fit' a wider context. As well as such 'experts' being ideally situated to comment on the transferability of the phase 1 findings, it was also noticed that where more than one person had been interviewed from a single category, the second person tended reiterate much of what the first person had said and although helpful in verifying the findings also gave the researcher confidence that saturation point had been reached. However throughout the process it remained important to constantly compare the emerging findings with existing research and debate and ask to what extent such data confirmed or 'fitted in' with prior theory.

5.4.4 Objectivity/Replicability and Confirmability

Sometimes referred to as 'external reliability', this aspect of 'good practice' is concerned with the researcher acting in good faith and being aware of where biases exist and attempting to diminish them as much as possible. Certainly the research methods and procedures have been explained in detail so as not only to provide a clear picture of what has been done but also with an emphasis on the possibility of the process being replicated by another. Field notes and comments about the research process have also been made throughout the research in an attempt to remain as transparent as possible (Miles *et al.* 1994).

The researcher aimed to be aware of his own values and biases and as discussed, has encouraged the emergence of contradictory information so as to challenge such assumptions so that he might be forced to re-visit and re-analyse the data which remains available for others to scrutinise. Presentation of emerging conclusions have also been made to fellow PhD students, colleagues and supervisors prompting further reflection on the data and the relative neutrality of the researcher.

5.5 Ethical Considerations, Sensitivity and Practice

Ethical issues and the amount of consideration given to such depend to some extent on the sensitivity of the subject under investigation (Kelly 1998). For example, ethical issues in relation to interviewing people about their cooking habits is likely to require less sensitivity than the ethical issues surrounding interviewing people about their criminal or sexual behaviour. However, one always has to ensure that human rights and people's well being are protected, that individuals are not exposed to unnecessary risk and that the research is ethical in terms of its purpose and the way it collects and analyses the data (Mason 1996; Kent 2000). Burton (2000) considers that once the purpose and overall aims of the research have been established it is then necessary to understand the ethical issues that need to be addressed so a code of ethics can be translated into practice. Indeed, it is important to be aware of the ethical dimensions of the research prior to entry into the field and perhaps for such a piece of work the most important considerations other than concern with harm are consent and *"the preservation of confidentiality and the privacy of people involved"* (Kelly p. 119).

Within any such ethical code of practice, Punch (1994) considers that 'informed consent' plays a significant role and this needs to go beyond simply ensuring respondent confidentiality and anonymity. He argues that research participants need to be informed that they are being researched and about the nature of the research. A person must have the right to agree or not agree to take part in the research, have the right to withdraw from the research at anytime and the granting of such autonomy *"forms the basis for attempting to ensure that informed consent is achieved"* (Kent 2000:63).

Ethical codes aim also to safeguard the privacy, identity, dignity and location of research subjects, ensure that they suffer no harm or embarrassment as a result of

taking part in the research and that all data is kept confidential (Punch 1994). After all, while an individual may give access to information about themselves it remains confidential as they have not given up control over such information and the researcher must not inform others of what has been learnt without seeking their permission (Kent 2000). Clearly respondents must not be identifiable in print and the data collected needs to be held securely and in an anonymised way. Furthermore, while research participants have indeed temporarily agreed to give the researcher access to their thoughts, feelings and behaviour, such access remains restricted and participants have the right to privacy and not to discuss certain issues if they so wish.

Finally, it is important that the researcher does not manipulate the research situation or mislead the potential participants about the purpose of the study. Researchers must tell the truth and in particular must be mindful of reporting the research results accurately and neither 'tinker' with the data nor be biased in the selection of what they use (Kent 2000).

Having outlined the ethical principles that should guide research, it is necessary to consider how such theoretical underpinnings have actually been translated in to practice.

Firstly the purpose and overall aims of the research were academic and no organisations or parties stood to benefit from it. The aim of the research stemmed from a professional and academic interest in the subject and the research did not set out to judge people's domestic food practices but to develop understanding and explanation in relation to both changes and continuities within two broad culinary cultures. The research sought to be objective and was of interest only to those involved in policy and academics more generally.

Secondly, potential respondents for both phases of the research were approached individually and given an accurate overview of the research and that further information was available upon request. Each were given a 'Consent form' which informed them that they could withdraw from the research at any time and that they could decline to answer any question they so wished. All respondents were informed that they could give as much or as little information as they wanted and that the duration of the interview was of no importance. If they agreed to be interviewed they were asked to return a signed consent form.

During phase 1 interviews it was important to remain sensitive to respondent's memories and recollections in relation to their domestic food practices and during one interview, a respondent became upset and it was suggested that the interview be halted. The respondent explained that the interview had re-kindled both sad and happy memories and that they would like the interview to continue.

It was essential to maintain the identity, confidentiality and anonymity of the research subjects and as such, names, addresses and personal details were kept separately from the tape recorded interviews, the transcribed interviews and the data generated from them. Each respondent's identity was protected via the use of reference codes in place of their names and such codes were used whenever discussing the data and throughout the writing of the thesis. No research participant has been bothered for further information since the completion of the interview.

The methodology was approached rigorously and the researcher remained vigilant so as not to manipulate the research situation or tamper with the data. Data was carefully collected, accurately transcribed and translations verified. The traceability of the data in relation to what was used, how it was used and from which source it came from was greatly facilitated via the use of NUD*IST computer software. Certainly the intention of the researcher was always to represent the truth and to be mindful of making value judgements. Ultimately the research aimed to hear the voices of the respondents and try to understand their meaning while at the same time accepting the influence of the researcher's culture on his interpretation of such meanings.

Finally, the work was overseen by an academic community at City University and with due regard for the ethical guidelines of good practice established by the University's Research Committee.

Chapter 6 : Phase 1 Data presentation

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings and emerging patterns in the data from the phase 1 interviews and presents an initial framework of understanding. Phase 1 aimed to collect data from the public in both France and Britain in relation to food practices within the home and present their experience of any transition in culinary cultures and the factors they consider may be responsible both for change and/or continuities.

Each respondent's identity remains anonymous and as such, next to each quotation is a unique code. Appendix 10 explains the coding, gives a brief description of each respondent and furthermore, appendix 12 is used to give a one page biographical profile of each respondent.

6.2 Domestic Food Practices: Who cooks what and why?

6.2.1 Why Cook?

6.2.1.1 French Respondents

The French respondents gave many reasons as to why people spent time cooking and it was often positively commented upon particularly if part of a leisure activity, especially so by the men. All the French respondents said they enjoyed the social aspect of eating meals with others which often entailed cooking oneself and another prevalent theme was that home cooked food tasted better. An Algerian born father of two commented:

> *"It is very important to cook in the house, it is always different so it is always interesting and it enables you all to enjoy time together around the table (*convivial)*"* (1/F/12/M).

A married, full time mother of two stressed how the eating of home cooked foods is appreciated, promotes conviviality and went on to describe cooking as:

> *"...a discovery... you have the basic foundations that you respect then you can let your imagination run."* (1/F/8/F)

A professional single woman focused on the improved quality of home cooked food and added:

> *"… it is a way of living. The first thing that is important is the quality of what we eat...because one knows what one eats when one cooks. With ready meals there is too much taste, too sweetened or salty...I think that if they need to enhance the taste it is because the base product is not of high quality. It is important to cook because we can guarantee the quality of what we eat, but I also think that it has a lot to do with the rhythm of life… to be responsible regarding nutrition, to take charge of this."* (1/F/5/F)

Offering different perspectives, two French males commented that when they were younger it was important to cook in order to attract a girlfriend home, three respondents discussed how cooking was an important part of socialisation for children and a male teacher and father added:

> *"We need to keep the skills and also not break the ties to our culture. I think that it is a pity to lose such things."* (1/F/9/M)

A 74 year old widow did however consider how nowadays many women did not have to face the daily drudgery of cooking and commented:

> *"Evolution, it has freed women. Because working all the time in the kitchen is not always pleasant...it can become a chore.*" (1/F/2/F)

6.2.1.2 British respondents

Just under half of the British respondents discussed how they enjoyed the social aspect of cooking and eating, especially at weekends, although alternatives to the daily 'chore' of cooking such as restaurant, takeaway or convenience meals were also positively accepted as the following married, professional woman indicates:

> *"I don't think it would be nice always to eat takeaways. Is the act of cooking important…I'm not sure. I think it is important to maybe put a meal together so perhaps I do think it is a bit important*."(1/B/17/F)

Only one woman, a working mother, explicitly described cooking as enjoyable and another working mother explained that she felt guilty if she did not cook. Lack of time was cited as the principle barrier to the enjoyment of cooking among the women and the following mother, who equally shared the responsibility for cooking the evening meal with her husband explained:

> *"I try to get it done as quickly as possible. It is not that enjoyable if you have to do it day in and day out*." (1/B/20/F)

More women than men considered cooking as a chore but more women appeared to have the daily responsibility for cooking. Another issue raised by several women was that home cooking was 'cheaper' as well as it being easier to control what one eats when one cooks oneself.

6.2.2 Who cooks?

Few British or French respondents could remember their fathers undertaking much cooking and many commented that cooking was now less gender differentiated and more men were likely to positively comment on their enjoyment of cooking although it was difficult to ascertain what percentage of the everyday cooking was done by them. 6 of the 17 male respondents who did not live alone discussed how the woman in the household had the greatest responsibility for cooking, the remaining 11 considered it to be more equally shared.

6.2.2.1 French respondents

Both work and family arrangements were key influences on who took responsibility for cooking in the home. The following two fathers, both of whom were university educated and the first one, due to being separated from his child's mother, had his son living with him alternate weeks commented:

> *"I cook less during the weeks the children are not here and the days my partner is freest she cooks the meals."* (1/F/10/M)

> *"...for the simple things it is often my wife...pasta for the children…and they usually eat before us. But if it is a dish that takes a while to prepare it is often me."* (1/F/12/M)

6.2.2.2 British respondents

British couples and families discussed the differing degrees with which cooking was shared among them. The following two fathers, both professionally employed, the first in London and the second in Cardiff, commented:

> *"I cook three times a week and my wife four or vice-a- versa. We have a strict rota of cooking every other day."* (1/B/19/M)

> *"I do Sunday lunch…and I will do the occasional special meal but otherwise my wife and I try to cook together during the week"* (1/B/23/M)

A married female teacher with no children also described how cooking was shared in her home and said:

> *"Yeah, I mean I cook regularly. Through the week it is mundane stuff…we're tired, …I'll cook probably a couple of nights, my husband will cook a couple of nights and he is more likely to cook if friends are coming and he's happy to cook more complicated things"* (1/B/17/F)

The Welsh were the most likely to discuss the unequal gendered division of cooking in the home. The following women, all mothers, aged between 30 and 57 and employed as office workers commented:

> *"I have got the major responsibility, yes. He likes cooking his curries, Indian and Chinese foods...he is good with stir fries, so that's his part of the cooking… Friday evenings, then I would take over the rest of the week."* (1/B/22/F)

> *"He's got five dishes he likes cooking and he'll do one a week."* (1/B/24/F)

> *"...he does make a nice cup of tea, but no he doesn't cook"* (1/B/27/F)

An army trained cook and family man, now working as a telephone engineer in Wales added:

> *"The wife cooks…she won't let me. She has the food ready for me when I get home. I sometimes prepare a Sunday Lunch."* (1/B/26/M)

6.2.3 What is cooked and eaten?

6.2.3.1 French respondents

'Classical' meat dishes appeared popular and a young working mother of two (1/F/13/F) considered that roast meats were the family's favourite. Other parents commented:

> *"I have meat two-three times a week, but not because of my own tastes, rather because of my husband's."* (1/F/8/F)

> *"…for example on Monday we did a roast beef with green beans."* (1/F/10/M)

> *"Often French dishes in sauce...classics I suppose...dishes of meat with sauce."* *(*1/F/1/F)

However, when discussing a ‘proper meal’, rather than a single plate of food, the French respondents tended to discuss the overall meal structure. Twelve French respondents discussed sequenced courses however there was also some evidence of ‘destructuration’ or greater flexibility in relation to courses, particularly among those living alone. A working mother with two young children said:

> *“The starter would generally be cold while the main course would be hot...plus cheese and dessert. Often yoghurt for the girls because it’s milk based and the dessert is usually an apple or orange or…pear.”* (1/F/13/F)

Two people, a man of 35 and a woman of 51 and who both lived alone added:

> *“No in the evening, it’s usually simply a main course…and a dessert or a starter with something to follow.”* (1/F/11/M)

> *“A normal meal now is made up of a single dish... although I might prepare a green salad, but there is no starter, main dish, cheese or dessert.”* (1/F/5/F)

Pasta and the like were broadly popular as summed up by a 23 year old man and a 51 year old woman as follows:

> *“...pasta’s the easiest, it’s fairly quick and one can do a sauce alongside. A sauce with fresh cream, little grilled lardons* (cubes of bacon), *a type of ‘carbonara’ perhaps”* (1/F/15/M)

> *“I often prepare a dishes based on rice or potatoes, rice particularly or couscous... I add some onions, peppers and mix them in”. (*1/F/5/F)

As well as pasta a variety of convenience foods were used in the homes of most interviewees and the following three women, one living alone and two living with their children explained:

> *“With tinned vegetables like corn and red beans it enables me to prepare rice salads...”* (1/F/*5/F)*

> *“We have had a tin of cassoulet in the store cupboard and I tell myself to check the date but these are emergency supplies... also tinned foods such as choucroute, peas, haricot beans.”* (1/F/8/F)

> *“Fish, it is easy if it is frozen and I like it and you can even poach it when still frozen and I find it tastes good... natural....”* (1/F/1/F)

> *“I often buy frozen fish because it is not bad and rice goes well with frozen seafood.”* (1/F/5/F)

A married man with children also added:

> *"…we have bought scallops/Coquille St Jacques from the traiteur, also frozen foods, but it is fairly rare, for an emergency...something like a frozen gratin dauphinois...we also sometimes use pizza…"* (1/F/7/M)

Pizzas and ready meals were popular 'standbys', especially for children as the following married men explained:

> *"Very rarely…occasionally for the children when we haven't much time. A frozen ready prepared 'cottage pie' (hachis Parmentier)."* (1/F/12/M)

> *"…if rushed as last night when we were going to see a football match, then the children eat alone and one might buy a fresh pizza that only has to pass through the oven."* (1/F/10/M)

6.2.3.2 British respondents

When asked what makes up a 'proper meal', British respondents were most likely to describe a single plate of food such as 'meat and two veg.' and the example of roasted meat served with a sauce/gravy was often given. For example, a 58 year old family man living in London and a 30 year old mother of two living in Wales said:

> *"As for meat and two veg.… we'll have a roast on a Sunday.... I like meat or fish and I wouldn't necessarily enjoy a dish if there was no meat or fish in it...a vegetable content, preferably more than one vegetable, some sort of carbohydrate…filler if you want to call it that…rice, pasta or potatoes."* (1/B/19/M)

> *"Roast lamb, roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, potatoes, all the veg. and gravy, yes. My husband likes his cooked dinner on Sundays and we all do."* (1/B/22/F)

The increasing availability of a range of fresh foods coupled with the convenience of foods such as rice, pasta and couscous was positively commented upon and were often incorporated into an 'ethnic style' of cooking which was sometimes further anglicized. The following men, the first two of whom were both family men aged in their 50s and regularly cooked followed by the younger male (1/B/28/M) who lived with his girlfriend and was often *'too busy'* to cook commented:

"I'll cook Chinese, Thai, or…Italian. The range is much, much better than in the past". (1/B/16/M)

"…different pasta with mushroom sauce or tomato sauce, sometimes pesto and then we do spinach and onions or courgettes, …leek tagine is another one I do." (1/B/21/M)

"Pasta is great, because it's so quick and easy, you've only got to add a sauce of some description." (1/B/28/M)

Another man, originally from Manchester and who had served in the army and had since settled in Cardiff with his extended family as a telephone engineer who liked plainer food and cooked rarely said:

"Tonight we've got chilli con carne but it won't be made like a normal chilli con carne, it won't have chilli beans in as I can't eat that sort of thing…I like baked beans in for me instead. I don't eat anything spicy" (1/B/26/M)

Two middle aged married women from London, the first with no children and the second with one child and who often also shared her home with the children of her second husband added:

"…we eat a lot of pasta…I don't think my mum ever cooked pasta." (1/B/17/F)

"Nearly every night it is rice, occasionally potatoes, pasta but I think we have more rice than anything else because it is just so easy and goes with so many dishes." (1/B/20/F)

Other popular convenience products included "*beans, tinned tomatoes, corned beef"* which, for example, were cited both by married women, one, an administrator with children (1/B/24/F) and the other, a teacher with no children (1/B/17/F). Another middle aged professional woman with no children and now living alone added:

"Tinned tuna, tinned sardines...I have quite a lot of those. I usually mix tinned tuna with tinned beans...things like coleslaw, hummus, dips, you know taramasalata, things like that." (1/B/21/M)

A family man and professional who cooked frequently and talked enthusiastically about food added:

"I do use baked beans and we use frozen peas and frozen spinach. My wife likes to do fresh spinach but I mean frozen's much more convenient for me. And the pasta that we usually use is usually fresh frozen pasta. We've got usually about 12 tubs of ice cream in the house...frozen peppers...usually cauli and broccoli we buy fresh, but we have some just as a standby". (1/B/21/M)

Ready meals or oven-ready meal component type foods were most discussed among those interviewed in Cardiff with fifty per cent of them claiming to use such items. The following range of men, all but the first with responsibility for children and with varying interest in cooking explained:

> *"We get a bit lazy these days…I do try to cook something decent at least once a week…I try to steer clear of instant meals, the ones you put in the microwave but I do the next laziest thing…like fish in breadcrumbs or ready cooked chicken bits that you just put in the oven.* (1/B/28/M)

> *"It could be lasagnes…that sort of thing, frozen fish, chicken Kiev's also frozen vegetables…."* (1/B/23/M)

> *"We buy a lot of ready cooked frozen meals…you know the type it takes 20 minutes in the oven to warm up …or micro –wave meals… pasta in white wine and garlic and things like that. We have a fair range of tinned soups in the house…beans, beans and sausage and ravioli, corned beef, that sort of thing. We also have yoghurts for the children."* (1/B/23/M)

> *"… the kids will have burgers, fish fingers, also yoghurts, ice cream also quick food like meatballs."* (1/B/26/M)

> *"Pizzas are handy for the children…they can just whack them in the oven… we do use some convenience foods, they have become a bit of a necessity at the moment because of the way we actually live so there is always a prepared meal in the freezer if the children need it...things like shepherds pies that I have prepared in advance and frozen down."* (1/B/25/M)

6.2.4 The everyday scheduling of modern life

Busy working schedules were frequently blamed for the lack of time available to spend cooking. Unless eating away from home, food was usually prepared for or by those spending the evening at home after work and rather than *'cooking from scratch'*, there was considerable reliance on convenience foods including pasta and rice dishes as outlined above.

6.2.4.1 French respondents

The youngest respondent in France, an IT developer who lived with his grandparents made the following comment:

> *"... there's also a lot less time available now as well as a desire to do other things instead. Plus I work a fair distance from where I live so it depends on the journey, how busy it is, whether there are traffic jams… Also before people didn't move much but now people go out, they might go to the cinema together*

*and sometimes there is not much time to prepare anything proper to eat. It takes time." (*1/F/15/M)

Respondents tended to consider that cooking had to be either quick or reserved for when one had more time such as at weekends. A range of responses from both men and women, as well as those with or without children included:

"Yes, sometimes it is a pain...there is little food in and little time to prepare anything…it has to be quick, maybe steak and chips." (1/F/14/M)

"...it is usually meat that can be grilled. It is not often meat in a sauce that requires a long preparation." (1/F/9/M)

"I do not have too much time to spend cooking because of my work, so only at week-ends."(1/F/7/M)

"… the evenings when we are most tired we can't be bothered… but at weekends it is possible, it is just a question of time." (1/F/13/F)

The presence of children and complex family lives were also described as having an impact on the time available for domestic food practices as summed up by the following mix of respondents:

"Now that I have the children I have less time and I prefer to spend it with them rather than spend three hours cooking, it is a choice. And it is also true that the children do not necessarily appreciate cordon bleu cookery." (1/F/8/F)

*"The children love pasta. Before having the children we had pasta now and again, but because they like it we now often eat it." (*1/F/7/M)

"… it is true that I prepare simpler things, more adapted for children." (1/F/8/F)

"... you tend to buy the things she [daughter] *likes."* (1/F/14/M)

6.2.4.2 British respondents

The youngest respondent in Britain who lived with his girlfriend in Cardiff made the following comment:

"The main thing is the time factor. I would like to do more cooking from scratch, but if I'm not away for the weekend, I'll leave it more for the Friday evening or a Sunday." (1/B/28/M)

Such pressures of time were also felt by older working people, male and female and those with and without children. For example:

> *"At the end of the day, especially when it's been hectic and busy I like to get home, eat and that's it. So it's like fish I put in the oven and bake for about 30 minutes and I do the vegetables in the steamer...it's all quick"* (1/B/27/F).

> *"…I try to do things very quickly. I try to think 'ready, steady, cook' in my mind, you know…I'm going to get this meal done in 20 minutes and normally I have to dash anyway because I come home from work, pick up the shopping on the way home and I want to get the meal on because I've got other things to do, homework to do with my daughter and God knows what else."* (1/B/20/F)

> *"We are talking about a total preparation time of probably no more than half an hour and actual cooking time of another half an hour on top. So we are talking pastas, we are talking chops, new potatoes and vegetables. Stews and meals that take a bit longer to cook have to be done at the weekend."* (1/B/16/M)

Respondents also discussed the impact of hectic family life on their domestic food practices as the following two, male, telephone engineers from Wales explained:

> *"The kids are always wanting to do something on this night, something else another night, yourself, you've got your own stuff on. There's so much more to do now."* (1/B/26/M)

> *"My wife and I try to eat together but she is involved with the PTA and I'm involved with the rugby club, I work late some nights, she works late some nights and so on."* (1/B/25/M)

6.2.5 The location of where meals are eaten

The preferred location of eating was largely dependent on where the dining table was situated although the location of the television was also an important influence for some.

6.2.5.1 French respondents

The French respondents often discussed an open plan downstairs area and 6 of the 7 French respondents who specifically discussed where they ate, mentioned the kitchen or main room as where both the cooking and eating took place as summed up by the following family man:

> *"In the main room at the table...yes, five of us at the table" (*1/F/10/M)

However, for those living alone or finding themselves eating alone occasionally, the location of the television was an important influence on where they chose to eat as discussed by the following two women:

> *"When it is all three of us, we eat at the table, but when it is only my son and myself sometimes we get a plate and sit in front of the telly."* (1/F/1/F)

> *"In the evening I regularly eat in front of the telly because around 8 o'clock is the time of the news"* (1/F/5/F).

6.2.5.2 British respondents

Discreet dining rooms were the most popular room in Britain to eat a meal with 8 of the 12 respondents mentioning it and only 2 stating the kitchen. A further 2 frequently ate off their laps and a further 4 sometimes did. 7 out of 11 British respondents regularly watched TV whilst eating, which might be located in the dining room and the remaining four sometimes did. Comments included:

> *"In the dining room and then go and sit in front of the telly."* (1/B/21/M)

Two married women from Cardiff further added:

> *"At the breakfast bar in the kitchen because we've got a portable TV there so it is really handy".* (1/B/27/F)

> *"When I'm on my own I do eat in front of the TV but when my husband is there I don't."* (1/B/22/F)

6.3 Further Influences on domestic food practices

6.3.1 Cooking for Friends

Nearly all respondents in France and Britain said they enjoyed sitting down with family and friends to share a home cooked meal and it appeared to be a significant social activity. The food was an important element as was wine and having a dish that could be left in the oven while guests enjoyed an aperitif. It was also apparent that among

both the British and French respondents, males were more likely to cook for such social occasions than females[114].

6.3.1.1 French respondents

It appeared that having friends round to share food was a frequent part of everyday life in France and the 'hosts' appeared experienced, relaxed and sufficiently confident to *'try out'* a new and/or special dish. Comments from two men, the first a 23 year old and the second, a 46 year old with family, followed by a comment from a mother and housewife included:

> *"...yes in France, an soon as there is an occasion then we take the time to go in to the kitchen and prepare something special for the people who are coming"* (1/F/15/M)
>
> *"The pleasures of the table, of eating and having a good time together is very agreeable … and I enjoy that pleasure"* (1/F/10/M).
>
> He added:
>
> *"Often when friends come round I slow cook (mijoter) something. This is more relaxed and the dish can simmer gently while we have an aperitif"* (1/F/10/M)
>
> *"I always take a risk and do things that I never done before...at times it is a success, at other times not."* (1/F/8/F)

6.3.1.2 British respondents

The preparation of something out of the ordinary for such occasions was important although this was often a 'tried and tested' recipe often served with some additional courses. At times, the use of cookery books to supplement any repertoire of dishes was apparent and such effort appeared to further increase the anxiety level of the host. Two female British respondents explained that they *'rarely cook'* (1/B/27/F) for friends or family other than at Christmas. Eating with friends appeared to lack spontaneity and was often more formal in style such as a 'dinner party'. The following family man who equally shared cooking responsibilities with his wife explained:

[114] Two British males discussed cooking vegetarian Indian or Italian dishes, another typically prepared spaghetti bolognaise with 'all the trimmings' and a 'Vienneta' to follow and one male referred to weekend barbeques when he would do the 'full Monty' and banana splits for pudding.

"I think we make more of an effort but not necessarily start cooking something that we had never cooked before. It would probably be something that we had done in the past and we're happy with and it is a bit out of the ordinary. I've got this thing I do and it takes a couple of hours in the oven and that is quite convenient if we want to have a drink with them." (1/B/19/M)

A woman who enjoyed the social aspect of such occasions and tended to share the cooking with her husband added:

"I love people coming round and sitting round a table and eating, I also think they haven't come for the food and the important thing is that we are all round the table together". (1/B/17/F)

6.3.2 Cost, quality and seasonality of foodstuffs

6.3.2.1 French respondents

Cost as a factor in relation to food practices was mentioned by many respondents. A 55 year old male teacher who lived with his female partner and had no children explained:

"Price…yes, but…no not really. I don't buy 'foie gras' every day or lobster, but price, no, I try and buy things that are wholesome." (1/F/9/M)

Four respondents discussed buying seasonal produce, and/or buying food from the market as it represented better value for money and a further five discussed how their choice of foods was shaped by the seasonal availability of foods. The following professionally employed father of two explained:

"We are careful with costs. We prefer to buy vegetables in season for example, because in season they are less expensive and they are also better. For instance strawberries in winter are expensive and not that good." (1/F/7/M)

He also mentioned the advantages of buying fish in season for later use:

"If one wishes to make coquilles St Jacques, one must buy them fresh during the season when they are not so expensive, clean them and freeze them...and use them later."

The following two fathers, the first professionally employed and the second employed as an electrician added:

"One or two Euro is not important but…price is an important consideration". (1/F/10/M)

"There are some nice cabbages now [January] *and you won't find them in the summer"* (1/F/14/M).

Quality issues were a common concern and free range and/or certified products including foods of known providence were often cited[115]. A single woman and teacher explained:

> *"It is true that when I buy chicken I do not buy the cheapest quality chicken, I buy corn fed poultry for sure and I pay attention to buying a branded 'Belle Rouge' chicken product, a free range chicken, not a battery chicken."* (1/F/5/F)

6.3.2.2 British respondents

Cost as a factor in relation to food practices was also mentioned by many British respondents but only one British respondent (1/B/29/F) mentioned the influence of seasonal produce. The following family men, the first a telephone engineer and the second a teacher commented:

> *"There are nine children in all in our family, and sometimes we are all there, so cost does come in to it."* (1/B/26/M)

> *"…I don't want to spend a fortune on a meal but I'm prepared to spend what is necessary."* (1/B/19/M)

6.3.3 Shopping habits

6.3.3.1 French respondents

Of the eight French respondents who discussed their shopping habits, half mentioned the regular use of supermarkets. The following two men, the first a single 23 year old IT technician and the second an older teacher and family man said:

> *"Yes, it is more efficient, there is everything… otherwise, if you go in to town, you have to go to the butchers, then you have to walk to the cheese shop, then walk on for fruit and vegetables or the grocery shop"* (1/F/15/M).

> *"The shopping, well 95% of it I do over the road in a smallish supermarket ...about 5% of the shopping is done at the market but generally it is easier to do the shopping at the local supermarket".* (1/F/10/M)

[115] Organic produce did not appear to be an important consideration among the French or British respondents and two French respondents explicitly discussed their distrust about organic foods.

Two of the eight respondents used mainly local markets although accepted that they used supermarkets for cleaning products, toilet paper and so on. The following professionally employed man who enjoyed food and 'simple' cooking explained:

> *"I go to supermarkets as little as possible, I can't stand them and I prefer to spend a little more and shop locally. When I go to the traiteur, I know him a little and we say 'bonjour', and at the bakers I know them and while it is not intimate, there is some contact. It's almost a personal vendetta against supermarkets, it's their style of operation, the way they present themselves as convenient and so on."* (1/F/9/M)

6.3.3.2 British respondents

Of the 12 British respondents who discussed their shopping habits, ten mentioned weekly use of supermarkets and the remaining two, used them occasionally[116]. The following two respondents, the first a family man and optometrist and the second a young mother and secretary explained:

> *"The majority would come from the supermarkets. There is a deli round in the high street and a few fresh fruit shops that we try to use as well plus a small store which we use for spices, nuts and rice. There isn't a food market in Barry although there are occasional farmers' markets and again we use those"* (1/B/21/M).

> *"Yes I do go to a local market on Saturday morning to pick up fruit and veg. but I do the majority of my shopping in the supermarket. It is all under one roof basically, and I find it again a time thing for me, convenient, and if I'm in town on weekend shopping I'll go to 'Marks' and buy a lot of their prepared meals. I find them handy" (*1/B/22/F)

6.3.4 Concerns about food safety and diet

At the time of the interviews, the issue of BSE was still high on the agenda although there was less of a *'crisis'* in France.

6.3.4.1 French respondents

Only 6 of the 12 French respondents who chose to discuss issues of food safety stated that BSE had been a concern and of the 8 respondents who explicitly discussed GM foods, only one was actively opposed to them. Nine out of thirteen

[116] When it came to buying meat, some respondents in France and Britain also mentioned buying it from a butcher because they had more trust in the quality of it.

respondents discussed diet and health and none claimed to be on a diet to lose weight, one wanted to reduce cholesterol and one was attempting to reduce salt consumption. Two mentioned actively avoiding ready meals as they considered them to be less healthy. The main concern among the French respondents was to eat a variety of foods so as to maintain a balanced diet. Individuals discussed the importance of eating more fresh fruit, vegetables, fish and less meat, cheese and charcuterie. The responses below were given first by a professional 55 year old married man, followed by responses by two women, the first aged 44 with no employment outside of the home and her family, the second by a professionally employed 51 year old single woman.

> "*I think variety is probably the best way to achieve a balance...a little of everything." (*1/F/9/M)

> "*A balanced diet is important. Also I think that ready meals are rich in sugar, salt and additives and not the best thing for one's health."* (1/F/8/F)

> "*I no longer eat cheese because before I ate too much of it, I eat a lot less meat. But otherwise I have never been on a diet. There are things that I eat in smaller quantities"* (1/F/5/F).

6.3.4.2 British respondents

All but four of the British respondents considered that their attitude or behaviour in relation to beef consumption had been modified by *'mad cow disease'*. Six respondents explicitly discussed GM foods, three were uncertain about it and three were opposed to it. All but one respondent discussed issues related to diet and health and the main concerns were to eat "*Low fat, low salt, low sugar"* (1/B/17/F). 13 respondents singled out fat as the nutrient they most wanted to avoid. A typical response was:

> "*During the preparation of foods I try to do more 'low fat' so if I buy chicken I will remove the skin .and I try and remove the fat from other meats and if the meat is very fatty, I try to drain it off."* (1/B/20/F)

Three of the thirteen respondents said they wanted to increase their fruit and vegetable consumption and 7 of the 13 mentioned wanting to avoid eating certain foods or followed certain eating patterns to improve health or to reduce weight. The following responses made by professional men and women illustrate the point:

"*We went to a place called 'Slimmer's World' and we try and hold to that in the week but get a bit naughty at weekends."* (1/B/17/F)

"*I came across the combining/non-combining diet where you keep your carbs separate from your protein and it's sorted out my indigestion completely."* (1/B/21/M)

"*We choose certain foods because of cholesterol levels and then it comes down to how we cook it. We tend to have a lot of oven ready meals…oven ready chips and things like that so we are not using the deep fat fryer and everything is grilled…and we micro-wave things as well."* (1/B/23/M)

6.4 Learning to cook

6.4.1 Cooking skills and confidence

6.4.1.1 French respondents

The French sample indicated that they were fairly confident to prepare a range of foods although lacked some skills necessary to prepare certain dishes. The French men considered they had a set of basic skills yet around a half went on to describe quite complex dishes as follows:

"*I am not very confident but I can use basic ingredients. I can cook an omelette, I can cook a steak, a beef bourguignon, a stew, most meats and fish...I do like doing raw fish, marinated in lemon juice, but beyond that...I never mind giving it a try and it doesn't scare me." (*1/F/9/M)

"*There are things that I haven't mastered. I do not know fish well. Yes, everything's in a frying pan yes, the oven, it depends.... I do not know how to steam very well... langoustines? Mayonnaise…. it's not difficult to make with the mixer. ..To prepare noix St Jacques you just sear them, flambé them with alcohol, add some mushrooms, fresh cream, stir a little and they are ready. It is very fast and delicious if the scallops are good"* (1/F/7/M)

"*I tend to lack the spontaneity to create something totally new… when I go to the shops sometimes I have no idea but then I see some lentils so I might then take some pork or some sausages or something like that. Or… if I see a little veal...I'll think about maybe a casserole...some spices, some coconut milk, a little curry and some rice to go with it. I don't always need a fixed idea"* (1/F/10/M)

6.4.1.2 British respondents

The British respondents, with two exceptions, were reticent about their skills and stressed that they were "fairly confident" (1/B/16/M) with the "basics" (1/B/27/F,

1/B/17/F) and preferred a recipe to follow (1/B/22/F).Typical responses from the men included:

> "*I know how to boil, poach, roast and I know how to grill… I sometimes create my own dishes around things like eggs with vegetables...a kind of large omelette...something safe. I wouldn't particularly experiment.* (1/B/16/M)

> "*I need the instructions... a plan. If I haven't got all the ingredients, I'm stuck."* (1/B/21/M)

The women, tended to say they were confident with *"quick and easy"* dishes (1/B18/F), and described their cooking as *"very basic"* (1/B/27/F) and also discussed the need to have a plan or follow a recipe. For example:

> "*Yes if I've got in front of me a recipe I feel quite confident…I'm not an adventurous cook, I wouldn't just think, well let's throw this in." (*1/B/22/F)

> "*There are certain things that I do that I am confident of. Friends came to lunch on Sunday and I did lamb pasta, I did grapes... cheese... then I just got some ice cream. Yeah, I would never do a roast, I'm hopeless …it makes me stressed." (*1/B/17/F)

6.4.2 Learning to cook at school

6.4.2.1 French respondents

In France, cooking appears not to have formed part of the compulsory curriculum for some years and was only cited by the oldest female respondent (aged 74) and the youngest, a male aged 23 who had done some basic cooking when he first attended school. One person had since followed an evening cookery class.

6.4.2.2 British respondents

All female respondents discussed having undertaken 'domestic science'/cake making but considered it of little use. Of the British males interviewed, only the youngest (1/B28/M) had received any cookery classes at school and this was part of a technology option for one year. Three respondents had since attended short courses or evening classes on different aspects of food. Two women, the first a 55 year old district nurse and the second a 30 year old secretary explained:

*"We had domestic science but I can't remember what we did. It doesn't really stand out in my memory" (*1/B/20/F)

"I did do basic cookery, just pizzas, burgers and maybe the odd casserole, but nothing more than that, but yes I got tips from school" (1/B/22/F)

6.4.3 Learning to cook from family and friends

6.4.3.1 French respondents

Very few respondents discussed learning to cook from their mothers although had sometimes casually watched them in the kitchen. One woman discussed learning to cook from her grandparents and a male had learnt some cooking from his sister. A 44 year old woman who had grown up in a family with ten children explained:

"*I did not help* [my mother] *much in the preparation of meals...yes if making cakes or things like that and I helped in preparing the vegetables. However I watched and that taught me and then it's true that I learned by doing it myself" (*1/F/8/F).

The male respondents generally claimed that they were not encouraged to learn from their mothers as the following 46 year old explains:

"*No, not at all from my mother...from friends a little but no, the kitchen was really a place reserved for my mother" (*1/F/10/M)

Seven respondents specifically mentioned learning to cook from friends and all but one was male. Of the males, two of them discussed that when younger it was important to be able to cook so as to be able to invite girlfriends to their homes for the evening and a further three discussed learning to cook from a girlfriend such as the following respondent:

*"It was a friend that taught me ('une amie'/*female friend*")* (1/F/6/M)

However, the most significant approach to learning how to cook, especially among the males but not exclusively, appeared to be experientially. For example:

"…you start with simple things…I have the impression not to have learnt really. There are things that one does naturally and then little by little" (1/F/5/F)

"Cooking is like lots of things, one learns all the time. I learn a little each day" (1/F/10/M)

6.4.3.2 British respondents

Few respondents commented on learning about cooking from their mothers although more had 'picked things up' from seeing them cook. Two British respondents commented on learning about cooking from their fathers and this tended to be special recipes, one male discussed learning to cook from his grandparents and a female had learnt some specialities from her Kurdish husband. Two middle aged women, the first an office administrator and clearly passionate about food and the second, a district nurse who cooked but did not want to spend long doing it explained:

> "*I suppose helping my mother...started off peeling the potatoes and the veggies, things like that and then gradually…"* (1/B/24/F)

> "*My mother taught me very little...she taught me how to do gravy which was mixing 'Bisto' with water, yuk, and mint sauce...she showed me how to do Yorkshire pudding"* (1/B/20/F)

A 58 year old professional male added:

> "*I learnt to cook by watching my peers cook...not so much my mother although you go in to the kitchen whilst she is cooking and you notice what she is doing."* (1/B/19/M)

Four male respondents discussed learning to cook from their wives/partners such as the following 40 year old living with his family in Cardiff who said he enjoyed cooking alongside his wife and added:

> "*My wife really…I was very much spoon fed by my mother…every meal was always ready when we came home, we never had to go and make even a slice of toast, but my wife decided no that's not the way."* (1/B/23/M)

Four male respondents discussed learning to cook from friends (one), scouts (two) or the army (one), often out of necessity as described by the following respondent:

> *"I left school and went straight to university and I had to… I moved in with five other guys and we did our own cooking usually and I picked up stuff from them" (*1/B/19/M)

Two women also discussed learning from friends and respondent 1/B/20/F added:

> *"I think I learnt to cook by watching friends abroad mainly...I didn't learn to cook from the British and my mother taught me very little. So I really learnt when I went abroad and the first country I lived in was France and that was just an eye opener because people really loved their food, loved the cooking and they made it a big social occasion and they invited you round and you were expected to sit at the table for hours and really enjoy it and they lived to eat not eat to live".*

On leaving the parental home, the most important method of learning how to cook particularly for the men was experientially but often mixed with other methods as the following male respondent describes:

> *"Trial and error…when I was 18 and went to live in a flat I suddenly realised there was no one to cook for me and I remember starting off with omelettes and baked beans and then I met my first wife and I learnt from her and I started buying a few of the… 'Galloping Gourmet' cook books (laughing) and then just trying it out"* (1/B/16/M)

6.4.4 Learning to cook from the media

6.4.4.1 French respondents

Thirteen respondents including seven males referred to using printed recipes from books, magazines and food packets. Two of them referred to extensive collections of magazines and half the women discussed cutting out and keeping recipes, although as the woman below suggests they are referred to rarely. The men in particular were more likely to say they used the printed media to learn how to cook as opposed to referring to recipes to cook a dish. Their comments included:

> *"For four years I bought a monthly magazine called 'Cuisine Actuelle' and I did some quite original dishes...that's over forty editions, so now I can cook much of what was inside them or at least it serves as a foundation" (*1/F/10/M).

> *"I learned with the encyclopaedia called 'Golden Fingers' in 10 volumes"* (1/F/5/F)

> *"Often if I like the recipe, I do it, but if not, it will join all my other recipes that I never look at"* (1/F/5/F)

No respondents discussed having used the internet for information on cooking and only four rarely mentioned TV/celebrity chef cooking programmes and then often in a disparaging way as part of day time TV. Two respondents, the first a 34 year old mother without university education and then a 24 year old single male who had attended university commented:

> *"I like watching them and they give me ideas but I hardly ever do them"* (1/F/13/F).

> *"Yes, I like them but they're not for cooking oneself as you have to take notes all the time or record it. No, I prefer lots of different recipe books"* (1/F/15/M)

6.4.4.2 British respondents

Twelve respondents, including seven males referred to printed recipes, of having a *"shelf-full of books"* (1/B/24/F) and approximately half the female respondents discussed cutting out recipes although often "*they don't really get looked at again"* (1/B/22/F). Four of the seven males who discussed the printed media said they rarely used such sources of information although the following professional, family man and keen cook added.

> *"We have got loads of books… we are very bookish with our cooking. Wherever we go we see a book of cooking of that area and then people bring us books because they know we like those. We have also used the BBC Good Food Guide and we've now got the binder"* (1/B/21/M)

Only respondent, 1/B/16/M, a 55 year old married architect with no children referred to using the internet although described Delia Smith's site as *"largely one big advert".* Celebrity chef shows were more popular and six males indicated that the programmes were interesting although they rarely influenced their cooking. Of the six women that referred to the programmes, half said they might try a recipe afterwards. Married women, both working as secretaries, the first one 30 years old and the second, 57 years old commented:

> *"...yes I did find myself trying out some of these meals and the best cook I find is Delia Smith. When I entertain I have got her recipe books and then I buy all the ingredients and make it"* (1/B/22/F)

> *"I like watching them but I certainly don't follow them or pick up any hints"* (1/B/27/F)

6.5 Eating away from home

6.5.1.1 French respondents

Respondents described how they enjoyed going to restaurants especially with friends and displayed familiarity and a relaxed attitude to the 'restaurant experience'. They referred to *"interesting meals, elaborate meals and time consuming to prepare"* and further comments from a diverse range of individuals included:

> *"We go for pleasure, to eat comfortably, take our time and often it is a French restaurant… with a good chef who can produce this type of food, a bit*

complex… this always influences my choice, but we sometimes visit Chinese and Indian restaurants. I like to discover things that I do not prepare at home" (1/F/1/F)

"I most like traditional restaurants but I also like the Chinese, less so the pizzeria but I like Italian" (1/F/14/M)

"I go to little restaurants that are not too expensive, that are good and I go fairly often" (1/F/15/M).

The use of takeaways along with the option of delivery was virtually unknown and only two people mentioned using them very occasionally. For example a 49 year old woman with husband and child explained:

"No, I suppose we have tried take-away pizzas once or twice but no, not like in England with the Indian and Chinese takeaways" (1/F/1/F)

Some respondents discussed the use of a '*traiteur'* or '*charcuterie'* which a 55 year old male living with his wife explained he might use to buy "*stuffed tomatoes"* (1/F/9/M) and a 23 year old male, living alone said he might buy "*a starter from time to time…a tabouleh* (a North African couscous based dish*), all readymade in a little container" (*1/F/15/M).

A large majority of the respondents said they did not like the large franchise type of 'American style' fast food outlets and rarely used them. However, the youngest respondent (1/B/15/M), a single male living with his grandparents used drive-ins such as McDonalds on a fairly regular basis at lunchtimes and another male, aged 43 and living alone explained he used them occasionally (1/F/6/M). The traditional independent 'friterie/merguez' establishments were used by some of the other males for example when watching live sporting fixtures and another male, aged 35 and living alone said:

"Sometime I have had chicken and chips or stuffed aubergines…but I eat it there. These shops close late and it might be the only solution". (1/F/11/M)

Half the respondents that discussed their eating habits at work discussed their use of work's canteens for lunch, three reported sometimes eating sandwiches or salads during their lunchtimes and a further four discussed how they would eat in small restaurants occasionally. Four reported sometimes returning home for lunch. For example a 37 year old electrician and family man explained:

"I eat at home and when I work away from Nantes, I eat in a restaurant" (1/F/14/M).

A 55 year old teacher living with his wife and without children commented:

"The days I don't work I often have a sandwich or a small plate of crudités (raw vegetables) in a café…or sometimes I go to a local bar/brasserie for the plat du jour" (1/F/9/M).

A 23 year old single, male IT developer said:

"I'll have a sandwich for lunch, it doesn't take long so I can leave earlier in the evening…I also use restaurants" (1/F/15/M)

6.5.1.2 British respondents

British respondents also described how they enjoyed going to restaurants especially with family, for celebrations and for *"a change".* They often referred to the choice of ethnic type restaurants and never referred to their own nation's cuisine although carveries were cited by three respondents. The high cost of eating out was frequently discussed and restaurant and pub chains were often considered as offering the best value for money. The actual food was rarely discussed other than *"good quality Indian restaurants".* Comments from London and Cardiff included:

"I can hardly think of any cuisine that you can't find. If we are eating cheap and cheerful it will be an Indian meal because we have some extremely good Indian restaurants around here [West London]*... out of choice I would probably eat Italian"* (1/B/16/M)

"Not too often. If we go out it's usually Sunday lunch which would be a carvery" (1/B/27/F)

"I I like very expensive French restaurants but this weekend we are going to a 'Harvester' because it is my stepdaughter's birthday...and it is cost. I just find restaurants in England obnoxiously expensive... we only go out on special occasions" (1/B/20/F)

Takeaway meals to be eaten at home were consumed by all respondents and a *"Friday (or Saturday) curry"* was consumed by almost half the sample often weekly, fortnightly or monthly although it was sometimes alternated with a 'Chinese'. Takeaways were described as an end of week treat, *"a tradition"* and half of those who engaged in such activities explained how they were simply too tired to cook

anything by the end of the working week. Men were most likely to collect the meals[117] and comments by some married, middle aged individuals, the first a woman in London and then a man living in Cardiff included:

> *"A curry on a Friday night…well it's the law...no one is going to cook* (laughing)*"* (1/B/17/F)

> *"We have a take-in probably once a week from a local Indian. It used to be a Friday night routine, but now it's a Saturday night … they will deliver but we usually order by phone, nip down and have a pint and then collect it"* (1/B/21/M)

A majority of respondents said they did not like the US franchise type of fast food outlets although most had used them *"once in a blue moon"* as this 30 year old male living with his girlfriend explained.(1/B/28/M). Four of the other men said they visited them when eating out with their children[118] as the following respondent explains:

> *"Yeah, McDonalds, that's always a treat* [for the children] *and we join in…also KFCs, Pizza Huts and so on".* (1/B/26/M)

A Cardiff woman and enthusiastic cook also explained how she and her husband engaged with such establishments as follows:

> *"Not very often, if we take the dogs for a walk down the beach we'll stop and have fish and chips, but not very often…McDonalds, no, nothing like that".* (1/B/24/F)

In relation to those eating away from home whilst at work, five said they sometimes used a work's canteen for lunch including two who tended to buy sandwiches. A further twelve also ate a sandwich or salad at lunchtime, all but three brought it from home and three reported eating it at their desk. The following comments come from, first a district nurse, then two teachers and finally an information manager.

> *"I don't really have time to stop at lunch times. I take a sandwich with me and I eat as I'm working...as I am answering the phone etc"* (1/B/20/F)

> *"I take sandwiches to work and I wash them down with a couple of pints of beer...that's my lunchtime meal…and a packet of crisps usually afterwards"* (1/B/19/M)

[117] British men discussed takeaway meals enthusiastically and how the routine often fitted in to their Saturday sports activities or return from the pub.

[118] 'Fish and chips' were mentioned by two respondents.

"I take these salads to work and I don't enjoy them. I eat them because I don't want to be hungry and I know that it is better for my weight" (1/B/17/F)

"I always eat there [canteen] *or if I'm with a friend I'll go and eat in a pub or in a café down the road...a nice lunch for under a 'fiver' "* (1/B/18/F)

6.6 Transitions in Culinary Cultures?

6.6.1 Changes in domestic food practices

A large majority of the respondents in both countries considered that in their childhood the foods available were mainly fresh foods although the range was more limited and home cooked meals were more routine and predictable. Men were in employment and rarely cooked and mothers were at home busy with child care and domestic chores including cooking. Eating together as a family was described as more common then although at least six respondents referred to men's shift patterns which disrupted eating all together. French and British respondents described change in the type of foods served (rice, pasta, foreign specialities and 'ethnic' style foods) and meals had to some extent become less structured.

As regards time spent cooking, of the ten persons in each country who specifically addressed the subject, all but two persons in both Britain and France considered they spent less time cooking than their parents had[119] mainly because their mothers were not in employment and spent more time 'cooking from scratch'. With both parents working, 'modern day lifestyles' were described as being more affluent and how it was possible to substitute home cooked meals for those prepared outside of the home (in restaurants, takeaway establishments (British sample only) and more processed foods available in supermarkets.

6.6.1.1 French respondents

A 44 year old woman summed up how the nature of meals was very predictable in the past and in her case, was further influenced by the size of the family she came from:

[119] Repondents in both countries also considered their parents had spent less time cooking than their grandparents.

> *"It was very regular... seasonal vegetables and meat ...however our family was large, we were twelve, so we only had meat perhaps three times a week"* (1/F/8/F).

The comments of this 49 year old woman sums up how many respondents discussed how they now spent less time cooking than previous generations as well as the familial nature of meals. She said:

> *"...my mother did much, more than I do nowadays. I remember my grandmothers, my aunts, my great aunts who spent an inordinate amount of time cooking, simmering dishes and so on... I remember the family meals ...hours spent sitting at the table"* (1/F/1/F).

However, seven respondents considered the foods eaten had little changed and the same mother and housewife as above added:

> *"Apart from the frozen foods that I use, especially frozen vegetables, it is very similar to what I ate as a young child"* (1/F/1/F).

At the same time, many discussed the increase of women in paid employment and the subsequent demand for more convenient type foods as the following woman explains:

> *"It is true that a woman who works and has children hasn't the time to spend cooking and even those that do not work buy things readymade as well...they think it is better, more sophisticated… a little more refined"* (1/F/5/F)

A male fruit and vegetable market stall holder described the changes he saw as follows:

> *"I think the majority of people cook a lot less than a generation ago. I see that in the food markets there are more and more stallholders that specialise in the sale of take away, ready prepared meals that people buy in little containers"* (1/F/12/M)

Four respondents went on to describe how cooking and eating habits were changing. The following quotations are taken from middle aged individuals, the first a family man, the second, a single woman and the third, a family woman and are as follows:

> *"Look at McDonalds and everything…people don't even know how to cook so they lose their taste and they get use to it. This trend in cooking habits is very difficult to shift and if people get use to eating the 'hamburger' it will be difficult to then eat other things"* (1/F/12/M)

> *"If children have been raised in a family where the mother did not prepare food but reheated ready meals in the microwave, or a McDonald etc, they will continue with such behaviour. It's a question of habit...socialisation (custom and culture)"* (1/F/5/F)

"If both work or not interested in cooking or do not necessarily know too much… I think that there are many like that...buying fast foods and ready meals now. And it is the young that use fast foods and if they get into a habit, a taste since childhood for ready made things, all sweet and salty, their palate cannot develop" (1/F/8/F)

Many respondents believed that there would be a return to more traditional cooking practices in France and that the young who might now follow an 'American style diet' and cook less would in time cook and consume meals in the same manner as their parents, namely at length and around the table. Six respondents discussed either how fast food was a passing trend, a 'fad' or that fast foods would co-exist alongside more traditional styles of cooking and eating which would remain popular, especially at weekends.

6.6.1.2 British respondents

Respondents tended to describe their mothers as 'good plain cooks' (stews, roasts, meat and two veg.) and at least eight referred to their mothers cooking pastries, puddings and cakes as the following 55 year old woman explained:

"She [mother] *would cook stews, she would cook cakes… my mum was a good plain cook. She would sometimes do things like a treacle pudding …what I eat now is incredibly different"* (1/B/17/F)

Mothers were described as having 'home cooked' meals ready for family members as described first by a 57 year old woman and then a 40 year man, both from the Cardiff area.

"There were four kids and we always sat down for our meal... my mother never worked so there was always a meal ready when we got home...she used to cook things from scratch...pies and that type of thing, the basics. It was always fresh because my father had a vegetable garden...we never had a fridge and everything was bought on that day... My father never worked on a Sunday but he worked late in the evening, so we would have our tea before he came home but on Sundays we always sat down together for a roast" (1/B/27/F)

*"My mother cooked week days and my father always did Sunday lunch because he was a mine worker and his shifts were erratic. It was very traditional home cooked food; very standard and very predictable…you always knew what you were going to have" (*1/B/23/M)

While one person considered that he and his wife spent more time in the kitchen than his mother who "*would have used tinned foods that were just heated up"* (1/B16/M), eight specifically described how they spent less time cooking than their parents, often because unlike in the past, women/wives were now typically in paid employment. The following man who now shared some of the responsibility for cooking the family meals explained this as well as the importance of convenient meal solutions. He said:

> *"Yes, definitely less* [cooking]*…because of the lifestyle we lead…we both work so it's all one big mad rush normally, we haven't got as much time to prepare and cook as much as I remember my mother doing… she didn't work outside the house so she had more time... I think it is getting diluted with each generation and coming down to me, I look for…I wouldn't say all the time, but it's convenience"* (1/B/23/M)

A young working mother added:

> *"Yes, a lot of my friends tend to cook convenience...it's the time factor. I think a lot of them if they can get out of doing it they will...it makes life a bit easier"* (1/B/27/F)

Respondents continued and considered there were now too many barriers for any return to cooking and the set eating practices of the past and this was described by the following two professional and married males as follows:

> *"...you're getting a generation of people who eat burgers, whose mum and dad ate burgers, whose grannies were eating burgers. I'm wondering if you can break that"* (1/B/16/M)

> *"I don't think you will see such set meal times anymore, people will eat everything on the go. I think we will be driven by the food manufacturers... I can't see us ever slowing down... I think cooking is in decline"* (1/B/23/M)

6.6.2 National/regional culinary cultures and the impact of globalisation

6.6.2.1 French respondents

All those interviewed demonstrated pride and confidence in identifiable French regional cookery styles and their centrality to French cultural identity and considered that truly authentic regional dishes were only available in their specific region. However they did also describe the increasing availability of regional ingredients and seven respondents acknowledged that regional differences had declined. However, stark differences between the north and south were described by eight of the respondents and a range of comments from male and female respondents, younger (23) and older (49), those with and without children included:

"There are regional differences for sure. I come from Finistere and we use a lot of pork and charcuterie...a lot of potatoes, this was typically Breton...also Normandy cuisine with creme fraiche and a lot of sauces. In the south it is Mediterranean cooking. But nowadays it is less strong perhaps. One ate the seasonal produce but now with the possibility of transport...but fish…I wanted to prepare bouillabaisse and the hog-fish (rascasse) was unavailable in the [Nantes] *market...so it did not work as the other fish did not give the right taste".* (1/F/1/F)

"...there are regional differences. I was in Alsace and there is a lot of charcuterie, a lot of pork, and this reflects the culture of the region. When one goes to the big hypermarkets there, there are impressive aisles of charcuterie, which is not the case here [Nantes]*"* (1/F/8/F).

"Each region has its specialities. It's very different and what each region does makes up French cuisine... people still prepare regional specialities" (1/F/12/M)

*"There are always certain French dishes...'coq au vin', 'pot au feu'...but here in the north there is more butter, lots of heavy sauces... the Nantaise butter sauce 'beurre blanc' is well known and there are other special things that remain regional...but you can now also find dishes of the south...you can find everything in the large supermarkets" (*1/F/15/M)

"One can find frozen containers of lasagne or Cantonese rice everywhere...Nestlé desserts so in that sense it is beginning to surpass regional differences" (1/F/10/M).

The culinary cultures of Spain and Italy were each positively referred to by six French respondents and Indian and Chinese food culture was also positively referred to. While some respondents considered food was now better in Britain, *"really not too bad at all"* (1/F/10/M), the following comment by a woman who had much visited Britain sums up many of the above points:

"The French...also the Italians, the Chinese I think also have a rich cuisine. The northern countries…perhaps not so much 'la cuisine' …I do not think England has…I thinks it is a matter of sitting at the dining table…when one sits for three-four hours... but in England I have often seen that people eat at six o'clock or before, the plate is ready, it is put in front of you, one eats it, then drinks a cup of tea, and one leaves the table. The pleasure of sitting at the table in France is very important" (1/F/1/F)

Five French respondents expressed some concern about the spread of globalisation and three of them discussed the anti-globalisation campaign headed by Monsieur Bové and considered it necessary for someone to draw attention to such tendencies. Such sentiments are summed up by two middle aged respondents with families, the

first an Algerian born, university educated fruit and vegetable market trader and the second a housewife.

> *"I think Monsieur Bové is raising the alarm, he is warning of the dangers that globalisation can bring i.e. a form of standardisation throughout the world and it's not really good because we have a rich diversity and everybody can enrich it. It's better to take advantage of the differences than accept standardisation" (*1/F/12/M)

> *"It would be a pity is if younger generations forget their culinary traditions...but I do not believe that McDonalds are going to stamp out the way people eat. It's true that all cultures will mix... it's an evolution, it's normal… whether this is good or not…I do not think that it will be less good"* (1/F/8/F)

However, four respondents highlighted some perceived benefits of globalisation such as the following 55 year old male teacher who said:

> *"Yes, I think there is some type of 'standardisation'…but I don't know... when you visit the aisles of the hypermarkets…the variety of fruits and vegetables are amazing. It's is such a transformation in the last few years and I don't know whether it's a good thing or not. Cuisines have always existed in relation to other cultures and customs and continue to adapt" (*1/F/9/M)

6.6.2.2 British respondents

Six respondents considered there were some differences in eating habits in Britain between town and country, north and south, rich and poor, but most thought such differences were diminishing. Overall the British sample considered there to be no longer any identifiable regional styles of cooking or cuisines in Britain and struggled to articulate any coherent notion of any culinary cultures although were able to list some regional dishes[120] and three typical responses from Cardiff followed by one from London included:

> *"Basically it is much the same over the UK ...the majority of people I know like their curries"* (1/B/27/F)

> *"…down here we do like the Welsh cakes… but not that seaweed stuff…lava bread, cawl is very nice…they like faggots and peas down here a lot… I think that is it really. Up north, everything goes with your chips...as for Manchester*

[120] Regional dishes that were mentioned included Lancashire Hot Pot, Cornish pasties, Scottish shortbread, porridge and specific Welsh specialities such as Glamorgan sausages, oatmeal and cockles and oysters but these were now either occasional items on commercial menus or something they remembered their parents preparing.

specialities…a chip balm (roll/bap) *and you can get anything on your chips…any kind of sauce. I don't think they really have a dish up there"* (1/B/26/M)

"...not in Cardiff –it's a poorer peoples diet…to bulk people up to do heavy work like the Yorkshire thing, or Cornish pasty thing, when you say culinary…it's too posh...it's not so refined…there are 'Glamorgan sausages' and all that sort of stuff but…people used to gather oysters in West Wales...but Cardiff is so metropolitan and there's so many people here from different countries, I mean it's fashionable to go Thai" (1/B/29/F)

"I still think there are regional differences but I think they are less than they were. I think they eat more fish and chips up north. You know, if you have got money in Manchester...well I think it is probably more a rich/poor divide than a north/south divide" (1/B/18/F)

Ten respondents highlighted France as possessing strong culinary cultures as well as other European nations, especially those bordering the Mediterranean. Such views are well summed up by the following quotes, first from London and the last two from Cardiff:

"They [the French] *have a much stronger view of food and culture...we don't seem to have that in Britain about food".* (1/B/16/M)

*"We sit for hours in a pub where the French will sit for hours round a table...eating and drinking wine" (*1/B/20/F*).*

"Food is more at the forefront of things in France" (1/B/29/F)

"No in Britain food is just something to eat to carry on living. It's not important how you prepare it or how you eat it" (1/B/25/M)

Three respondents explicitly expressed concern about the impact of globalisation on culinary cultures and the impact of a powerful "*pervasive American culture"* (1/B/21/M). Two married and professional males commented:

"I don't suppose Italy and France will be able to hold out...but as it spreads it also creates a counter movement" (1/B/21/M).

*"The power of the conglomerates is enormous...this globalisation of the American dream...but you go to Italy and there are McDonalds there, but you don't have a huge sense of it sweeping the country…or France or Spain or Portugal" (*1/B/16/M)

At the same time, two respondents highlighted some advantages of globalisation such as the following from a professional, single woman in London.

"I think there is a cross fertilisation of influences. I think people are finding that they enjoy it more, that kind of mix of different types of flavours and ingredients and I think that has had a good effect because I don't think we had a particularly interesting diet. It has given us all sorts of opportunities to try new things and enjoy our food more" (1/B/18/F)

6.7 Social variables and patterns of diversity within and between France and Britain

A common finding from the interviewees was their perception that in contemporary France or Britain, working, leisure and in many instances, complex family arrangements meant they lacked time to regularly cook from scratch and everyday cooking now needed to be faster and with greater substitution of a range of convenience foods. Notably, working mothers in both countries celebrated the easy availability of pasta, rice and the like, however, the use of processed foods such as fish in batter, sausages and oven-ready meals was more widely reported in Britain among both men and women with responsibilities for children and particularly among the Welsh respondents. However, such a phenomenon was not uniquely a British occurrence and for example it was also apparent that some French men, and to a lesser extent women, reported giving their children readymade foods such as pizzas when rushed for time. The use of tinned foods such as fish, mixed with tinned beans and/or salad were reportedly used by those on both sides of the Channel but such a pattern was more marked among those living alone in search of a quick and simple meal and in Britain such meals were more likely to be 'spiced up' into a more ethnic creation. Cost of food was an influence on foods selected for cooking in both countries particularly among those with larger families and among those not in professional employment, or where only one parent was in full time work. However, many French men and women, including those without children and in professional employment, were more likely to discuss economising via the use of seasonal foods than any respondents in Britain. A pattern emerged in that the French interviewees were more likely to discuss structured meals of clearly defined courses - although there was evidence of the preparation of simpler meals and with fewer courses particularly among men and women living alone. Individuals living alone, particularly those in France, were also more likely to eat their meals in front of the television than those living in a family household or social group according to this research.

Women in Britain were the most likely to describe themselves as good, plain cooks although the older British women were more likely to report making pastries, cakes and puddings than the French. Evidence has also highlighted how some British women described cooking as a chore and some British mothers reported feeling guilty if they did not cook for their families. No respondents in France described cooking as a chore although some French mothers described cooking as a regular part of their caring responsibilities. No male interviewees made any such observations and there was also clear evidence from respondents from both countries that men now cooked more often than a generation ago and were more likely to report enjoying it, although such cooking was more likely to be occasional and frequently undertaken during leisure time and weekends such as cooking for friends/family or the 'Sunday roast' or barbeque. Middle aged, family men, particularly those in France, when cooking for such special occasions appeared to often engage in some quite complex cooking tasks but there was also some evidence in Britain that when such men cooked, they enjoyed cooking more elaborate foods. Interestingly, there was also evidence in France and more so in Britain of men of all ages, and most notably those in professional employment, now taking a more equal responsibility for the everyday cooking in the home. However, such a pattern was far from uniform and in particular, there was evidence of some married, working men in Wales doing little or no cooking.

The use of takeaways and fast food restaurants to replace home cooked meals was a popular choice in Britain and to a lesser extent France although there was considerable variation and diversity within and between the two nations. Indian styled takeaways or similar were frequently regarded as a regular end of week treat by working individuals and many men from Cardiff and London reported the ritualised collection of such via a stop at a local pub. Such provision appeared unavailable in France however the use of a *'traiteur'* was described by some men and women. Food from chip shops and *'les friteries'* tended to be eaten by those already away from home such as the married couple walking their dog along the Welsh coast or young, largely male spectators of the Nantes football team. Few persons on either side of the Channel acknowledged using American styled fast food restaurants although it was evident that they were used more among the British sample, for example by some of the Welsh men who reported it being a treat for the children. In France, the younger single males also reported using them, typically at lunch time when working away from home or in the evening when rushed.

Both French and British respondents, particularly women, discussed being *'fairly confident'* to cook although all but two of the British sample stressed their need to keep to the basics or to follow a recipe. As was noted, the French men also stressed their confidence with the basics but went on to describe the preparation of some complex dishes. Men (and women) living alone of all ages either in France or Britain did not acknowledge experiencing any difficulties in relation to cooking for themselves or indeed others. There was no overwhelming pattern as to how people had learnt to cook in either country however all females and the youngest male in Britain discussed being taught cooking at school - although there was little agreement as to how effective such classes had been. In contrast, in France, only the oldest woman and youngest man had been taught cookery at school and neither commented upon the experience positively. Few respondents in either country commented on learning about cooking from their mothers although the women were more likely to have reported having *'picked things up'* while all but the youngest males on both sides of the Channel were more likely to report being shunned from the kitchen. French men were more likely to cite learning to cook from friends and especially girlfriends while the British male respondents were more likely to stress learning to cook later in life, such as from their wives/partners. Most respondents discussed learning by *'trial and error', 'little by little'* and many had referred to printed recipe sources. For example it appeared that those in professional employment were more likely to refer to recipes in 'cookery books' (the British) as opposed to methods of cookery in magazine collections (the French).

Social variables remain a useful means with which to examine domestic food practices and meal habits and some broad patterns have emerged that appear common within and between the two nations. However, evidence of clear homogenous groups that share patterns of behaviour as a result of their social backgrounds appears less overwhelming today as distinctive lifestyles and individual choices create greater diversity in relation to people's attitudes and conduct within each country. Such diversity is already complex but given the need to compare patterns of similarities and differences across geographical and cultural boundaries requires further sensitivity to the myriad of factors that impact upon the construction of the individual's beliefs and behaviour, in France and also in Britain.

Chapter 7 : Phase 2 Data presentation

7.1 Introduction

In phase 2 of the fieldwork a cross section of nineteen experts (10 in France & 9 in Britain) were interviewed from a range of related policy areas that were able to comment on the narrative that had emerged from the public in phase 1 of the fieldwork. Furthermore, they were able to contribute their knowledge of any changes in relation to culinary cultures and most significantly, discuss related food policy issues and their implications in each country.

Key data was then selected and organized under themes so as to present a systematic summary of the main findings from the interviews. Each respondent's identity remains anonymous and next to each quotation is a unique code. Appendix 21 explains what the codes represent and gives a brief profile of each respondent.

7.2 Cooking in the home

7.2.1 Respondents in Britain on the significance of cooking

The significance of cooking was widely discussed and the majority of respondents were concerned about the likely health implications if knowledge of cooking was limited. While respondent 2/B/46 (a professor of nutrition) pointed out that "*it only really matters if people eat in an unhealthy way",* four respondents explicitly discussed the importance of having the ability to cook, *"knowing a bit about where food comes from and to understand it"* (2/B/35 – a director of an academy) and how the ability to cook *"equips everybody with the skills, knowledge and information for them to be able to make informed choices"* (2/B/44 – a food consultant/campaigner). How cooking increased independence and personal autonomy was also a recurrent theme as demonstrated in the following comments from a university professor, a director of a MNC and a food consultant/campaigner respectively:

> *"...cooking is essential to a healthy diet and we don't value what those skills mean long-term to our health"* (2/B/33)
>
> *"...if you don't understand how cooking should be done, are you in a position to judge what is good for you? Even if you don't necessarily practice the skills on a daily basis, the knowledge is necessary for health and well-being"* (2/B/34)
>
> *"I think you are hugely disadvantaged if you can't make food for yourself confidently and knowledgeably".* (2/B/44)

This last respondent added that with home cooked food '*"you know what went into it"* and respondent 2/B/33 also felt that if people are not able to cook they are reliant on highly processed foods which are often "*riddled with additives".* Respondent 2/B/43 (a professor in psychology), agreed and respondent 2/B/44 (a food consultant/ campaigner) went so far as to say that the ability to cook was a *"basic survival skill".*

The wider significance of cooking was also discussed by over half the respondents and for example respondent 2/B/35 (a director of an academy) said *"I think food is so important to life in more ways than just putting it into our bodies".* At least five respondents discussed the social role of cooking and how pleasurable it could be to share home cooked food. The importance of eating together for family and community was summed up by the following manager within community health:

> *"...building a social value to eating has merit in itself. I'm sure it supports mental health, reduces alienation and it's about building stability into social communities. Even in the family, if you sit down at the same table for a meal it is the time for sharing news and building the community of the family… I think probably the 'quality' is missing from the food agenda"* (2/B/42)

Cooking was also described by a director of a MNC as offering "*self-sufficiency, independence and the ability to care for others"* (2/B/34) although others acknowledged that the replacement of home cooked foods with re-heated processed foods need not necessarily undermine such giving and caring roles.

7.2.2 Respondents in France on the significance of cooking

Respondents in France also outlined the health implications of a poor diet and how cooking *may* help promote the consumption of a healthier diet. In particular they stressed the importance of the home cooked, traditional three meal model as a safeguard against rising obesity levels. A senior health promotion officer (2/F/30) commented: '*"if we cook at home we can eat less salt, less sugar and less fat"'* and considered the majority of the French enjoyed cooking, at least occasionally. A director of a national institute concerned with food and taste added:

> *"Cooking skills enable people to at least cook simple food and to vary the tastes they have and that is good... as children become older they are able to be as free as possible so they are able to exercise choice"* (2/F/37).

The social aspect and enjoyment of eating food with others was a significant factor among the French. A project manager of nutritional policy (2/F/32) added:

> *"...people frequently cite the pleasure of eating when they discuss their food habits and I have the impression that this continues to drive people towards cooking"*

He continued that "*people like cooking in France, especially at weekends"* and respondent 2/F/37 (a director of a national institute) agreed that "*cooking skills have become less essential…more of a leisure activity."*

Respondents considered that the ability to cook was an *'"expression of caring for and about the family'* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy) and that to *'"provide food is an act of love'* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy) and that "*if you don't prepare it yourself there is no such emotional involvement".*

7.2.3 Respondents in Britain on cooking skills and knowledge about food

Nearly all respondents in Britain considered that people were cooking less in the home than a generation ago and such a decline further undermined confidence to cook and knowledge about food. The following views from a university professor, then a community health manager and a professor of psychology outline some of the views expressed:

> *"...in the past people had the skills because they were forced to have them because there was no other alternative* ... [and that now if]... *they don't know how to cook, they go for the convenient option"* (2/B/33).
>
> *"...fewer people are cooking* [and as a result they are] *less confident around basic cooking skills"* (2/B/42)
>
> *"Everybody is cooking less…the popularity of processed foods, ready meals, means they can't be cooking as much and we do know that they don't have the cooking skills to cook from scratch"* (2/B/43)

At least five respondents discussed a decline in the inter-generational transfer of cooking skills and how children were increasingly socialised in households where little cooking took place and that combined with the lack of cooking in schools would lead to a further decline in cooking and understanding about food. Two respondents discussed how *"we've missed out on two generations now and this has had enormous*

consequences" (2/B/33 – a university professor) and respondent 2/B/35 (a director of an academy) agreed and added such parents did not have *"the background and skills to draw on".* A range of further comments included:

> *"We now have hardly a 20 or 30 year old who can cook or has ever had a cookery lesson in their lives and know nothing whatsoever about food so we have got parents setting bad examples at home"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant)
>
> *"If food comes out of the deep freeze and in to the microwave then many children would have no sense of where food comes from other than the supermarket" (*2/B/42 – a community health manager)
>
> *"Very few people at home have those skills at all. We've got massive problems with obesity now and this is a food crisis situation. If they don't get good food in the home they won't want it outside... it's the primary socialisation and that's the problem we've got"* (2/B/33 – a university professor)

The director of an academy (2/B/35) gave the example of how celebrity chef Jamie Oliver tried to improve school dinners and had met with considerable opposition from the parents. She added:

> *"...the parents were like...it's not what they eat at home so why should they have to eat it at school?"*

Five respondents discussed how the nation was clearly divided when it came to cooking and interest in food. Such views are best summarised by the following respondents:

> *"Ultimately it is a class thing. If you haven't got any money you can't afford posh cookery books and if you don't have any education you don't read books anyway and if you can't cook you are absolutely stuffed because you don't want to risk your benefit money on something the children won't eat and you haven't got the confidence to believe they will eat it"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant)
>
> *"I think we're actually starting to see the super tanker slow and turn in that food is coming back on the agenda. People are able to afford more and entertaining and producing meals is actually becoming pleasurable again".* (2/B/34 – a director of a MNC)

Other respondents considered that there was some increased interest in food but were less sure whether such interest had impacted on cooking practices or been enough to *'"change the de-skilling process" (*2/B/42– a community health manager). Four respondents stressed that the *"basic rudiments"* (2/B/35 – a director of an academy)

and skill acquisition themselves were not complicated but that perceived lack of time and the ready availability of convenience type foods militated against skill acquisition.

7.2.4 Respondents in France on cooking skills and knowledge about food

Only three respondents specifically discussed some diminution of cooking in the home and felt this was as a result of perceived lack of time, the availability of convenience type foods and they were concerned about the subsequent impact on primary socialisation. The following comments best sum up these views:

> *"I think cooking skills are declining. Because of time and* b*ecause of the ready meals we can buy in stores. Children don't see their mother in the kitchen everyday… and they like McDonalds. I think that cooking skills are disappearing, but I hope not totally"* (2/F/30 – a senior health promotion officer)

> *"If you compare England and France, there is a very clear difference, but the tendency is the same, but we're not starting from the same point. For example, the structure of the daily meals, the proportion of meals eaten outside of the home, the place where they are eaten outside of the home, all are very different between France and England"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist)

7.2.5 Respondents in Britain on celebrity chefs

At least seven of the nine British respondents discussed the role of celebrity chefs in relation to passing on knowledge and skills about food and for example how '*"the proliferation of cookery, food and gastronomy programmes on television had rekindled an interest" (*2/B/34 –a director of a MNC) in food and cooking. However, a similar number had reservations about their actual impact on domestic food practices. Respondent 2/B/46 (a professor of nutrition) considered that celebrity chefs tended to demonstrate *"the sort of things you do when you have people round…kind of treat food"* and respondent 2/B/33 (a university professor) thought that *"the chef's make it too complicated"*[121]*.* Other comments included:

> *"They create interest but it doesn't seem to translate into practice...you have to have your peers or your parents leading the way"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant)

[121] Respondent 2/B/45 did consider that *"Jamie is a hero in that he has managed to get the government to concentrate on school meals"*

"What they have done is educated people about food but I'm not sure it has actually converted people into buying ingredients to cook at home" (2/B/33 -a university professor)

*"People say how much they enjoy watching it and I will say OK, do you ever cook any of these things and they will just say no we just love watching it" (*2/B/35 - a director of an academy)

7.2.6 Respondents in France on celebrity chefs

Respondents in France focused on when, how and by whom TV celebrity chefs were viewed as follows:

"Such programmes are fairly marginal and watched by far fewer people... they are mainly on in the afternoons and Saturday mornings perhaps…there is some interest but mainly by those that are housebound or those that watch daytime TV" (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

*"I saw many programmes in England but it's not like that in France. In France programmes about cooking are only in the morning maybe for elderly people" (*2/F/30 - a senior health promotion officer)

French respondents tended to consider that such shows only create *"a very passive interest"* in cooking (2/F/38 – a director of an academy).

7.3 Factors influencing cooking, diet and culinary cultures

7.3.1 Respondents in Britain on the food industry and the everyday scheduling of modern life

All respondents discussed the increased sales of processed, convenience and/or ready meals and considered that people must be cooking less than in the past. Such a trend was regarded as significant if it negatively impacted on diet and it was noted that:

*"The more affluent who have access to higher quality premium products, such as those from M & S or Waitrose, might be able to buy their way out of a poor diet" (*2/B/42– a community health manager)

*"The supermarkets and their ready meals are adding to the list of culprits that are responsible for the decline in cooking" (*2/B/35 - a director of an academy)

At least three respondents discussed how such 'meal solutions' facilitated individualised eating habits and comments included:

> *"With convenience products, people eat when they come home, and there tends to be more isolated dining in families...families eating together now seems reserved more for weekends rather than a daily activity"* (2/B/34 – a director of a MNC)

> *"We have a family that do eat together but they all eat different things … each person goes to the deep freeze, chooses the meal they want, puts it in the microwave and then they all eat together at the table. So, they want to eat together and they do but…it's seen as the easiest way" (*2/B/42 – a community health manager)

A majority of the respondents considered that demand for convenience foods was driven by the food industry and their advertising budget and that such activities should be controlled: For example:

> *"...the market is promoting fast food or ready meals* and *there is hardly any promotion of fruit and vegetables" (*2/B/42 – a community health manager)

> *"I think it is fair for the government to intervene and I would like there to be no advertising to children whatsoever"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant)

She added:

> *"Retailers do have such power because customers trust them and any survey you see about organisations and trust, Tesco and Waitrose always come top and politicians and journalists, bottom"*

> *"...the role of advertising in terms of encouraging kids to eat junk food and we do need some controls on that"* (2/B/44 - a food consultant/campaigner)

Respondents also discussed the rise in 'eating out' and *"how people are going for easiness, a quick fix…cheap and cheerful"* (2/B/41 - a French chef in Britain) and the subsequent decline in domestic cooking. Three respondents considered the extent of the commercialisation of food in France to be less pronounced and explained *"the food industry can't make inroads in France like they can here* [Britain]...*there's a resistance..."* (2/B/33 - a university professor) and that unlike the French "*we don't like food" (*2/B/45 – food and school meal consultant). Respondent 2/B/46 (a professor of nutrition) also considered the marketing of foods in Britain, especially to children *"is so much more aggressive* [than France]*, you feel that it is more of a consumer society"* and considered that less foods were explicitly marketed at children in France partly because they will be expected to eat the same foods as their parents who do not offer *"anything different… basically they eat the bits that they like from the meal and there is always bread if they're still hungry"*. Respondent 2/B/45 (a food and school meal

consultant) agreed and commented *"they* [France] *don't get an alternative; you see they're like a generation back from us".*

The influence of increased female employment rates on cooking practices was explicitly discussed by at least five respondents as well as whether there had been any change in relation to whether men or women cook in the home. How people wanted to spend their 'leisure time' was also discussed. Comments included:

> *"There are many more working parents within the family so consequently there's less time... we've become a more convenience nation in every sense of the word"* (2/B/34 – a director of a MNC)
>
> *"You have to look at the rate of women entering the workplace... people's lives feel much more pressurised... cooking 'from scratch' does take up a lot of time and even when you do have that time many people are saying is that how I want to spend it"* (2/B/44- a food consultant/campaigner)
>
> *"I wouldn't want to blame women for people eating badly but as a household there may not be shared responsibility for cooking therefore if we are both going to go out to work, how do we share the task of cooking healthy food"* (2/B/42– a community health manager)

Respondent 2/B/35, (a director of an academy) also questioned whether there was greater male involvement in cooking and while respondent 2/B/44 (a food consultant/campaigner) said "*there are a growing number of young men who are interested in food and preparing it",* respondent 2/B/42 (a community health manager), considered that while men from the middle class might now be more interested in food, pointed to evidence that suggested that men tended to cook only on an occasional basis such as at weekends[122].

7.3.2 Respondents in France on the food industry and the everyday scheduling of modern life

All respondents agreed that the food industry made available increasingly processed foods resulting in *"the time devoted to preparing and cooking being really down"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist). Other comments included:

[122] Two respondents also highlighted how the lack of adequate kitchen and dining facilities, especially in social housing could frustrate the desire and occurrence of cooking in the home.

> *"...a free market economic model shapes our food and the consumer is passive...people are cooking less and the agri-food industry promotes a model to the consumer…and I do think it is this way round…I don't agree that it is consumer driven"* (2/F/37 -a director of national institute)

> *"...on the one side there is the industry which is well structured and organised… on the other side there is this rejection of cooking"* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy)

He added:

> *"...each person snacks by themselves, eats when they want and to do this there is no other solution other than to buy a ready prepared and pre-portioned dishes"*

All but two respondents considered there had been significant change to shopping habits as a result of the growth in large food retail outlets and that their focus on processed foods had also undermined cooking in the home, health and food culture more generally. The following respondents summarised many of these points:

> *"Today there is no closeness to production… one doesn't know where the food came from, it has lost any sense of identity"* (2/F/37 - a director of national institute)

> *"We have seen tremendous growth in large supermarkets... and of course cheaper food products inevitably mean more additives, more salt, sugar and fat and thus a less nutritionally balanced meal...all this means that people cook less"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

At least four respondents in France explicitly discussed increased female employment rates and how this had reduced the amount of time women had available for domestic cooking. Many respondents also considered that people now had a choice of leisure activities and combined with the provision from the food industry of less time consuming meal solutions, less time was spent cooking. Typical comments included:

> *"...you had women joining the workforce massively in the 80s and on the other hand they are still expected to take charge of feeding the family. So people are increasingly resorting to foods transformed by the food industry"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist)

> *"Women have less time to do the cooking and in response to this evolution– the food industry and supermarkets – and canteens – all three have grown. As regards the family there is a whole variety of leisure options"* (2/F/36 – a civil servant within the Ministry of Health)

> *"There is a far greater choice of leisure activities so in some ways people are busier…but about 90% of those asked claimed to still eat their evening meal at home…and usually in the company of others"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

Three respondents noted that despite the increase in female employment rates, women *"are still expected to take charge of family feeding"* but rather than "*toiling in the kitchen on a daily basis"* women would rather spend their free time engaged in other activities (2/F/39 –a researcher/sociologist). It was felt that cooking responsibilities now need to be less gender specific and that, "*while men spend a lot of time talking about cooking… it's much more than the time they actually spend cooking"* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy).

Working patterns, busy lifestyles, an aggressive food industry and the increasing requirement to eat away from home during the working day were all cited as reasons why cooking in the home had decreased. While eating outside the home had increased generally, respondent 2/F/40 (a director of a research centre) explained how two thirds of those who ate out do so at lunch time. Increased travelling distances to work, shorter lunch breaks and the requirement of employers to provide a subsidised canteen or 'Ticket' (luncheon voucher) which could be exchanged for food in commercial establishments were all cited as reasons for the rise in eating outside the home and subsequent decrease in cooking. A range of comments included:

> *"The 35 hour week, they have less time to have a big lunch. Before they would get a two hour lunch but now with the 35 hour week that has all been cut down"* (2/F/48 - a British chef in France)

> *"Nowadays, people are travelling further to work and many shops now remain open and you will see people out at lunch time, grabbing something to eat such as a sandwich" (*2/F/31 - a regional director of nutritional policy)

> *"...at lunchtime you see all the people are in the restaurants eating and even in the staff restaurants it is one hour for lunch and people will have a little salad to start with, they would have their main course and something to follow like a yoghurt" (*2/F/47 – a GM within an international hotel group)

A respondent in Britain with expert working knowledge of France agreed that a three or four course lunch in a subsidised canteen was the norm and often constituted the main meal of the day. However, respondents 2/F/31 - a regional director of nutritional policy and 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) considered that the evening meal

spent at home and in the company of others remained popular, although such meals were not necessarily totally home cooked. Respondent 2/F/39 (a researcher/sociologist) added: *"'understandably, working people are not prepared to spend a lot of time toiling in the kitchen on a daily basis"* and respondent 2/F/36 (a civil servant within the Ministry of Health) agreed that people now had '*"less time to do the cooking"* and concurred that this had "*given rise to a strong response from the food industry".* Respondents discussed the greater use of prepared foods, simpler meal structures and faster cooking methods as summed up by the following respondents:

> *"...the composition of the meal which is offered is sacrificed – in families, there's often no longer a starter, just a main dish and a dessert; the structure of the meal is becoming simpler - but essentially the meal will be maintained – particularly the evening meal although during the day people might go their own way" (*2/F/36 – a civil servant within the Ministry of Health)

> *"The frequency and composition of the meals was remarkably constant although with more women working, slow and long cooked foods (mijoter) are less possible. However, evidence suggests that the vast majority of people in France do still sit down to a fairly traditionally structured evening meal together usually sometime between 7 and 8 in the evening. People might be using some processed foods and cooking less but the meal remains"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

7.4 Food and culinary cultures

7.4.1 Respondents in Britain on British culinary cultures

All respondents expressed reservations about the strength and/or future longevity of any British culinary cultures and were not sure whether Britain *"ever did have the same sort of culture and passion for food that they did in Spain and France... food is more of a way of life there"* (2/B/33 - a university professor). Early industrialisation was described as having destroyed British culinary cultures (2/B/42 – a community health manager) and how access to *'cheap'* imported foods had further undermined it and how this was particularly pertinent after the Second World War when

> *"...the Government said to the farmers what we want is cheap food, lots of it".* (2/B/35 - a director of an academy)

Respondent 2/B/41 (a French chef in Britain) described a *"cheap and cheerful"* food culture and that *"'laziness'* (2/B/41 and 2/B/46 - a professor of nutrition) and

"convenience' (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant and 2/B/46) characterised British culinary culture, along with "*sugary, fatty and salty snacks" (*2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant). Respondent 2/B/44 (a food consultant/campaigner) discussed "*food on the go as people don't have time to waste on lunches, they are sitting looking at their screens snacking on a sandwich"* and respondent 2/B/46 (a professor of nutrition with expert knowledge of France) went on to compare British and French culinary cultures adding:

> *"In Britain there is this culture where you want everything now, like not being prepared to wait for 3 hours for you to cook a really complicated meal…it's got to be now! Because I'm hungry now, and they want to eat, and can get on with doing other things. In France people spend a long time being hungry and that idea of restraint is part of their culture in lots of ways"*

There was further discussion on the decline in the popularity of what were regarded as traditional British dishes and how many regional dishes had all but disappeared having been replaced by international/'ethnic' foods[123]. Respondents also discussed how urbanisation and greater physical distances had severed people's mental links with the land and respondent 2/B/46 further added how meat in Britain was *"made not to look like it came from an animal"* while the French "*are very passionate and proud of their foie gras... that would never be allowed in this country because of animal rights etc"* and how people did not talk about or identify with their food in Britain (2/B/33 - a university professor).

The decline in families eating together was mentioned by three respondents as a reflection of a weak food culture and respondent 2/B/42 (a community health manager) for example considered "*we haven't continued to value the family meal in the same way that other countries have"'.* He added how for example school lunches in France involved people sitting together at tables with individuals responsible for collecting and serving the meal to the others and considered *"it was already built in…food was being seen as part of a social activity not an individual activity".* Respondent 2/B/41 (a French chef in Britain) added that in Britain people might share a strong pub culture but *"the*

[123] For example *"many youngsters today have never eaten a steak and kidney pudding"* (2/B/33) and that many regional dishes had all but disappeared having been replaced by "an *international dimension" (*2/B/34) or an "*ethnic mix cuisine" (*2/B/33).

pub story is not exactly the same story as the French bistro." Respondent 2/B/33 (a university professor) added:

> *"In Spain and France it's a pleasure to eat out with families; it's a culture, everybody's eating out".*

A respondent in France with expert knowledge of Britain agreed and explained how *"the French still like to sit down and have a meal together"*, including at restaurants and continued:

> *"The French are brought up with eating out, they go out 'en famille' whereas in the UK you'd probably get a babysitter round or there would be a bouncy castle or something, so that the children are not actually encouraged to sit and stay at the table"* (2/F/48 - a British chef in France)

7.4.2 Respondents in France on French culinary cultures

There was detailed discussion in France about their culinary culture and for example, six of the 10 French respondents explicitly discussed the centrality and resilience of the three meal model to French culture - *"breakfast, lunch and dinner"* (2/F/40 – a director of a research centre) and he added that the French *"attach a lot of importance to the meal, to the structure, and it's a symbolic importance"* and that it is "*a strong feature of French social life"* (2/F39 – a researcher/sociologist). There was acknowledgement that 'snacking' was increasing, however respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) explained that over 80% of the French population continue to eat three structured meals a day and explained how:

> *"...the 3 meal model in France serves us well, it tends to deliver a fairly well balanced diet and the French are quite attached to this model which is part of the French culture…set times, set meals, set courses, set ideas about what and when to consume etc... it seems embedded in French culture and while there may be simpler, quicker styles of preparing the food nowadays eating habits remain remarkably consistent. People might be using some processed foods and cooking less but the meal remains and the range of foods offered….the structure of the meal is often well balanced"*

Respondent 2/F/31 - a regional director of nutritional policy agreed and considered the model "*resistant to change"* although it was also pointed out that:

> *"....time allocated to eating, preparation and consumption of food has been going down…we have some very good 'time-use' surveys that shows that there*

> *are differences. The differences are that time devoted to preparation has gone down but time devoted to eating and consumption has decreased less than the time devoted to preparation of food"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist)

> *"...the French model has changed and there are some features which approach the Anglo-Saxon model but we're a long way from the situation which you have in England"* (2/F/40 – a director of a research centre)

Five respondents discussed the importance of preserving the traditional three meal model as an effective means to safeguard against rising levels of obesity, how it also played an important social role and was highly valued. For example, respondent 2/F/47 (a GM within an international hotel group) explained how sharing a meal with others underpinned an important aspect of French culture and said: *"you know the French don't sit down and eat and get up and do something else…you sit down for a few hours and you talk".* Children and even adolescents were expected to "*eat from the same pot...what the mother prepares has to be shared"* (2/F/32 - a project manager of nutritional policy) and respondent 2/F/36 (a civil servant within the Ministry of Health) added that approximately 90% of teenagers continue to eat with their family *"even if the television is more likely to be on".* Further comments included:

> *"*[In France] *when there is a family meal time, the children or teenagers still do come in to that…there is so much closer link of the family in so many ways and maybe that's how traditions of food are passed on"* (2/B/46 - a British professor of nutrition with expert knowledge of France)

> *"We thought we might find that adolescents were abandoning the 3 meal structure, that the composition of their meals would have changed and that meal times etc were less important to them. However, we found little evidence to support such a hypothesis". (*2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

Respondent 2/F/48 (a British chef working in France) considered that some of the reasons why French cooking *"has been the best in the world"* and continues to be enjoyed by much of the French population was that *"people have a lot more time on their hands"* and this helps maintain the centrality of the family, and with it the enjoyment of the traditional family meal. He added that the 35 hour working week served to further bolster the institution of the family and other comments included:

> *"There is very strong resistance in the population to preserve the meal as a time which is not just for eating, but more for being together, as a family and that set-up remains very, strong"* (2/F/36 – a civil servant within the Ministry of Health)

> *"...findings show that people cite the enjoyment of eating together as one of the pleasures of life and partly it is this sharing of something that has expressly been cooked for everyone to enjoy that is important to this model of eating that seems so deeply embedded in the French culture"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

> *"Compared to other European countries, we find that the attitudes of the French are really significantly different in the sense that they emphasise everything about sharing and everything that is social about the experience of eating and they highly value that and they seem to regret it when they cannot apply or practice what they preach"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist)

At least six respondents explicitly discussed '*terroir'* and the discourse around food. It was explained that each French region maintains a clear identity within the minds of the French people and how the totality of the regions makes up the national heritage, the French culture and *"makes up the resources from which we can construct our image" (*2/F/40 – a director of a research centre). Other comments included:

> *"Terre means earth so pain de la terre means bread from the earth so the earth becomes part of me and that becomes the focus of my life or represents a reference to my life...it is an integral part"* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy)

> *"The French food and gastronomic spirit is quite regionalised…the geographic origin of a product has meaning and these characteristics constitute the main elements with regard to 'terroir' "* (2/F/40 – a director of a research centre)

> *"Knowing what you eat to the French means knowing where it came from, who prepared it, how...it is the authenticity thing, the tradition thing"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist)

Whilst many respondents clearly considered that the concept of *terroir* would endure, the impact of urbanisation, particularly since the 1960s along with migration patterns were noted in relation to the character of towns and the countryside as well as the food and drink offered for sale. Respondents 2/F/40 (a director of a research centre) and 2/F/48 (a British chef in France) also discussed a universal trend of globalisation, however the latter noted how city dwellers remained in close contact with the countryside, often choosing to holiday there. Respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) agreed that when people did visit another region both for pleasure or business they would *"chat about the food and drink in anticipation and talk about it afterwards"* and how the topic of food was anyway a popular subject of conversation. Other views included:

> *"Certainly, trips to other regions for many would not be complete without some tastings or visit to a local food producer and then taking some products back home to either share with their friends and families or to remind them of the visit…and of course, take advantage of local prices"* (2/F/32– a project manager of nutritional policy)

> *"...it always amazes me how they can talk about food all the time…where they can buy the best chocolate and where you can buy the best chicken or bread. All the conversation can be, more or less, about food and where it's from and who produces it and so on"* (2/F/47 – a GM within international hotel group)

A respondent in Britain (2/B/46 - a professor of nutrition with expert knowledge of France) considered that *'terroir'* was very important to France, "*a country that has such a strong national identity and really strong regional identities that are to do with food".* Furthermore in relation to the French discourse around food, she added:

> *"...people say where did your carrots come from…I mean who would ask you that in England (laughing)…or if you were talking about chickens or hens people say oh, I've got one from the Perigord and someone else would say oh no, they are much nicer from the Dordogne"*

She agreed that when the French visit another region, there will be discussion with friends and colleagues about the regional food specialities and for example, if someone was to say they were going to '*"Strasbourg…oh… you will be able to have sausages".* She believed that food was a very important marker of national and regional identity and added:

> *"The association with the land is really strong because people have a much stronger association with their place of birth, it is quite a large part of their identity and they will go there for holidays as well…where their family is... so that anything to do with it…it's the terroir, the land and there is a real intimate relationship with it and that is why people will discuss where something comes from for quite a long time...frequently people buy the odd field from where they are from even though they know it is not for building"*

The influence of France's culinary heritage was also discussed and for example, respondent 2/F/38 (a director of an academy) described how French chefs had enjoyed an international reputation and how this was integral to France's "*gastronomic or culinary culture".'*

7.5 Policy in relation to cooking, diet and culinary cultures

7.5.1 Respondents in Britain on general Government policy on diet and health

All respondents expressed concern about diet, health and rising obesity levels and agreed that government policy was required. Within the broader policy context, respondents described the plethora of agencies involved, expressed frustration at the perceived conflicting roles and lack of *"joined up thinking"* (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology), questioned the effectiveness of the numerous nutritional and community initiatives and expressed concern about long term financial planning. Comments included:

> *"The Primary Care Trust is funded by the Department of Health, the Healthy Schools Scheme is too but the SFT is developed by the Department for Education & Skills as an arm's length agency"* (2/B/42 – a community health manager)

He added:

> *"I think it* [a school food and health project] *will have very little impact because it is short term funding. It isn't hard core, community development and what is going to happen after this bit of funding ends?"*
>
> *"You have a School Fruit Scheme that is run by the DoH but school meals are run by the DES and they're interested mainly in education… …there is also the Department of Agriculture...the government is 'faffing' around"* (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology)

He continued:

> *"You need to cut through all the crap, all the stuff that is around, all the partnerships, all the little initiatives that go on in local areas. Do something serious on a national scale…really get hold of it and do something that is effective"*
>
> *"When you look at reviews of the effectiveness of all these different interventions…they are not really making that much difference"* (2/B/46 - a professor of nutrition)
>
> *"There are potentially many more opportunities…SureStart schemes or local community schemes, old people's clubs, clubs for people with learning difficulties…food is such a great tool…you can't teach that in terms of mass government educational campaigns. However, such campaigns are so hugely piecemeal …it doesn't easily fit…is it public health, is it community health, is it about other aspects of society….I think that is the challenge" (*2/B/44- food consultant/campaigner)

These respondents continued and for example commented how the FSA were '*out of touch'* and half hearted with their '5-a-day campaign' (2/B/42) and '*having done quite a lot around salt reduction, which is fine but what about the bigger messages'* (2/B/44) and the SFT was described as needing to "*increase people's knowledge within the community to provide healthy meals"* (2/B/42). Three respondents discussed social marketing as a means of realising dietary change and for example, respondent 2/B/44 said *"it has to be about positive messages …the 'don't do' approach isn't terribly productive"*. Respondent 2/B/43 considered that it was necessary to win "*hearts and minds"* and that this could only be done via "*positive messages".* He continued:

> *"...we are in battle with the big multi-nationals and we have to use similar tactics and we have some advantages by having a captive audience in schools .You wean them over positively and build on the kids own enthusiasm"*

7.5.2 Respondents in France on general Government policy on diet and health

In relation to government policy on food, diet and health, respondents explained that policies tended to be highly centralized and strategically coordinated. For example, the Ministry of Health directs a range of agencies to undertake large scale surveys and longitudinal studies on food consumption patterns such as the INPES *"barometer in 1996, a second one in 2002, and we are in the process of preparing a third for 2007 or 2008" (*2/F/36 – a civil servant within the Ministry of Health). Such surveys formed the basis for policy development and agencies such as INPES would then be given responsibility for promoting healthy diets at the national level. Four respondents working in the area of nutrition and health discussed how central government had a duty of care and commented that they had provided useful and respected information in relation to nutrition which was then delivered at the local/community level. For example:

> *"… the Ministry of Health are reinforcing their system of gathering data - notably large surveys on people's tastes and food consumption and is responsible for the implementation of the national programme of nutritional health (PNNS)"* (2/F/36 – a civil servant within the Ministry of Health)

> *"I think the Ministry of Health has to promote good nutrition, also the Ministry of Education too, the teachers and the food industry, they do, but if it's from the Ministry of Health they believe it more"* (2/F/30 – a senior health promotion officer)

> *"The PNNS findings were prepared for the Ministry of Health and are generally trusted… perhaps more than in Britain, and I think the public has a healthy scepticism of information provided by interested commercial bodies such as the food industry. That is not to say that campaigns such as the ANIA one and their promotion of 'liberty' and 'freedoms' have no effect….they are influential and are picked up by certain sectors of the popular press" (*2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)
>
> *"France is probably the most centralised nation in Europe unlike in Britain where I understand you have very devolved structures ...we have very little autonomy at the regional or departmental level…our job is simply to put in place policy decisions made at the national level in Paris"* (2/F/31- a regional director of nutritional policy).

The current focus in France appeared less exclusively about obesity and more about the importance of nutrition and exercise to health generally. For example two of the above respondents continued:

> *"...our obesity levels remain low …CHD and some other diet related diseases have not increased as much as we feared they would…the 'French paradox' " (*2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)
>
> *"…in many ways France was 'avante garde' in that it first started looking at nutrition in advance of rising obesity levels…in the 70s, 80s even the 90s and various initiatives were put in place"* (2/F/30 - a senior health promotion officer)

She continued that those in charge of such "*educational campaigns such as '5 – a day' and 'eat less salt'"* (2/F/30) enjoyed relatively long term funding and she explained that INPES sends out *"*40 *or 50 million documents in France per year"* and that *"of course we can make a broadcast for TV, for radio, for press and so on."* Respondents (2/F/32) continued that it was possible *"to promote fairly simple and yet beneficial messages like 5 a day"* and that at the regional level:

> *"We have distributed a range of information including CD Roms to youngsters and health professionals. About 1,000 diverse health professionals have attended training days and workshops and received toolkits to promote further understanding and advice on diet and exercise"*

However others appeared less certain whether such nutritional policies and "*glossy brochures targeted at middle class people"* (2/B/46 -a professor of nutrition) were effective. Half the respondents said that advice on particular nutrients such as salt or fat and *"the nutritionalisation of food"* (2/F/40 – a director of a research centre) were inappropriate and a more holistic approach was required. Respondents also questioned

how such messages could be effective when they divorced food consumption from the taste and social experience of eating, "*cooking without emotion...more of this and less of that"* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy) and respondent 2/F/36 (a civil servant within the Ministry of Health) believed that *"to have balanced food, I think we have to take into account the taste aspect – does it taste good."* Further concerns were expressed as follows:

> *"People's attitudes to food change very slowly and we have noticed little change in consumption patterns" (*2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)
>
> *"Our findings continue to point to a nation of two halves: those with the means to buy a varied and fresh diet and those that don't. Of course, this is very political and with the presidential election next year* (2007) *and our continued bids for funding…we have to be careful"* (2/F/36 – a civil servant within the Ministry of Health)
>
> *"The discourse I learn from nutritionists and dieticians doesn't interest me… we should no longer take a medicalised standpoint when we talk about food" (*2/F/37 - a director of national institute)
>
> *"…you have to read all the nutritional guidelines and the pyramids and the recommended daily allowances etc and… so what are you going to do…compute the whole thing? Nobody has ever eaten like that and even the new labelling system …traffic lights…what does it mean? And when it tastes foul does it have a light…this is never discussed"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist).

Respondent 2/F/36 also explained how the government had already passed a law to control the advertising of certain foods and discussed the possibility of government taking further action on the "*nutritional quality of the choice of food offered by the food industry, school and work's canteens and distribution chains such as Carrefour".* Respondent 2/F/40 (a director of a research centre) discussed Mon. Bové's popular opposition to *'the liberal model'* of the increasing availability of homogenised food products and "*the re-politicalisation of the food question in the face of trans-national industrialisation".* Respondent 2/F/37(a director of national institute) discussed how politicians had become interested in food and taste and had created the 'French Institute of Taste' and the *'semaine du gout'* although he was concerned about its increasing reliance on commercial sponsorship from the food industry and added:

> *"The 'semaine du gout' was funded not only by OCHA and CIDIL (the dairy industry and …the Centre Inter-professional de documentation de l'industrie laitiere) but by CEDUS, the sugar producers but there are always ulterior motives. I considered that OCHA and CIDIL had an open approach but CEDUS much less so".*

7.6 Policy in relation to food in schools

In relation to cooking and food within a school context, respondents raised issues under three broad categories:

- whether there was a need for government action in relation to teaching cooking/food studies in schools
- policy in relation to school meals
- other broader educational initiatives

7.6.1 Respondents in Britain on food education and the teaching of cooking in British schools

All the respondents felt the government had an important role to play in directing policy in relation to cooking, diet and the general food culture within schools. Three respondents explicitly expressed concern about the negative influence of the food industry on diet and considered that within schools, the state was in an ideal position to intervene because "the *first few years at school is when the impact of what we do is greatest"* (2/B/35 - a director of an academy) because "*the children are malleable and I do think you can make a difference"* (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology). Three respondents discussed the need to involve parents and that "*with a whole school approach to healthy eating, things can only get better" (*2/B/42 – a community health manager) and that "*the School Food Trust has been given an awful lot of money" (*2/B/44 – a food consultant/campaigner). Further comments included:

> *"...yeah, a national strategy in schools, because we've really got massive problems with obesity now, so government have to play a major role"* (2/B/33 a university professor)
>
> *"The only justification for interfering with business is for children because I think the accusation of 'nanny state' is fair enough but children sometimes need a nanny to stave off the forces of commerce...then I think it is fair for the government to intervene"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant)

All but one respondent considered that the compulsory re-introduction of the teaching of cooking in schools should be a priority of government policy. Respondents discussed

that while parents had a responsibility to teach their children about food and cooking *"if you do now have a generation of parents that were not taught such skills"* (2/B/44 – a food consultant/campaigner) then the inter-generational transfer of skills was not possible. Respondent 2/B/45 (a food and school meal consultant) added that if children lacked familiarity with such things as fresh vegetables, then this was a further barrier in addressing obesity levels. Respondent 2/B/33 (a university professor) considered schools *"should be given the right tools, the right budget, the right people"* which would ultimately require '" *national strategy".* Six respondents discussed other cookery initiatives based broadly around schools and the wider community however respondent 2/B/35 a director of an academy considered that regardless of the intervention *"it is going to be a generation before it has real influence".* Such views were developed as follows:

> *"The main focus should be on encouraging children to cook in school and developing their food skills and their interest in food so they understand they can actually make nice things and that it doesn't have to be that complicated" (*2/B/46 - a professor of nutrition)
>
> *"I think if we have an understanding of what good, fresh and nutritious food is, and what it does to you, very few of us are not in a position during our lives to be caring for others. And also, it's about a skills level that helps you make decisions on what is good and what is not good"* (2/B/34 – a director of a MNC)
>
> *"...if you plop healthy food in front of them if they have never seen it before, they don't want to eat it…the easiest way is to teach them how to cook because then they become interested in food and concerned about what goes in it"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant)

Two respondents expressed reservations about any positive correlation between teaching children cooking skills and the consumption of a healthier diet. Respondent 2/B/44 (a food consultant/campaigner) considered that the ability to cook was about confidence and *"you can't teach that in terms of mass government educational campaigns"* although accepted that *"getting more on the curriculum at school is a great place to start".* Respondent (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology) doubted whether *"cookery interventions"* alone would be effective in changing children's eating habits but added:

> *"...motivate kids to want to eat good food then you are beginning to get a basis, then one could potentially influence the other in that they could learn about cooking and that could get them into wanting to eat good food more. So I think these two things could work very well in combination"*

7.6.2 Respondents in France on food education and the teaching of cooking in French schools

Few respondents explicitly discussed the need for government policy in relation to diet, cooking and the general food culture within schools although government intervention to regulate aspects of the private sector's involvement was discussed. For example the banning of 'unsuitable' vending machines in schools was mentioned by at least three respondents and the need to arrest the growth of private food service companies within the school meals service was discussed by two more. Such interventions were:

> *"... very important in shaping food habits…they can be very effective in modelling diet of the young and this can persist in to later life"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

Five respondents discussed how 'Home Economics', including cooking was taught to girls but had been abandoned in the 1950s/60s. Nutrition, as part of the science curriculum continued to be taught and "*there are discussions in France that the idea of developing food education would be preferable to nutritional education" (*2/F/40 – a director of a research centre) and that cookery classes "*would probably be very good idea"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/ sociologist) *"so that children as they become older are able to be as free as possible…to have the greatest choice"* (2/F/37 - a director of national institute). Other comments included:

> *"…it's not a priority but why not? I think for children, we need to teach them to cook" (*2/F/30 - a senior health promotion officer)

> *"The lack of cooking skills can be a barrier to cooking a balanced diet. One of the strategies of PNNS is to educate and inform consumers, especially the young in matters relating to healthy nutrition practice and this must surely relate to the preparation of a healthy diet. They have started acting on foods available in schools but are yet to promote cooking skills…but I think it is on the agenda"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

> *"...to recognise the sheer taste quality of the stuff, to enjoy it and to have a discriminating capacity …not just the lipids and glucides and the vitamins. It's OK to know about nutrition but it is also important to know what is good and what is bad and where it comes from and what it includes"* (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist)

7.6.3 Respondents in Britain on policy in relation to school meals

As well as teaching cooking skills three respondents discussed school meals and for example how *"nutritional guidelines under Thatcher had been got rid of"* (2/B/33 -a

university professor) and how there was now a need to "*have some regulation to which there is some compliance across the UK"* (2/B/34 – a director of a MNC). As can be seen, the significance of school lunches and the availability of *"decent foods"* were seen as important steps in relation to improving children's diet and food culture (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology) and many respondents acknowledged the work of the School Food Trust, their aspirations and the barriers they faced. The following quotations add to the discussion:

> *"The aim of the SFT is to transform school food and also food skills, and promote the education and health of children by improving the quality of food supplied and consumed in school. However*, *the SFT also needs funding for dinner lady training and to set up cookery clubs in schools to involve parents and children cooking together. School dining rooms are so horrible, so crowded...we have to enable all children to eat with a knife and fork and sit down with their friends without having to have queued for half an hour"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant)
>
> *"Where schools might be addressing all this nutritional stuff they were still allowing children to have just 20 minutes to have their lunch break…it's not building it into a social activity"* (2/B/42 – a community health manager)
>
> *"...staff in schools, teachers, admin assistants etc, all see lunch as a nuisance...they don't see it as a continuation of the curriculum...you have an opportunity to sit people down together to have a social activity. That is socialisation but there is no value placed on it*. *They have to get through something like nearly 1000 kids in 45 minutes and it's a dogfight. The state of the kitchen was appalling, food wasn't good, lots of snacks and standing up eating sandwiches out of a plastic cartons"* (2/B/33 - a university professor)
>
> *"What really matters is whether there is money for kitchens and money for equipment and facilities in order to be able to teach kids in schools about cooking"* (2/B/44 – a food consultant/campaigner).

Three respondents specifically discussed whether simply providing children with a healthier school diet would be effective. For example:

> *"It's unreasonable to expect a school pupil to eat one thing at home and something else at school. You need demonstrations, tastings and educating palettes towards a wider range of foods"* (2/B/34 – a director of a MNC)
>
> *"Where schools had put on freshly cooked food, the children didn't recognise it and sales had decreased"* (2/B/33 -a university professor)
>
> *"You need to create a culture where if the kid wants to eat fruit and veg., they get a lot of cultural support from their peers, from the teachers...get parents involved as well"* (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology)

7.6.4 Respondents in France on policy in relation to school meals

There was no discussion of any recent reform of school meal policy in France and most appeared satisfied with the system. In particular, they discussed *"the importance of the midday meal"* to the enduring "*French model"* (2/F/40 – a director of a research centre) and how school canteens needed to safeguard it both nutritionally and socially. There was some concern about the increasing involvement of large private food service companies, although respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) explained that lunch provision, particularly in high schools remained 80-90% *"under the control of public bodies at a regional or departmental level".* Among some smaller primary schools, respondent 2/F/48 (a British chef in France) explained children might have to return home for lunch, or the operation was very small and as respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) explained, *"there are the good ones and the less good ones".* Levels of subsidy varied considerably and were guided not only by income but the policy of the municipality for primary schools, the department for colleges, the region for the *lycées* and only in universities was there a fixed price. More than half the respondents discussed the educational significance of school meals and other comments included:

> *"The school meals system in France has been very strong since the 1950s, it's really a tradition –it's continually improved particularly when I compare it with – forgive me – with your country which I find frightful! In France we are trying to limit the intrusion of the private sector into schools"* (2/F/36 – a civil servant within Ministry of Health)
>
> *"...it is far better to keep the powerful food companies out of the schools. We must promote awareness of the benefits of self managed school meal services to local and regional elected representatives involved in this area of decision making and we remain hopeful"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)
> *"In universities there is one price for a complete meal for all students – which consists of a starter, a main course, cheese, a dessert, and it must be about 2.80 euros now"* (2/F/36 – a civil servant within Ministry of Health)
> *"...no matter which system, municipal, private caterers or whether in primary or high schools…school meal provisioning has a teaching role"* (2/F/37 - a director of national institute)
>
> *"...the best education we could provide is to make school meals compulsory for everyone. Give them some robust/real food which is nutritionally correct…but also attractive and then the children would receive some education about food"* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy)

> *"...we need to ensure a good environment in which children can exercise healthy food choices"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

Respondent 2/F/36 (a civil servant within the Ministry of Health) also discussed whether offering them choice was nutritionally advantageous and respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) was also concerned about giving children *"the personal freedom to choose whatever they want and whenever they want it"* and explained the various actions in place *"to suppress snacking between meals".* Three respondents discussed the nutritional training needs of those involved in the school meal service and how this was implemented by health education committees working at a '*department'* or regional level. Respondent 2/F/31 (a regional director of nutritional policy) stated that such committees were mindful of how school kitchens *"get bombarded with lots of regulations and edicts from the central state"* and respondent 2/F/30 (a senior health promotion officer) added that initiatives had to complement the aims of the PNNS. For example, dieticians were available to work alongside school cooks to help them to use less salt and incorporate more fruit and vegetables in their menus and there was an increasing focus on local and seasonal varieties which were culturally acceptable (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy). Other comments included:

> *"In one department 3,000 schools were provided with a range of information, training sessions and toolkits. We work closely with health education committees (CODES/CRES) which work at a 'departmental' level"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

> *"...we're keen to develop a realistic training and a booklet of practical information…. for example, when purchasing fresh fruit and vegetables" (*2/F/31- a regional director of nutritional policy)

> *"schools are being asked to plan a seasonal menu for the entire year, visit suppliers at least once a year, privilege local produce and respect the 'terroir"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy)

7.6.5 Respondents in Britain on broader educational initiatives

Five respondents discussed the need to re-connect school children with the food chain and there was discussion of the role charities and industry could play in general. Three respondents specifically discussed the work of the Academy of Culinary Arts (ACA) and other comments included:

> *"Why not teach kids an in-depth study of food? Teach them where food grows, how it's purchased, how it's manufactured"* (2/B/33 - a university professor)

"The ACA put primary schools in touch with local farmers, helps teach dinner ladies to cook and plan menus...they work with schools on growing schemes and visiting farms and just getting them interested in food generally" (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant)

*"The ACA's 'Adopt a School' gets its members to go into schools and teach children about food and cooking through taste exercises mainly" (*2/B/35 - a director of an academy)

"...after growing it the children could then be taught to change the food from whatever form it is in ...do the magic on it and turn it into something that you can actually eat and enjoy" (2/B/42 – a community health manager)

*"…these 'junior chefs club' are for youngsters who are really keen on the subject and they come along and experience working with real ingredients, real food, real cooking on a Saturday morning. It's been a tremendous success" (*2/B/33 -a university professor)

"The JCA [Junior Chef's Academy] *is an attempt by industry to put food back on the agenda in schools and amongst young people. One company supplies uniforms, one pays for the teaching and a number of other resources and Whitbread and City and Guilds have also joined in order to stimulate interest in the industry"* (2/B/34 – a director of a MNC).[124]

Respondent 2/B/42 (a community health manager) discussed some community health initiatives to provide some basic cookery training over a six week period. He explained how such a voluntary process with the help of some paid project leaders made this initiative more sustainable and increased the *"reach and impact... and how it has really increased the capacity of a community overall to feed itself better"* as well as increasing individual's self-esteem.

7.6.6 Respondents in France on broader educational initiatives

The French respondents made little comment about any broader educational debate and one respondent expressed concern at the apparent need for schools to help children re-connect with their food (2/F/39 – a researcher/sociologist)[125]. As in Britain, the Academy of Culinary Arts of France, (ACdF) placed professional chef members in

[124] He also explained how large food service providers were involved with charitable work connected with "*rehabilitating socially disenfranchised and long-term unemployed people"* via teaching them cookery and life skills through *'Training for Life'* and the "*Hoxton Apprentice"* so that they may go on to find careers in the hospitality industry.

[125] He added that *"there has been a process of estrangement from foods and products…their culture is so bad…I mean they are taking kids to farms to show them cows and things like that otherwise they wouldn't realise that milk comes from cows"* (2/F/39)

schools but only during the *"semaine du gout"* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy)[126]. The *'semaine du gout'* was positively acknowledged by nearly all the French respondents and although a government initiative, it also relied on funding from the food and hospitality industries as well as charitable donations. Its aim was to celebrate food in France and to *"promote knowledge, consciousness raising and pleasure in relation to food" (*2/F/37 - a director of national institute)

It was apparent that the 'Institute of Taste' which founded the '*semaine du gout'* had seen many changes and was now concerned with the commercial provision of courses, partly aimed at children and sometimes delivered within a school context. Other changes were explained as follows:

> *So, the association that still exists is the Institut du Degoustation which reflects an image of research, reflection and conferences and the company which is called CQFD has taken over all the professional and commercial activities. We receive no subsidy from the state although when we visit schools this may be funded by the municipality. Our activities enable people to describe sensations we experience in relation to food. If we don't speak of them we won't feel them. It is necessary to describe/appreciate it in order to experience it" (*2/F/37 – a director of national institute)

7.7 Agreement and diversity of responses among the 'experts' interviewed

It has been noted from the above presentation that a broad range of British respondents agreed that the skills associated with cooking had atrophied in recent decades although such debate was only marginally discussed by just three French respondents. For example, a senior health promotion officer in France discussed some decline in cooking skills and an academic commented that while there was some diminution it was much less than he observed in Britain. Respondents in Britain, and to a lesser extent France, went on to discuss the significance of cooking and as has been shown, those experts on either side of the Channel engaged in health promotion were the most likely to consider that cooking at home was important because it *may* help promote the consumption of a healthier diet. However, a professor of nutrition in Britain believed that

[126] The Academy in France is also involved in the promotion of professional culinary skills and respondent 2/F/38 went on to discuss the availability of hotel schools for those youngsters wanting to develop vocational skills for employment as cooks or chefs as well as "*some special schools designed for 'mastering the home' but they are very expensive".*

cooking per se is of little significance and that it is only people's diets that were important while a French manager of nutritional policy emphasised the pleasure associated with sharing food within families which he considered drove people towards cooking. He, along with a director of an academy in France, also stressed the significance of cooking to the demonstration of caring, sharing and love. Other experts from British and French institutes, academies and businesses highlighted that it was an essential life skill and contributed to social and family life.

Health workers in Britain were the most likely interviewees to blame the food industry for aggressively responding to consumer demand for increasingly pre-prepared foods. This response by industry was often blamed for the decline in cooking, the rise in the consumption of *'unhealthy convenience foods'* and the increase in individualised eating habits and many of these experts believed that greater regulation was now required. Similar views were expressed in France although less forcefully and by a wider range of experts. However, other views were also expressed and for example a director of an institute as well as an expert within the Ministry of Health both considered that it was the food industry that had driven demand for convenience foods and that such increase in consumption was not *"consumer driven"* (2/F/37).

A cross-section of experts from Britain and France commented that despite more women now going out to work, there was little evidence of men sharing the cooking at home. However, a food consultant/campaigner in Britain considered that with changing family structures there was greater evidence of men taking responsibility for domestic cooking although others, including a community health manager in Britain, considered this might be the case among some middle class families and/or only on an occasional basis. Academics and researchers in France discussed that despite the evolution in working practices, there had been little change with respect to the expectation of women cooking in the home and as a result, they had been forced to become more reliant on convenience type foods. A director of a long established academy in France noted that although men now talk about cooking more than in the past, this greatly exceeded the time spent actually cooking.

From the presentation of data in this chapter it can also be noted that respondents in Britain from diverse professional backgrounds experienced difficulty in articulating any sense of discreet culinary cultures in contemporary Britain and many were unsure whether Britain had ever *"had the same sort of culture or passion for food"* (2/B/33 - a university professor) as found in other parts of Europe. Experts from business, academia and school meals described a cheap and cheerful food culture based on convenience, laziness and self interest and other professors described the greater mental distance between consumers and their food. In Britain, the centrality of the family meal, whether eaten at home or in a restaurant, to the continuity of culinary cultures was discussed by respondents ranging from a community health manager to a professional chef and a university professor all of whom thought such meals were in decline. However, in France six respondents from diverse backgrounds explicitly discussed the symbolic importance of the structured meal and the resilience of the three meal model to France's culinary culture. Such experts discussed how French people enjoyed the social aspect of eating with others, whether at home or in commercial establishments, and how even adolescents continued to make time for eating with their families although an expert within the Ministry of Health explained how the television is more likely to be on than in the past, especially for the teenagers and those eating alone. Two experts involved in research also discussed some simplification or de-structuration of the meal and a director of nutritional policy considered that although the model was resistant to change and that the time spent eating together had little altered, the amount of time spent cooking had been reduced because of current living and working arrangements and the availability of convenience foods. The centrality of *terroir* to culinary cultures was also highlighted, most notably among French researchers and directors of institutes, although managers and chefs within the hospitality industry along with those engaged with nutritional policy also agreed that *terroir* was important to the construction of regional and national identities.

All the experts interviewed in Britain concluded that government policy was urgently required in relation to diet, health and obesity however those from a nutritional and health policy background in particular expressed concern regarding the lack of strategic planning or long term funding as well as all the various agencies and government departments involved in policy formation and delivery. A professor of nutrition agreed and wondered whether the various piecemeal actions were making any difference while

a professor of psychology continued that it was now necessary to develop an effective national strategy. In France, those respondents drawn from the nutritional health arena discussed highly centralized and strategically coordinated nutritional health policies delivered at the national level that had so far averted any obesity epidemic. However many of those respondents not drawn from the nutritional health area complained of *"the nutritionalisation of food"* (2/F/40) and questioned the efficacy of such policy developments. Directors of a research centre, a national institute, an academy plus a further expert engaged in research were all concerned about the current *"medicalised standpoint when we talk about food" (*2/F/37) and that a more holistic approach to food, taste and the social experience of eating was required in place of the current emphasis on nutrients, guidelines, pyramids and traffic light labelling systems (see 2/F/39).

In Britain, while there was some concern expressed by a food and school meal consultant about any general curbing of business practices and the further creation of a 'nanny state', in relation to schools, all respondents agreed that some form of government intervention in relation to food, diet and/or cooking was both appropriate and desirable. All but two strongly believed that the teaching of cooking should be a priority although a professor of psychology and a food consultant/campaigner were less convinced that large scale government interventions in relation to cookery classes would be an effective means with which to change children's food practices although tended to agree that it was a useful step in the realisation of changing eating behaviours. Respondents from all professional backgrounds were in favour of some broader, often charity backed, school food initiatives such as growing vegetables and discussed various means by which to get children to re-connect with the food chain however, the professor of psychology, although supportive, was less sure whether such action would translate in to more cooking in the home and/or healthier diets. An area of unanimous agreement was support for the development of regulations by the SFT to improve school meals although as noted, individuals expressed a host of concerns regarding the barriers they faced and for example, a university professor, a director of a MNC and a professor of psychology considered students also required further support if they were to be encouraged to change eating behaviours.

In relation to the teaching of cooking skills in France, there was no broad pattern of agreement in France and individuals expressed divergent views. Only a four

respondents explicitly discussed the re-introduction of cooking in schools and for example, a director of a research centre and a further expert engaged in research both thought it better to teach children cooking rather than nutrition and another researcher as well as a health promotion officer agreed it would probably be a good idea to teach cooking in schools. Unlike in Britain there was little further discussion of any broader educational initiatives although a cross section of respondents positively commented on the work undertaken in schools during the *"semaine du gout"* however, a director of a national institute expressed concern over the increasing commercialisation of such provision. In relation to regulations, experts, particularly from the area of nutritional policy agreed that state intervention in schools to ban vending machines and to curb the growth of food service companies within the school meals service continued to be a priority. A director of a national institute also stressed how "*school meal provisioning has a teaching role"* (2/F/37) and a director of an academy along with two other experts drawn from the area of health and nutritional policy agreed and added that well prepared and nutritionally balanced school meals should be compulsory. A manager within nutritional policy agreed with some of his British counterparts that it was also important to create a supportive environment where children could "*exercise healthy food choices"* (2/F/32). Many of those working in France within the broad area of nutritional policy discussed the availability of nutritional training for staff involved in school meals, dieticians, training booklets and toolkits along with the need for school meal cooks to build relationships with local food producers.

From the above summary of the results of this second phase of research it can be seen that the experts interviewed expressed a broad range of views. At times, patterns of agreement on an issue were apparent for example between respondents from similar professional backgrounds within one country. Sometimes such views were also at least partly shared by the same professional group in the other country although specific economic, political and socio-cultural factors often meant that individuals interpreted the phenomenon differently. However, even within a single country, often diverse views were expressed both by individuals working within similar professional environments and among those experts drawn from very different backgrounds. Clearly, this was the reason why it was necessary to ensure that data was drawn from a cross-section of individuals working within different professional arenas so as to capture a full range of views that could then be analysed.

Chapter 8 : Comparative analysis of French and British culinary cultures

8.1 Introduction

In order to systematically analyse how culinary cultures might be changing in France and Britain, it was necessary to study the factors, both at the macro and micro level that appear to be influencing change in relation to domestic food practices and most importantly evaluate the extent, rhythm and manner they are accepted, resisted and/or rejected. Comparisons can then be made within and between France and Britain in their experience of any transition in culinary cultures.

8.1.1 The changing meaning of cooking

In relation to food practices currently employed in the home, data indicated that transformational processes continue to be applied to many raw foods so as to make them both edible and acceptable and the application of heat or energy to raw ingredients has been described as a defining characteristic of cooking (Levi-Strauss 1965; McGee 1984; Murcott 1995; Symons 2000). However, with the increased consumption of ever more processed foods it has been suggested that time spent cooking must inevitably be declining. Furthermore, with the increasing popularity of 'micro-wave-able ready meals', pot noodle type dishes and other snack foods, especially in Britain, it has been argued that the skills now required *"to get food onto tables and down throats"* have significantly changed (Lang *et al.* 2001:2). Stitt *et al.* (1996: 10) concluded that *"ready-cooked dishes* [prove] *a boon for consumers who have less and less ability to domestically produce meals in the kitchen''* and that in Britain at least, rapid de-skilling is occurring and that the public has deliberately been moulded into passive consumers of ready meals (see Lang *et al.* 1993). Indeed, Caraher *et al.* (1999) question whether the term cooking now also refers to the assembly process or the re-heating of -ready cooked dishes. However, although many of the mechanical skills of chopping and mixing now appear to be more often undertaken in the factory, writers have suggested that blunt distinctions between the skills required for *'cooking from scratch'* and cooking using convenience products are exaggerated and rather than any decline in the need for cooking skills there now exists the demand for a broader range of 'food skills' to suit current lifestyles and eating habits (see Fieldhouse, 1995; James *et al.* 1997; Rodrigues *et al.* 1996; Lang *et al.* 1999b; Caraher 2001; Short 2002; Stead *et al.* 2004).

It has been suggested that how people cook is always changing and shaped by what foods are available '*and the cultural needs and preferences of the society'* (Fieldhouse 1986:63). It has also been argued whether any demise in cooking actually matters if other solutions to social provisioning of food prove more suitable to modern ways of living (see Fieldhouse, 1995; Mennell, 1996; Mennell *et al.* 1992) and furthermore can act as a means to liberate women from domestic drudgery (Oakley 1974 & 1990; Attar 1990). Respondent 2/F/31 (a regional director of nutritional policy), for example, agreed that *"cooking habits are always evolving... changes in how we live…lifestyles and so on have always impacted on domestic practices"*. Certainly data from phase 1 and 2 illustrated how the foods now available have greatly changed and so while the application of heat is often at the centre of the cooking process, the person who cooks often also has to acquire the food, decide how to prepare it and organize its distribution so as to best satisfy the needs of the individual eaters (Symons 2000). Whilst it may be that the precise nature of the required practical and mechanical skills may have changed and reflects some sort of transition, much of the academic and perceptual skills appear to remain relevant and widely practiced (Short 2002).

8.1.2 Changes to cooking routines and foods eaten

Many phase 1 respondents discussed how their mothers had usually been at home and in charge of domestic routines, including cooking. Such routines frequently dictated what foods were bought and these were often described as being *"cooked from scratch"* and often formed a set weekly rota of meals. Such rotas were typically described as: "*we knew what we would have on a Monday, a Tuesday... it was all very predictable" (*1/B/23/M - a working father in Cardiff) and "*every Thursday we ate 'pot au feu', for example. It was market day..."* (1/F/8/F - a married, full time mother). Mothers of the British respondents tended to be described as *"good plain cooks"* and over half of the British respondent's mothers also cooked puddings and cakes. The symbolic significance of meat was apparent and remembered as a central part to meals in both countries (where money allowed) and 'traditional' meals of roasts or 'meat and two veg.' in Britain were popular and often followed by a homemade pudding. Similarly in France, a 'classical' main course which was usually meat based and sauced appeared common place, but unlike in Britain, this would have invariably been preceded by a starter, often vegetable based, and followed by cheese and/or dessert/fruit and with bread being served throughout the meal.

While the ‘traditional’ and structured type meals of meat and two veg. remained popular, there was clear evidence from phase 1 respondents of a trend toward the use of foods that were both simpler and quicker to prepare and eat. For example, respondents in both countries described that unlike their parents, they now used much rice, pasta and couscous which they described as an attractive solution to time constraints. Whilst the increased availability of a range of fresh foods were also positively commented upon in both countries, so too were a range of prepared foods such as dairy puddings, frozen fish, tinned beans/legumes and the occasional pizza all of which were regarded as ‘handy’. Prepared foods such as mashed potatoes, frozen vegetables and washed salads were also popular and many phase 1 and 2 French respondents described how such items might be served with quickly grilled meats in an overall meal structure which was often now more simple.

A key difference in the findings between France and Britain was that no French respondent described the use of totally ready meals (see also IEFS 1996; Pettinger *et al.* 2004 Food &Drink Europe 2003; Fischler *et al.* 2008), while in Britain, oven ready foods such as lasagne, battered fish, bread crumbed chicken and other convenience options were common place with 50% of those interviewed in Cardiff, mostly working women, saying they used them on a regular basis as summed up by one such respondent as follows:

> *I do buy a lot of readymade meals. I suppose because I am working and my husband works away. Yes, we reheat them and then serve fresh veg. with them, bit of a cheats way (laughing)* (1/B/22/F).

Pettinger *et al.* (2004 and 2006) also found that while about two-thirds of their French respondents cooked a meal from raw ingredients on a daily basis, less than a quarter of their English respondents had done so. From the data presented in this research, it appears that people in France were more willing to set aside time for cooking and valued it more than the British (see also Fitzpatrick *et al.* 2010). Interestingly respondent 2/B/46, an expert interviewee in Britain who knew France well explained that in France the daily or “*normal French food that most people eat it is not that complicated and involve quite simple skills”,* few ingredients and could be prepared quickly such as raw vegetables as a starter, *“fried or grilled meat or fish...with some type of salad...either with just bread or pasta”* and followed by cheese or fruit. In

contrast she considered that in Britain, the main meal was often included more complex combinations and "*involve things like…chilli con carne or things that involve more mixing and so on".*

Data from phase 1 and 2 of the research demonstrates that domestic food preparation remains a significant domestic activity for the vast majority of the respondents, and evidence suggests that in both France and Britain this increases with age and was found to be more prevalent among women and those living alone. Furthermore, cooking was frequently described in both France and Britain as an enjoyable activity, especially among men and when undertaken as a leisure activity such as at weekends.

8.1.3 Time spent cooking

Not only has the number of daily meals cooked in the home declined across most western countries over the last century (Fitzpatrick *et al.* 2010) but the actual time spent cooking any individual meal would appear also to be in decline in both France and Britain. From the data collected for this research, all but two respondents from phase 1 (one in France and one in Britain) remember more time being devoted to cooking in their parents' home than currently takes place in their own home and in turn believed that their parents had spent less time cooking than their grandparents. As discussed below, with the rise in female employment rates in both France and Britain, not only do women have less time in the home to prepare meals 'from scratch' but they are often less prepared to spend the end of a working day cooking. Not only has the food industry responded, or perhaps driven, demand for more convenient 'meal solutions' but combined with the increased ownership of modern kitchen equipment such as freezers, microwave ovens, dishwashers and food processors, has reduced the time people need to spend on a daily basis cooking, preparing and clearing up afterwards.

Phase 1 and 2 respondents confirmed how the foods now available had greatly changed and phase 1 respondents on both sides of the Channel discussed how the preparation of such foods was now quicker than in the past and this appeared to correspond with the preferences and demands of the respondents interviewed. It was also apparent that people now cook with a mix of raw/fresh foods and pre-prepared &/or convenience foods fairly interchangeably.

8.1.4 Why cook?

Lang *et al.* (2001) have clearly stated why they consider the ability to cook to be important and as such why the State needs to support the development of cooking skills but further analysis of the evidence is required. The ability to select a healthy diet was a recurrent theme in the primary data and most of the phase 1 French respondents and two of the phase 1 British respondents stressed the need for the individual to be responsible for their own diet and considered home cooking offered them the opportunity of knowing what goes into their meals including the nutritional content. This point was further developed by a cross section of the phase 2 respondents and for example a nutritionist (2/B/46) said she thought it was not so much the cooking that mattered but whether people's diets were healthy or not. However, almost all the British phase 2 respondents tended to consider that without cooking skills, people became more dependent on convenient, processed and take-away foods which they described as frequently high in fat, sugar and salt and as such, at least partly the cause of the increase in obesity levels and other diet related diseases. It has previously been suggested that if people lack knowledge about food and cooking their ability to make informed choices from an increasing range of food products available in today's supermarkets is difficult. This then promotes a dependency culture and people have to rely on trying to understand food labelling and information on packets if they want to exercise control over their diet and health. Phase 2 British respondents also discussed that an understanding of how to cook was essential for a healthy diet and that not being able to cook placed people at a disadvantage because *"with cooking...you can make choices around health and nutrition"* (2/B/44 – a food consultant/campaigner).

While no French respondents discussed the rise of a dependency culture and indeed cooking appeared to be more taken for granted among most phase 1 French respondents, phase 2 respondents living in France did also consider home cooking to be important because it enabled people to eat less salt, sugar and fat and is "*probably the most important thing we can do to ensure a healthy diet in France"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy).

Of course, there is not necessarily any direct relationship between having cooking skills and actually engaging in cooking although as Short (2002) found among her British sample, while possession of practical skills appeared to be of lesser importance, the

tacit perceptual and organisational skills did influence people's confidence to cook and this influenced the degree to which people find cooking to be an effort and in turn this influenced their ultimate cooking practices. Phase 1 respondents generally considered themselves to be fairly confident to prepare a range of foods although all but two of the British respondents expressed some reservations and for example one man discussed being "*fairly confident "*(1/B/16/M) and four women agreed that they were confident with the *"basics"* (1/B/27/F) and *"quick and easy"* dishes (1/B18/F), but were *"not creative"* (1/B/17/F) or adventurous and either preferred not to experiment or *"need a recipe and method"* to follow (1/B/22/F). French women appeared more confident that their British counterparts and while French males appeared to agree more with the British respondents and expressed some reservations about their skills, they then went on to qualify such statements. For example they described their cooking of what appeared to be quite complex dishes such as *"beef bourguignon" (*1/F/9/M - a married male teacher, no children) and another of how he was inspired what to cook for the family by what was available in the shops/market (1/F/10/M – a professional, married man and father). Respondent (1/F/7/M - a professional married man with children) who admitted to seldom cooking added:

> *"steak au poivre…. Coquilles St Jacques, flambés with a cream sauce. These are some of my specialities…. Yes, but they are not difficult".*

There were a variety of other reasons why phase 1 respondents considered cooking to be important and many, particularly among the French respondents, broadly reflected Lang *et al's* (2001) findings that cooking and eating meals together was a normal part of one's life and when shared with others was not only enjoyable but integral to one's sense of belonging in society and an essential part of culture and identity and as such was important. They stressed the convivial aspect of sharing home cooked foods and such social occasions were often undertaken during leisure time when people felt less rushed and respondents, especially the phase 1 men, explained how they would often enjoy the cooking aspect. Such occasions appeared to demand extra effort so as to prepare something out of the ordinary or additional and while the British were more likely to rely on a 'tried and tested' recipe, the French were more prepared to experiment. The French respondents also appeared to take pride in the fact that the greater part of the meal would be cooked from scratch, and that this reflected care and love between the provider and the receiver. The British respondents who did enjoy the

social aspect of eating with others were less sure if it mattered if the meal consisted largely of convenience products or indeed was totally a 'take-away meal' provided everyone enjoyed the occasion. Several phase 1 British respondents also remarked how home cooking was cheaper while many phase 1 French respondents commented that it tasted better, was convenient and two of the men even discussed how the ability to cook was useful when younger and wanting to attract a girlfriend.

Controlling diet and health are clearly complex issues and the causes of diet related diseases are multi-factorial. However, phase 1 and 2 respondents in France and Britain have tended to agree that the ability to cook oneself and learn more about food and what goes into it may be one of the factors that can help people make more informed decisions about the foods they then choose to eat. In addition, it offers the individual greater autonomy over what they eat and is seen by many as an enjoyable way of passing one's time as well as having the potential to give people a sense of belonging. However, the ability to cook is an influence on cooking practices only in conjunction with other economic and social influences as well as cultural attitudes more generally.

8.1.5 Changing work patterns and the further impact on domestic food practices

On average, employees in France and the UK spend a similar amount of time working[127]. However, one key factor that has influenced change in relation to domestic food practices has been the substantial changes in employment patterns in France and Britain and in particular, that between 70 and 75% of women over eighteen are now in paid employment in both countries (Mintel, 2003, Amalou & Blanchard 2004). It has also been shown that as in most countries, women in France and Britain have in the past had almost sole responsibility for cooking in the home and despite them now being in paid employment, continue to have by far the greatest responsibility for cooking, shopping as well as other household chores. About half of the phase 2 respondents both in Britain and France stressed how the increase in women in paid employment had inevitably reduced the amount of time available for them to spend cooking in the home. Women from phase 1 of the research clearly described how by the time they got home from work "*I am not going to spend hours in the kitchen cooking"* (1/B/27/F) and that

[127] United Kingdom 31.7 hours and France, 29.9 hours (OECD, 2009)

"*when I was working I cooked less"* (1/F/1/F) and a respondent from phase 2 summed it up as follows:

> *"With more women at work they naturally have less time to cook and as a result alternative solutions have emerged"* (2/F/31 - a regional director of nutritional policy)

Whilst overall there is little evidence to suggest significant change in relation to traditional gender roles, there was evidence from phase 1 interviews to suggest that some men were now spending more time cooking. For example, respondents on both sides of the Channel could not remember their fathers engaging in much, if any cooking and a typical response was: "*We go back to those days, the wife cooked and the husband went out to work*" (1/B/27/F). While 6 of the 17 respondents who did not live alone in France and Britain described how the woman in the household continued to have the greatest responsibility for cooking, within the remaining 11 households it was considered to be more equally divided. In addition, 2 of the younger French males lived alone and cooked most days and one of the younger British males who shared a mixed household also cooked regularly. The increase in single households may inevitably see more people, including men, taking responsibility for preparing their meals although it has been questioned whether such men continue to cook if they go on to marry (Murcott 1995).

Other changes to household structures including the incidences of separation and re-marriage also appeared to have influenced domestic food practices and for example some of the phase 1 male respondents had separated from female partners and in some cases men had gone on to live with/marry new partners. By means of illustration, respondent 1/F/10/M and 1/B/19/M who were similar in many ways had also both separated from their earlier partners/wives and re-settled with new partners. In addition both had their children from their previous relationships now living with them some of the time and were more likely to take responsibility for cooking when their own children were present within the new family setting. Respondent 2/B/33 (a university professor) agreed that working patterns, and also the way people now lived within families, had changed and a food consultant/campaigner added "*the idea that it's only women that cook I think is now pretty old fashioned one….there are a growing number of men and young men who are interested in food and preparing it"* (2/B/44)

There appears to have been some rise in the number of men cooking (see also Lang *et al.* 2001; Mintel 2003) and data from phase 1 found that more men than women were likely to say they enjoyed cooking although it was difficult to confirm how much responsibility the men had for the everyday cooking. It was also suggested that men probably spend more time talking about cooking than actually doing it (2/F/38). The data suggests that men appear more likely to perceive cooking as an occasional activity that involves creativity and/or entertaining and findings from this research indicated that men, for example, were likely to cook the summer barbeque and in France, men were more likely to cook than women when there were large social gatherings. In Britain, and especially Cardiff, men were most likely to cook for a dinner party, a special Saturday night ethnic type meal or a more traditional family Sunday lunch.

Findings from phase 1 of the research indicate that British women were more likely to refer to cooking as a chore than the French women although interestingly, the French women were twice as likely to engage with cooking on a daily basis. All but one of the British women stressed lack of time and the need to prepare a meal quickly as a barrier to enjoying cooking but respondents from phase 1 and 2 also discussed how people often now have to travel further to work and that a *'métro, boulot, dodo'* (tube, job, sleep) lifestyle and other aspects of increasing urbanisation militated against long periods of time spent cooking (Jeffries 2001). Such modern lifestyles have also further eroded the time spent on domestic food practices because increasingly, they also require the commercial provision of midday meals whilst working further away from home.

With the growth in two income families, there is not only evidence of greater time constraints but also financial freedom to decide how to spend their time away from employment including whether to eat in the rapidly expanding food service sector or relatively inexpensive takeaways and ‘American style’ fast food establishments. Such usage of the food service sector has inevitably resulted in a further reduction in the time spent actually cooking at home although there is considerable variation between individuals, families and countries.

Phase 1 respondents tended to discuss how busy family and working schedules influenced decisions in relation to what would be eaten in the home of an evening and whether they had the energy to prepare something from scratch or whether they would prefer something more convenient. Many considered "*we've become a more convenience nation in every sense of the word"* (2/B/34 - a director of a MNC). British and French respondents also described how such decisions were frequently further influenced by the obligation to attend children's out of school activities as well as leisure opportunities such as the PTA, rugby and cinema. For example respondent 2/F/36 (a civil servant within the Ministry of Health) summed it up and said:

> *"...in our society there is a whole variety of options – cooking is one of those options which compete with going to the football match, telephoning friends, going out for a walk, doing the shopping, etc."*

As noted, Warde (1999: 518) considers that as a result of *'de-routinisation'* and the need to schedule a host of different tasks, people now have complex lives and find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time and thus unable to prepare a meal at home from scratch and/or eat with other members of the household. Certainly respondents in France and Britain suggested the time pressures they faced were as much about difficulties of timing as they were simply a matter of shortage of time but either way, cooking practices had changed and there was now greater reliance on foods that had been increasingly part prepared.

8.2 The food industry and its influence on culinary cultures

Another key factor that has influenced change with regard to people's relationship to food in both France and Britain has been the growth of an increasingly powerful global food industry, most notably from the nineteen sixties and seventies. The food processing industry in both countries is often dominated by the same multi-national food companies, food retailing is concentrated in the hands of very few companies in each country and there are as many outlets of McDonalds in Paris as there are in London, despite the population of Paris being a third that of London. It has been suggested that such trends have led to increasing similarities of diet in Britain and France, at least among the middle classes, and a growing homogeneity of their respective culinary cultures (Mennell 1996; Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006).

8.2.1 The food manufacturing industry

Sales of processed, convenience and/or ready meals have increased on both sides of the Channel and inevitably are one of *"the culprits that are responsible for the decline in cooking" (*2/B/35*).* Respondent 2/F/39 (a researcher/sociologist) added that with the increase of women in the labour market:

> *"we have the same changes that are observed everywhere, that is we are increasingly resorting to foods transformed and processed by the food industry"*

A majority of phase 2 respondents from both countries considered such expansion in the sales of processed foods to be driven by a sophisticated industry and their advertising budgets which were seen to influence consumption. However other respondents, particularly in France, considered the expansion to be more consumer driven and that with more women for example in employment "*ready food products become the norm"* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy) and that there is *"a very powerful food industry* (here in France) *which is eager to exploit every opportunity"* (2/F/31- a regional director of nutritional policy) and that *"the time devoted to cooking has decreased everywhere and the food industry is ready to jump in"* (2/F/40 - a director of a research centre).

At least three of the phase 2 respondents living in Britain and just one in France discussed how the foods promoted by the food industry enabled greater individualisation of eating habits which tended to undermine the frequency of families eating together (see Warde 1997). Such freedoms meant that people, and especially their children, had greater choice of what, when and with who they ate. However, such individualised eating habits were not evident among the French respondents in this research where the social/familial aspect of eating remained significant.

8.2.2 The food retailing industry

The British respondents appeared more willing to accept the inevitability of supermarket shopping although as it was also pointed out "*going to the supermarket and buying ready-prepared things is not* purely *an English phenomenon…it's happening in France too"* (2/F/38 – a director of an academy). However, the French respondents interviewed in this research tended to demonstrate greater resistance to the supermarkets and also

greater use of small independent shops such as bakers as well as street markets. As also noted by Blythman (2004), French respondents remain concerned that even foods bought in supermarkets reflect locality or region and it was pointed out that:

> *"...the French like to buy local produce and even if you go to the supermarkets, it tells you where it all comes from"* (2/F/48 a British chef in France)

However, the dominance of supermarkets remains unquestionable even if French supermarkets are required to offer more local produce than their British counterparts. Furthermore while the retail sector is more regulated in France and there have been more attempts to protect smaller shops and maintain commercial diversity, large numbers of small shops have closed in both France and Britain as supermarkets have expanded and this has clearly shaped the food offer (De Certeau *et al.* 1998; Satterthwaite 2001).

8.2.3 The food service industry

The food service sector has also grown and on average about a third of people's total food budget in both France and Britain is now spent on eating outside the home and increasing (Millstone *et al.* 2008). Such growth has inevitably reduced the demand for cooking in the home and respondent 2/B/43 (a professor in psychology)summed it up as follows:

> *"...higher levels of disposable income means people will eat out more and the trans-Atlantic influences we've had in the post-war years means that people eat out far more regularly, and that we produce less at home"*

In France respondents focused on the significance of eating out at lunch time when at work and explained how the increase in female employment, the imposition of the 35 hour week (and thus often shorter lunch breaks with no time to return home for lunch) coupled with people now working further away from home meant that two thirds of those who eat out in France do so at lunch time (2/F/40 a director of a research centre). These people were now '*grabbing something to eat…a sandwich or in a local restaurant plus of course, many eat in canteens'* (2/F/31 - a regional director of nutritional policy). However, a significant number of French respondents also discussed more leisurely breaks and traditionally structured lunches, both at home and away from home, and this was summed up by respondent 1/F/9/M:

"When I eat at work it is in the canteen and then it's... a starter, a main course, a dessert and a cheese, yoghurt or other dairy product" (a male teacher)

A major influence on lunchtime eating in France was how employers typically paid workers about half the cost of their lunches either via subsidised canteens or the 'Ticket' system (rather like the old Luncheon Voucher (LV) system in Britain). Such a system is believed not only to help to sustain the French restaurant industry but also tends to re-enforce the tradition of a significant lunch time meal although recently, there does appear to be a growing inclination for such 'Tickets' to be used in franchised American, fast food type establishments and the like.

Whilst British respondents talked about eating outside the home, work canteens and local lunch time restaurants were much less significant and there was no reference to luncheon vouchers. All but two of the phase 1 British respondents frequently ate a sandwich or salad brought from home for lunch and most ate such food at their desk. Such findings mirror other UK research which indicated that over 50% of workers reported eating a sandwich type product for lunch and between 10 and 25% of people reported being too busy to stop for lunch and instead ate on the job, sometimes referred to as 'desktop dining' (see NFM Monitor 2001; Mintel 2003; Key Note 2007). In contrast, findings from this research suggest the French midday meal remains *'a ritual occasion assigned to a specific time and place and protected against chaos and intrusion'* (Fischler 1999; 539) and appears ingrained in the French way of life (The Times, 2008). Certainly desktop dining was as yet, unrecognised among the French respondents.

The restaurant industry clearly provides an alternative to home cooking and as part of a leisure activity, was enjoyed by all the phase 1 respondents. Mintel (2003) suggested that for young adults especially, dining out is also popular among those who *'cannot be bothered to cook'*. However, from the data gathered from phase 1 of the research, it is apparent that there are key differences in relation to restaurant dining and for example the French reported visiting restaurants more frequently, appeared more relaxed about them and often went in gregarious groups whereas the British respondents appeared more reserved and used them for the occasional family celebration and treat. In addition, the French respondents tended to discuss independent 'traditional French restaurants' while the British sample were more likely to discuss the range of ethnic styled restaurants they liked to visit and never referred to 'British cuisine' other than

carveries which were cited by three respondents. The high cost of eating out was discussed uniquely by the British respondents who often considered restaurant and pub chains such as 'Harvesters' offered better value for money. Mintel also suggest that in relation to the UK, time-poverty rather than affluence is the dominant motivating factors for what they refer to as 'utilitarian' eating out and while literature suggests that overall the British eat out slightly more often than the French, they also spend less on each occasion (Millstone *et al.* 2008).

8.2.4 The fast food and takeaway industry

Another key difference between France and Britain in relation to how the food industry had impacted on culinary cultures was the huge growth of take-away restaurants in Britain compared to France. All the phase 1 British respondents considered the use of such establishments, normally 'Indian' but sometimes 'Chinese', as the norm and about half used them regularly as a ritual end of week treat when they were too tired to cook. Such 'routines' were characterised by the meals being eaten at home after either having been collected, often via a visit to the local pub or delivered directly to the home. Apart from some US franchised pizza chains, the option of takeaways was virtually unknown and unused among French respondents although they might use a more traditional local *traiteu*r for the purchase of ready prepared dishes to re-heat at home. The major franchise type of 'American style' fast food outlets were said to be rarely used by the majority of all phase 1 respondents although over half the British and two of the French respondents, largely males and often with their children, revealed using them occasionally. The more traditional chip shops, often also selling fish, kebabs or '*merguez'* were sometimes used out of convenience in France and Britain such as when men were attending a football match or by either gender for example when out walking the dog at the seaside.

8.3 Meal patterns and eating Habits: Continuity and change

Structural anthropologists stress how the application of food preparation methods not only transform food into the cultural realm but convert the food into what has become known as the 'meal'. Douglas (1997) noted that meals, as opposed to snacks, must include a range of contrasts as well as meat, vegetables and cereals and that these

require careful sequencing and ordering. The precise combination of foods and how they were structured would vary according to the actual meal event and eating behaviour would also be governed by complex underlying structures, cultural rules and social norms which appeared relatively slow to change (Douglas *et al.* 1974; Murcott 1982, 1983, 1983b; Charles *et al.* 1990). Alternatively, developmentalists and macro-historians such as Mennell tend to prioritise how shifting economic and social relations including changing lifestyles and the pressures of modern living outlined above undermine such fixed structures and that meal patterns like cooking habits and culinary cultures are constantly evolving. Certainly 'proper meals' of meat and two veg. or 'roasts' with gravy, followed by a hot pudding and eaten at specific times and with other people remain popular in Britain but appeared to be in decline. The 'French food model' of structured and social meals, evenly spread over the day has also experienced some simplification and modernisation.

8.3.1 The symbolic significance of meal structures versus destructuration

The desire to more quickly be able to 'put a meal together' because of the perceived pressures of modern living exerted considerable influence on the type of foods used and the meals that were eaten. From the primary data collected the use of rice, pasta and couscous appeared popular in both France and Britain. However, only in Britain did respondents frequently describe how such products were often incorporated into an 'ethnic' or 'international' style of cooking and that "*different recipes from around the world"* (1/B/19/M -a professionally employed father in London) were used to cook Indian, Chinese, Thai foods as well as favourites such as lasagne, spaghetti bolognaise or chili con carne served with rice and garlic bread. Roasts with all the trimmings were largely regarded as weekend treats and no British respondent discussed sequenced courses other than when cooking for a special occasion such as a dinner party. It has been shown that most Britons identified with the pattern of three meals a day of which one was considered to be the main meal (Charles *et al.* 1990). However as Key Note (2007) pointed out and phase 1 British respondents confirmed, for many and particularly for those at work, lunch is a rushed, 're-fuelling' break often undertaken whilst engaged in another activity such as paid employment. Respondent 1/B/23/M (a professionally employed father in Cardiff) added:

"I don't think you will see such set meal times anymore, that will change… plus the fact that people probably won't even sit down at the same table…people will eat everything on the go"

Such findings reflect those of Mintel (2003b) and Pettinger *et al.* (2006) who describe how Britons are Europe's largest consumers of snacks and tend to confirm data from the FSA (2007) who found that two-fifths of those questioned had eaten between meals on the previous day.

In contrast to the Thai curries and Chinese stir fries cooked in Britain, the French continue to 'fly the flag' in relation to the meals prepared and eaten and they often included 'traditional' and symbolic French meat dishes with sauces such as "*blanquette, bourguignon, boeuf en daube" (*1/F/1/F- mother and housewife) and *'poule au pot' (*1/F/11/M – single 35 year old IT technician). Furthermore, all but one of the phase 1 French respondents discussed the French model of clearly structured meals and sequenced courses within the meal such as *"a starter, a main course and a dessert which could be a yoghurt or fruit"* (1/F/12/M). Mennell (1996:102) considered that such a model, along with the use of stocks, butter based sauces and *'delicate little made dishes'* perhaps as described above, first appeared in the mid seventeenth century and represented a break with rustic, medieval cookery. Not surprisingly, there was now some evidence of meal structures becoming modified, especially among those living alone, such as "*simply a main course followed by a milk product such as yoghurt or rice pudding …and a fruit to follow"* (1/F/9/M). Simplifications including people apparently 'skipping' the traditional starter or cheese course, increased sales of lunchtime sandwiches and fast food and increased snacking and 'grazing' outside of meal times have led some writers, most notably Poulain (2002), to consider there was a weakening or 'destructuration' of the French model of 'three square meals per day' and 'no snacking in-between meals'. However, further research suggests six out of ten French persons remain strongly attached to the principle of three meals per day and no snacking while in Britain there was far greater evidence of destructuration with just 2 in 10 strongly attached to such a model (Fraser 2000: Fischler *et al.* 2008).

Similar results in relation to the continuation of structured meal times in France was discussed by phase 2 respondents living in France and for example respondent 2/F/32 32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) explained that while the meal structures

might becoming simpler, 40% of people continue to eat 3 courses for lunch and 85% of people still eat 2 or more courses in the evening (INPES 2004, states 70%). In contrast only around 20% of UK adults have at least two courses for their main meal of the day, more usually the evening meal (Mintel 2003). INPES (2004) also found that even the four course midday meal was still consumed by almost 20% of the French population in 2002 although this had declined from 25% in 1996. So, while there was some evidence that the 'French model' is under threat, overall respondents were fairly confident that many aspects would endure because as the following two researchers suggest, the French *"attach a lot of importance to the meal, to the structure, and it's a symbolic importance"* (2/F/40) and that *"the meal is still a strong feature of French social life"* (2/F39).

8.3.2 Mealtimes as focal activities in France

The opening of Euro Disney in France in 1992 demonstrated how there had also been an overestimation of the 'destructuration' of meal habits. It had been assumed that around half the visitors would eat fast food during their visit but the management had not appreciated how the French, and many other European visitors, continued to follow strict rules governing meal times. As a result massive queues appeared at such food outlets at traditional French mealtimes of 12.30 and between 7 and 8pm and such food outlets remained largely empty at other times (Fischler 1999). This perhaps illustrates that it is not the fast food that the French disapprove of but the snacking between meals and how it is the mealtime and not the type of food that remains sacrosanct.

As regards the meal itself, in comparison to America, Fischler (1999) noted that when the French visited establishments such as McDonalds they were more likely to visit in larger social or family groups, spend 50% more time there, order a greater range of food items to spread out on the table to share with others and make it into a meal occasion. Clearly unlike the Americans, and in many ways the British, the French continue to attach great importance to sharing food with others and continue to regard the meal as the main or focal activity even when simultaneously engaged in other activities such as watching television. Furthermore, while the French might eat smaller portions it has been suggested that they enjoy spending longer eating the meal and thus have more 'food experience' (Rozin *et al.* 2003).

8.3.3 Meal structures among families

To further test the hypothesis that the French food model might be under attack, Michaud *et al.* (2000) set out to specifically research whether perhaps French children and adolescents were abandoning it. As discussed they found little evidence of any collapse of how children and adolescents received their daily meals and concluded that while there might be "*gradual adjustments due to changing our way of life"* (p. 127) the structure and overall rhythm of meals remained remarkably consistent. Respondent *(*2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy) discussed how:

> *"It seemed that adolescents still valued meals together as a family. Whilst they did not necessarily want to spend more than 30-40 minutes at the table they did recognise and value this opportunity to at least once a day sit all together and discuss certain family things"*

A very different picture emerges in Britain and for example, Mintel (2003) and Keynote (2007) found that among UK teenagers and those in their early twenties, considerable destructuration or rejection of the three meal model had occurred and that young persons were the least likely group to eat with other members of their family. What has also been referred to as the de-regulation of eating habits was further reflected in the increase in individualised eating patterns with snacking and the consumption of fast foods being commonplace (Warde 1997).

Findings from phase 1 of the research reveal that British respondents were more likely to report difficulties in getting all the family, especially growing children together around a table. No phase 1 French respondents discussed such difficulties and respondent 2/F/36 (a director of a national institute) said that approximately 90% of teenagers continue to eat with their family *"even if the television is more likely to be on"* and a further French respondent commented:

> *"I think the younger generations still like to sit down together…that is the structure of the family and they all come home for the evening. …it's like the centre of the day type thing…to socialise…food is such a part of life over here"* (2/F/47 -a GM within an international hotel group)

In contrast, a busy professional family man from Cardiff said "*we don't eat as much together round the table...we do try and sit down altogether at least once a week"* (1/B/25/M) and a male telephone engineer also from Cardiff (1/B/26/M) added how "*the*

kids are always wanting to do something" which made family meals difficult. Such a sentiment was also reflected by a male optometrist and family man from Cardiff who said:

> *"We are keen on sitting around the table. It's just getting everybody that's there to do it at the same time because they're getting different time agendas"* (1/B/21/M).

Some phase 1 respondents in Britain considered that with the availability of convenience foods each person could eat alone when they got home and that family meals seemed more reserved for weekends. The decline in British families eating together was further discussed by three phase 2 respondents and respondent 2/B/42 (a community health manager) also noted that even where families might all eat together, they might all eat different things individually selected from the deep freeze and that Britons had not valued family meals in the same way as other countries.

As regards younger children, phase 1 respondents on both sides of the Channel discussed their children's food preferences and how this might influence mealtime decisions and for example two men from Cardiff said:

> *"My son only likes pasta and roast dinners basically and chips, my daughter likes baked potatoes so it does influence the way we cook" (*1/B/25/M).
> or
>
> *"whatever is the most popular advert on the telly, I suppose, tends to drive what we buy for them"* (1/B/23/M)

In contrast, while the phase 1 French respondents also reported sometimes indulging their young children's preferences, they were more likely to consider that:

> *"you should try and get them to taste food, even if they say they don't like it too much. I think that children have too much choice"* (1/F/12/M – a family man)

In Britain and across the age groups it appears that the three meal model identified by Charles *et al.* (1990) is in decline. Meanwhile the 'traditional' French food model of little snacking and three meals a day, with each meal comprising of several dishes and usually shared with others appears to remain a significant part of everyday life in France (see Bellisle *et al.* 2000, INPES 2004, Michaud *et al.* 2004, Amalou *et al.* 2004 and Outram 2005). Respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) summed it up as follows:

"...the three principal meals per day model endures and they maintain their daily schedule and communal nature. Families continue to eat much the same menu at the same time and there is resistance to change"

8.3.4 Embedded, structured and sequenced meals - a good nutritional model?

Certainly it would seem that the French food model is *"holding up better"* (2/F/39) with ninety percent of the French continuing to eat by strict rules in a socially controlled and regulated way and the principal place for the eating such meals remains the home, including the midday meal (67.7%) (INPES 2004). The persistent enactment of such deep rooted traditions appears "*culturally embedded" (*2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy) and it has been argued that while the traditional French food model may be constraining, it also supports the individual in their choice of foodstuffs and discourages not only snacking between meals, but also rushing a meal or having 'seconds'. The model also tends to offer a *"fairly balanced diet"* and five of the phase 2 French respondents discussed the need to preserve and protect the model. Respondent (2/F/31 - a regional director of nutritional policy) added that:

"...several different courses [and] *the French model of 3 meals a day remains remarkably resistant to change and by in large it is a good nutritional model"*

In contrast, phase 2 respondents in Britain expressed concern regarding the casualisation of eating habits and the corresponding rise of snacking in Britain, especially among young persons, and driven by the food industry and their advertising budgets. Respondent 2/B/44) was not alone when she discussed "*the open availability of food, snacking, food marketing and food on the go"* and while snacking could be healthy, respondents considered the overwhelming majority of snack foods contributed to an energy dense diet. Similarly home cooked foods served at set mealtimes might not necessarily be 'healthy' but respondents considered home cooking "*is essential to a healthy diet"* (2/B/33 -a university professor) and "*the knowledge is necessary for health and well-being"* (2/B/3434 – a director of a MNC). As such it might be concluded that the cooking of regular meals might help address issues such as the rising obesity levels and this theme was best summed up by respondent 2/B/44 – a food consultant/ campaigner who said:

"I think it is important to look at the role of non cooked food in terms of contributing to that [obesity]*. I think the decline in cooking is part of the problem, not the overwhelming…it's not the sole determinant, but it is important"*

8.3.5 Less time spent cooking in France but little change to the time spent eating

Respondent 2/F/32 (a regional director of nutritional policy) referred to research which led him to state that "*about '90% of those asked still eat their evening meal at home"* and this remained a fairly traditionally structured meal, served normally between 7 and 8pm, at the table, in the company of others and formed a significant part of the day. Such meals may no longer necessarily be 'cooked from scratch' and the director continued it was often necessary to purchase "*some prepared foods which can easily be bought on the way home from work"* (2/F/32). Respondent 2/F/37 (a director of a national institute) discussed surveys which highlighted that while the overall amount of time spent preparing and eating a meal in France had gone down over the years, he also pointed out how it was the time spent preparing and not the time spent eating the meal which had decreased the most. This was due not only to the increased use of more processed foods and kitchen equipment but as respondents 2/F/40 (a director of a research centre) and 2/F/36 (a civil servant within the Ministry of Health) stated, was also due to the midday meal increasingly being eaten outside the home and thus not personally cooked while "*the evening is when cooking skills are still used" (*2/F/40*).* He went on to explain that this was at least part of the reason why "*the extent of the use of cooking skills in France in recent years and the time devoted to cooking has decreased."* Research data reporting on the time spent actually eating the meal tends to vary however reliable data from INPES (2004) concludes that the average meal periods in 2002 were sixteen minutes for breakfast, thirty-eight minutes for the midday meal and forty minutes for the evening meal: identical to the periods observed in 1996 for the two main meals and one minute longer for breakfast.

8.3.6 The significance of the midday meal

Throughout the discussions above it is apparent how much more significant the midday meal is to the French than it is to the British. In the UK, Mintel (2003) indicate that just 17% of their UK sample ate a cooked meal at midday and 60% of adults opted for a sandwich or light meal. Mintel (2003b) also report how a full scale home cooked meal in

the middle of the day is only really practicable for those who have retired and how otherwise the main meal tends to be in the evening due to work and study commitments and the only time the family might all eat together (Marshall 2000, Fraser 2000, Padilla *et al.* 2001, Mintel 2003b and Pettinger *et al.* 2006). In France almost 68% of midday meals are still eaten at home and while this alone does not confirm that meals are elaborate about 60% of those surveyed ate three or more courses at lunch time (INPES 2004). Furthermore, it appears from this research that if the French cannot return home at midday, rather than have a sandwich, they will tend to enjoy a meal in the canteen or local restaurant. The following man living in Nantes with his working partner and young pre-school aged children summed it up as follows:

> *"When I work in Nantes, I eat at home and only when I work elsewhere do I eat in a restaurant"* (1/F/14/M).

Certainly while the midday meal in France has often been regarded as the most important meal of the day, and it remains the meal that includes on average the most courses, there is some evidence that outside of the south of France at least, a trend towards the evening meal becoming the most important social or family meal time. For example, respondent 1/F/1/F (A mother and full time housewife) said: "*We have more time for 'living' in the evenings. Midday meals are faster...Italian style is always nice, pasta with a sauce".* Further evidence suggests that as in Britain, household members in France increasingly no longer have adequate time to be able to travel home for lunch.

8.3.7 The social aspect of eating meals

The pleasurable and social aspects of eating appear of particular importance to the French (Pettinger *et al.* 2004; Fischler *et al.* 2008). Fischler *et al* revealed the significance for the French of being able to eat a meal with family or friends and that the 'getting together' was the most important part of the meal (Volatier 1999). All but one of the phase 2 respondents in France stressed the continued social aspect of eating together and respondent 2/F/30 explained that 70% of French people recently surveyed said that they eat their meals with friends or family. This sentiment was also prevalent among the phase 1 French respondents and was perhaps best summed up a family man and teacher who said:

> *"The pleasures of the table, of eating and having a good time together are very agreeable. That is what food and eating are all about"* (1/F/10/M)

In Fischler *et al's.* (2008) comparative European study it has been shown that the French were the most likely to strongly identify with the typology of being a 'social eater' while half of the British did not identify with it at all. Such findings were reflected among the phase 1 respondents in that all the French and just half the British respondents described how much they enjoyed the social aspect of eating meals with others which had frequently been home cooked. For example, respondent 1/F/8/F (a housewife and mother) said: "a *meal is an occasion to meet, to chat, to be together, to enjoy a dish, to appreciate it, it is convivial to be together".* Certainly the phase 1 French respondents were more spontaneous and confident in such social gatherings and in contrast four respondents in Britain considered that they either did little cooking for others or would prefer to go out when friends or family visited. For example, a working women in Cardiff (1/B/27/F) explained:

> *"We would probably go out. The only time I cook with family … my daughters and friends, is actually over Christmas and we do sit with family then"*

From this research it appears that an integral part of eating in France remained the enjoyment of a shared meal and that "*it is very important that everyone shares from the same dish that has been prepared for the occasion"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy) and that asking for something different is discouraged. Interestingly, phase 2 respondents in France confirmed how normally no special concessions would be made for what the children might want to eat however they were always permitted to refuse anything they did not like. Three such respondents also explained how there was always a plentiful supply of bread on the table if the children were still hungry at the end of the meal.

8.3.8 The French food model: A conclusion

Findings suggest that the traditional French food model persists in at least two of its three dimensions: the existence of three main meals and their daily rhythm and that of eating with other people, however there is some evidence that modern lifestyles are tending to simplify the structure of the two main meals. While eating habits are not homogenous across all groups throughout France and certain groups conform less to the French food model as well as recommendations of nutritionists, any transition in

eating habits appears to be less widespread than among the British population (Michaud *et al.* 2000; Michaud *et al.* 2004; INPES 2004; Pettinger *et al.* 2006). While younger respondents in both countries were more likely to miss breakfast and to a lesser extent lunch, this was more prevalent among the British sample that had less structured meals with more snacking on energy-dense snack foods such as crisps. Pettinger *et al's.,* (2006) research confirmed that the French were more likely to follow a regular meal pattern of three meals a day than their sample in England where they found new structures based on convenience foods to be emerging with households eating and preparing foods individually[128].

8.4 Comparison of Culinary Cultures

As well as what and how people cook, another key influence on domestic food practices and the extent of change are the attitudes, knowledge and experience people bring to food, cooking and eating, namely their 'culinary cultures' (Mennell *et al.* 1994; Short 2006 and Lang *et al.* 2009). Britons and the French share a strong cultural attachment to certain foods and eating habits although unlike France, Britain does not appear to have a clear notion of a national cuisine and furthermore, state institutions seem less inclined to mobilise cuisine as a symbol of national identity. The significance of such factors to the extent of change and continuity in relation to domestic food practices now requires further comparison.

8.4.1 The development of national cuisines and culinary cultures

Significantly, no phase 1 British respondent considered Britain as possessing any identifiable national cuisine or culinary culture. In comparison, 10 of the phase 1 British respondents considered that France had a strong culinary culture and went on to describe how the French spend more time either preparing or sitting round the table enjoying their food while the British might "*have tea and retire in front of the TV sort of stuff or go to the pub…but it's a big thing in France"* (1/B/29/F – a single 43 year old woman living with her parents). The significance of British pub culture was discussed by both British phase 1 & 2 respondents as well as how the British attach less

[128] Such restructuring of the modern British meal has been confirmed by many writers (see, Visser 1989; Mennell *et al.* 1992; Ritzer 1993; Branan1994; Murcott1997; HEA 1999).

importance to food and saw eating more akin to re-fuelling. A professional man from London asked:

> *"I seriously don't understand theoretically why our food is always so bad and cooking is so awful. We had no deep home-based cuisine at all which is very strange. The Swedes seem to, the Danes seem to even the Norwegians do why don't we? The Irish do…what happened to Britain? Maybe it was the international influence of the colonies…I don't know"* (1/B/16/M)

Phase 2 respondents in Britain were also unsure of the extent that Britain had ever had a positive or strong culinary culture. This was summed up by respondent 2/B/33 – a university professor) who asked "*whether we ever did have the same sort of culture and passion for food that they did in Spain and France".* Respondents in Britain considered that in France, food was a way of life, formed part of their cultural identity and that they had "*a deep tradition of respect for good food"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant), *"a long history of enjoying food in France"* (2/B/43 -a professor in psychology) and *"you know the French love food but you don't kind of realise how it is such a central part of life until you have lived there"* (2/B/46 -a professor of nutrition). The British respondents also offered some answers to the above question as to "*why our food is always so bad"* (1/B/16/M – a professional man in London) and for example discussed Britain's demand for 'cheap' domestic and imported foods and how this had promoted a *"cheap and cheerful"* culinary culture where people wanted a *"quick fix"* solution to their meal requirements and that Briton's attitudes to food and cooking had been undermined by perceived lack of time, *"laziness"* (2/B/41 - a French chef in Britain) and a food culture that revolved around *"convenience"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant). Certainly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, cookery book writers such as Hannah Glasse, Eliza Acton and Mrs Beeton promoted an economic and relatively joy-less approach to the use of food and considered cookery should be *'plain and simple'*. As Driver (1983) and Mennell (1996) suggest, good, plain food remains characteristics of British culinary cultures and continues to influence the development of domestic food practices. However, as many writers agree, it was also the Enclosure Acts and Britain's brutal transition to an industrialised society with its dispossessed proletariat along with the victories of free trade which perhaps more significantly shaped a culinary culture dependent on the purchase of cheap industrial and often imported foods that could easily and quickly be prepared (see Burnett, 1983; Driver, 1983; Tannahill 1988; Mennell 1996; Symons 2000; Lawrence 2008).

Alternatively, workers could purchase convenient takeaway foods sold by Britain's street vendors. Such debates were best summed up by respondent 2/B/42 (a community health manager) who considered:

> *"We were early to industrialise and it hit a larger proportion of the population harder and I wonder if those sort of things begin to break the shackles, not just between the people and land which clearly it did, but whether that also broke the chain between people and food, so that food became industrialised fairly quickly"*

As Symons (2000) suggests, the French Industrial Revolution treated French citizens far less brutally. In addition, the massively changed working and living conditions brought about by industrialisation and urbanisation in Britain also interrupted the inter-generational transmission of culinary knowledge and this partly further explains the faster decline in Britain's cooking habits than in France. British cuisine was said to have been 'decapitated' (see Mennell, 1996; Chevallier 1997) and such events do appear to have had an enduring influence on British culinary cultures and frustrated the flourishing of a popular culinary culture that people identify with and express pride in.

Industrial, colonial, cosmopolitan and multi-cultural influences on British culinary cultures were all highlighted by British respondents along with some specific regional dishes such as Cornish pasties, Scottish shortbread, porridge as well as Welsh specialities such as Glamorgan sausages, cockles and oysters but these Welsh specialities were now described as either occasional items on pub menus or something they remembered their parents preparing. Phase 2 respondents in Britain also discussed the decline in the popularity of 'traditional' British dishes along with a rise in consumption of what were considered to be "*ethnic mix cuisine, fusion cuisine" (*2/B/33 – a university professor) and "*the international dimension"* of food *(*2/B/34 – a director of a MNC). Respondent 2/B/33 continued and described how people were now "*brought up on"* such foods and that *"many youngsters today have never eaten a steak and kidney pudding".* Respondent 2/B/34 also noted a decline in popularity of many national or regional dishes that had existed. He added:

> *"Fish and chips perhaps, Yorkshire puddings and roast beef, maybe steak and kidney pie, but a lot of the other regional varieties that we had; Lancashire hotpot, shepherd's pie, fish pie, all the different braises and stews and offal dishes, meats and pickling and all those sorts of things have certainly faded"*

Respondent 1/B/24/M, a manager in Cardiff, perhaps summed up the industrialisation and de-regionalisation of British food when he discussed his consumption of pies in Wigan, fish, fried Mars bars and Chinese food in Scotland and curry throughout the UK. There was some vague discussion of differences between cooking and eating habits in the north and south while others considered such differences reflected class differences and respondent 1/B/26/M, originally from Manchester but settled in Cardiff joked: "*it's not easy getting gravy on your chips down here".*

In contrast, the entire phase 1 French sample demonstrated pride and confidence in a clearly defined French cuisine, its longevity and many, only half jokingly, considered it the best in the world. Indeed, ever since Louis XIV (1643- 1715) it has been said that *"a distinct and distinguished French tradition of cookery"* emerged and that France assumed *"culinary hegemony of Europe"* and later over much of the world (Mennell 1996: 63). Respondents from phase 1 and 2 described how French cuisine was engrained in the French psyche and underpinned cultural events such as marriages and acted to bolster cultural identity and that *"France has a culinary tradition, to eat well and that remains"* (1/F/7/M – a teacher from Nantes). While French cuisine has undoubtedly evolved and been democratised since Louis XIV, the durability of particular preparation methods and the symbolic significance of the consumption of certain foods cooked in a particular way are said to play a significant role in defining cultural identity and nationhood as well as articulating concepts of inclusion (see Levi-Strauss 1969; Douglas 1972; Barthes 1973; Bell and Valentine 1997; Warde 1997; Ashley *et al.* 2004)[129].

In Britain it would appear then that in many ways, 'good plain food' has become symbolic of British cuisine and the notion of 'cheap and cheerful' food is representative of a British culinary culture. Of course, while steak and kidney pudding may be in decline, and fish and chips now more expensive, a roast meal and in particular, the 'Roast beef of Olde England' remains *"a core symbol of national identity"* (James 1997: 72). Respondents also discussed the creation and popularisation of the cooked Edwardian English breakfast as representing something special and unique about

[129] For example, the consumption by a French person of an iconic dish such as a *'poule au pot'* might confer upon him/her a feeling of being French and symbolise their sixteenth century's king Henri IV's desire to see a chicken in the pot of every French citizen on a Sunday.

British eating habits and the national diet. Certainly, British culinary culture appears to have evolved faster and in so doing has been influenced by a range of contemporary external factors. For example, a dish such as chicken vindaloo, (which inspired the unofficial anthem of the England football team in the 1998 World Cup - "Vindaloo"), was adopted to represent something distinctive and meaningful about being English. However, such innovations appear less durable and their significance appears weaker than for example a *'poule au pot'* and while evidence from British phase 1 respondents demonstrated their fondness for a 'curry' and how a 'takeaway' of such might regularly be consumed over the weekend, a chicken vindaloo was not identified as a constituent of British cuisine or as a part of an individual's culinary culture by any respondent in Britain.

8.4.2 Regional cuisines and local Foods

Britain's industrial revolution has been blamed for undermining the significance of regional cuisines. In contrast, the French political revolution led to the reconstruction and glorification of distinctive regional culinary specialities as symbols of a shared historical community and these were mobilised to create a new and much needed sense of united national identity in post revolutionary, nineteenth century France (Crang 1996; Csergo 1999; Symons 2000; Pitte 2002 & Abramson 2007). Many of these symbolic representations of regional identity were indeed based on discrete physical regions with different climatic conditions and these appear to have produced meaningful regional culinary identities that remain in the public's memory. For example both phase 1 and 2 respondents in France displayed local patriotism and enthusiastically recounted the continuing presence of regional cuisines and discussed their importance to French culture and identity. Admittedly, around half the phase 1 respondents considered such regional differences had been somewhat eroded, at least in the big cities but they continued to discuss specific specialities from the south and north, from Brittany, from Alsace and so on. While supermarkets had made regional specialities universally available it was felt that they did not offer authenticity and for example to truly taste a dish such as a '*bouillabaisse'* it was necessary to eat it around Marseille as only there would fresh hog-fish ('*rascasse'*) be available (1/F/1/F). Respondents explained the continued popularity of the *'Nantaise'* wine and butter sauce to accompany freshwater fish known as a *'beurre blanc'* and also how readymade versions were available in

every supermarket. However respondents believed that the true '*beurre blanc'* could only be made with local white wine, butter and shallots and ideally, fish caught in the nearby River Loire and it would be important to seek out at least some of these when re-creating it at home.

Finally, one phase 2 respondent (2/B/46) living in Britain but who knew France well believed their attachment to regional cuisines and '*terroir'* was:

> *"...part of that wanting to be different in all things…to differentiate themselves from the globalisation of the world…that Anglo-Saxonism nastiness, it is also part of the theatre of being French"*

Evidence from this research suggests that popular images of regional culinary specialities have gained status in the popular imagination and such specialities and preparation methods have an enduring, meaningful and symbolic nature that is inclined to preserve a more traditional approach to domestic food practices and confirm belonging to a distinctive national identity (see Csergo 1999).

8.4.3 Terroir

The meaning of the term *terroir* has already been discussed (see Abramson 2007; Fischler *et al.* 2008) and at least six of the phase 2 respondents living in France explicitly referred to it in relation to food, its locality and the influences of the earth and regional climate upon the food. In the past, most people had been wholly dependent on the soil where they lived for survival and while there is evidence of some trivialisation of the term for commercial benefit, fundamentally the term appears to remain profoundly meaningful to the French as summed up by respondent 2/F/38 (a director of an academy):

> *"In France we have solidarity/are united with our land [terre]…it can't be touched or interfered with either physically or morally, it is an integral part of us"*

Terroir was described as representing tradition, authenticity and culinary heritage and that "*people in France would love all their food to have such meaning"* (2/F/39 - a researcher/sociologist) as not only did they enjoy contact with their culinary past but it remained essential to the construction of personal and shared identities. While such foods were too expensive for some people to buy regularly, respondents explained how many city dwellers would continue to visit their ancestral '*territoire'* or "*go chez nous on*

holiday" (2/F/47 - a GM within an international hotel group) and often stay with family still living there and take advantage of local prices. Some people had bought a small plot of land in such places which served to give them a greater sense of belonging and a place to dream of retiring to one day. It was explained that for the French, no visit to the countryside was complete without lengthy conversations in anticipation of the local produce to be enjoyed there and what foods and wines they could bring back for a special occasion that others could share and enjoy. For example, a phase 2 respondent living in Britain commented:

> *"People in France still know and visit people in the countryside who would at least keep chickens and certainly within the community people would have cows or goats, whereas in Britain we don't have that…we might visit an aunt across the other side of the country but it would be somewhere in suburbia"* (2/B/42)

There was little discussion of local foods *i*n Britain and respondent 2/F/40 (a director of a research centre in France) summed it up as follows:

> *"What is different between France and England is that we* [French] *have a considerable heritage of local products, with our tradition of localisation, while you have probably more of a tradition of mixtures such as Christmas pudding. Without your British colonies this would not have existed; we're talking about colonial histories, of cultural positions which are different"*

The increasing popularity in Britain, at least among the middle classes, of 'farmers markets' selling local produce was discussed by some British respondents but these were compared to French markets which contained produce both from local farmers and larger commercial growers and how *"everybody and anybody go to markets"* in France (2/B/35 – a director of an academy). In addition, respondent 2/B/46 (a professor of nutrition) considered that unlike in Britain,

> *"even if you go to Carrefour you've got loads of local produce" and explained that small, local producers take their goods "to the wholesale regional market and the supermarkets feeds off that because people want local produce, that is the norm".*

Respondents in France confidently discussed how to *"safeguard the processes of localisation of products and how to create appellations and preserve production methods"* (2/F/40 a director of a research centre) so as to ensure authenticity and quality. Under EU regulations, applications in Britain are increasingly made to Defra for specific local foods to be protected rather like the '*Appellation d'origine controllee'* or

AOC (Controlled Denomination of Origin) status for wine and foods in France. Just over 40 products have received such accreditation in Britain [130] although no British respondents discussed such foods or systems of authentication.

8.4.4 A culinary discourse

The culturally constructed quality of national identity remains a powerful part of everyday life to a nation's population and cultural apparatus such as state institutions, the media and various elites can play a significant role in the development of national culture and nationhood (see Goody 1982; Anderson 1983; Smith 1991; Mennell 1996; Parkhurst Fergusson 2001). In France, the period following the Revolution is known as the age of the 'culinary institutions', 'great chefs' and 'gastronomy' and the time when the national character of French cuisine was consolidated (Mennell). The reconstruction of French regional cuisines during the nineteenth century was an important symbol of a new unified national identity in the largely rural, post revolutionary period in France and required the energetic articulation of a gastronomic discourse to demonstrate the primacy of rural over urban life. The State engaged the support of various institutions, associations and professional groups in an attempt to create a geographical solidarity and present regional foods as symbols of a shared memory. Writers, such as Grimod de la Reyniere developed gastronomic tours and maps and later restaurant guides and popular culinary literature appeared. At the start of the twentieth century, the first 'Michelin Guide' was published and the 'Tour de France' was established and all attempted to glorify the social and regional diversity of the new nation often via representations of culinary specialities. The Third Republic (1870-1940) needed to bolster its local roots to encourage pro-republican sentiment and embarked on a regionalist discourse, offering support for agriculture and small towns[131].The celebration of regional culinary cultures continued and served to satisfy industrial workers who had recently arrived in the cities from the regions (see Csergo 1999; Pitte, 2002 and Abramson 2007).

It appears that as many writers suggest, the commodification of the regions and culinary constructs have been used to reflect a mixed range of both political interests

[130] These include the Cornish pasty, the Cumberland sausage and recently, Yorkshire Forced Rhubarb.

[131] The height of political and culinary unity is said to have been reached in 1900 when 21,000 mayors from across France were invited to Paris for a huge, celebratory banquet

and commercial motivations and while they may lack some authenticity, they do appear able to provide the French with some sense of pride and belonging (see Bell *et al.* 1997; Ashley *et al.* 2004; Abramson 2007). Such opportunities have not been ignored by more recent politicians who have also moved to mobilise and strengthen opinion around France's national culinary heritage and promoted it as a symbol both of popular French identity and cultural significance (Willsher 2010)[132]. As Parkhurst-Ferguson (2001) argues, the repeated transmission and popularization of the distinctive national character of French cuisine combined with the intellectualization of a culinary discourse helps ensure that it remains in cultural circulation. For example, Chirac's alleged verbal attack on British and Finnish foods at the EU summit in 2005 and how the 'leaked' story was reported by the French press served to further enhance in the popular imagination the superiority of French over 'foreign' cuisine and how cuisine continued to reflect a symbolic representation of a 'gloriously different' national identity. Furthermore the ability of a culinary discourse and French gastronomy to attract international tourism and thus contribute to the national economy has not been overlooked by successive French Presidents. Recently, President Sarkozy has described French cuisine as the best in the world and successfully lobbied to have it included as the first gastronomy to be listed on UNESCO's 'intangible' heritage list. Ministers are now required to take measures to preserve the French gastronomic tradition, including within schools, and to promote it as a world treasure (Fouquet 2010). Such articulation and celebration of any British culinary culture by leaders of state appears very limited[133] .

Culinary discussion and discourse in France remains popular and this may serve as a safeguard against the imposition of food practices, habits and customs from 'outside' after all "*the fact that the French like food will protect them much better….we don't like food" (*2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant). Certainly from phase 2 respondents in France it was apparent how much they enjoyed talking about food and that it remained a widely discussed topic of conversation as summed up by respondent 2/F/47 (a GM within an international hotel group)who said:

> *"All the conversation can be, more or less, about food and where it's from and who produces it and so on"*

[132] For example, Presidents Mitterand and Chirac, and Prime Minister Jospin and Mauroy.

[133] Following the BSE crisis, there have been attempts by Prince Charles to popularise the preparation and consumption of mutton.

Phase two respondents in France also explained for example how French workers of either gender, would, before eating in their canteen, phone one another in anticipation, discuss what might be on the menu that day and get mildly excited. During such a meal, people also discussed the food and even after the meal people discussed how the meal had been prepared and how they would have prepared it given the opportunity. In contrast, respondent 2/B/46 (a professor of nutrition) added:

> *"...in England if I eat with my colleagues we never talk about what we are eating, we talk about other things"*

Another phase 2 British respondents added that in France:

> *"Life revolves around food…. you talk about foie gras, you talk about wine, you talk about truffles...people feel passionate about their food identity. I don't see that in this country"* (2/B/33– a university professor)

Respondent 2/F/48, a British chef living and working in France said unlike in France, it is incredible to think of people in Britain discussing what part of the country their carrots came from or the region where their chickens were raised. Such culinary discourse in France was described as important as it was "*to do with the association or the identity of that county with its type of food"* (2/B/46 - a professor of nutrition in Britain who had lived in France). Phase 2 French and British respondents believed that in Britain people thought about food less, cared less about the origin of the food and discussed such matters rarely. It was also discussed how such opinions and lack of interest and respect for food had a direct impact on culinary cultures, eating habits and diet.

8.4.5 Globalisation and its impact on culinary traditions

It appears from the above discussion that for the French at least, certain foods and means of preparation often remain symbolically important and as such they prioritise the consumption of those foods that are regarded as being traditionally French. While the British respondents cited old time favourites such as shepherd's pie or roast beef, they were more inclined to stress their own individual food preferences. Evidence of enduring rules, structures or overarching culinary cultures providing Britons with guidance in relation to patterns of food consumption or indeed any single sense of nationhood were less apparent. Of course, as many macro-historians and developmentalists have suggested, food habits and domestic food practices constantly evolve and in Britain it was particularly apparent that culinary cultures have absorbed

attitudes, taste preferences and cooking styles from other nations (see Mintz 1985, Visser 1986, Mennell 1996, Bell *et al.* 1997, James 1997, Short 2002, Mintel 2003, Ashley *et al.* 2004; Seymour 2004; Panayi 2007 & 2008). With increasing globalisation including the impact of colonialism, migration as well as the food industry, the ability of national borders to contain national identities, at least in the case of Britain, has been seen to be further eroded and furthermore it would appear that as Ashley *et al.* (2004: 78) suggested, perhaps British cuisine is a culinary desert '*waiting to be colonised from abroad'.* Certainly many British respondents discussed their liking of an Indian takeaway and reflected the popularity of CTM (chicken tikka masala) (see Hardyment 1995; Bell *et al.* 1997; Marr 2000) and celebrity chef/restaurateur Raymond Blanc (2002) has expressed his amazement at the multiplicity of choice in relation to food in modern Britain. British respondents, male and female, typically discussed cooking food that "*has its origins abroad"* (1/B/17/F) and how *"the food that we cook tends to have an 'ethnicy' sort of flavour to it"* (1/B/16/M) and how people cook *"everything really, lasagnes, chillies, Bolognese"* (1/B/24/F), sort of "*ethnic mix cuisine, fusion cuisine" (*2/B/33). A mother who worked as a district nurse in London summed it up as follows:

> *"It's got to be quick ...yesterday I did a typical Iraqi dish …we had pork chops done by my husband the evening before that...the evening before that I did Hungarian, which was a pork-paprika thing, with cream and paprika and I think I did curry before that so it is very cosmopolitan. We often do French and Italian and Chinese…we do a stir-fry occasionally"* (1/B/20/F)

Such tastes and cuisines are often modified so as to be acceptable to a British public and this has been referred to as food creolisation (see James 1997; Bell *et al.* 1997). However, while such hybridized dishes may well lack authenticity it is perhaps still surprising that the British, ostensibly raised on 'plain and simple' foods should not only take these dishes to their hearts but also raise such 'foreign dishes' with an *"ethnicy sort of flavour"* to iconic status as for example has been discussed in relation to chicken vindaloo. It has been argued that the popularity of *"pork chipolatas cooked in an Indian style"* (Jaffrey 1982: 61), chicken tikka pizza with cheddar cheese, and other 'exotic' ready meals and takeaways reflects Britain's acceptance of multi-cultural influences. However, James suggests, the acceptance of such creolized foods actually represents continuity rather than a diminution of British food traditions and Ashley *et al.* (2004) have argued that the continued search for inexpensive and convenient ways of enlivening 'plain and simple' British food reflects a subtle continuation of many of the

imperatives of the British culinary culture, and in many ways is nothing more than *"old food habits in a new form"* (James 1997: 84).

Pettinger *et al.* (2004: 307) argue, while British eating habits have evolved over the years and absorbed *"foreign cuisine ...France, tends to 'follow the flag' and local, regional and national culinary traditions seem to have persisted more"* and this was further supported by phase 2 respondents in France. For example respondent 2/F/48 (a British chef living and working in France) considered that Britain had had more immigration than France, was culturally more integrated and also *"more open to taking ideas"* unlike France which did not have *"such a mix of diverse cultures"*. He added that because of France's own particular colonial history, especially in northern Africa:

> *"You have tabbouleh and couscous and also nems from south-east Asia but the French don't seem to absorb it. Britain had so many colonies whereas the French have tended to stick to their roots and they are very proud of their cuisine"*

Such findings are also supported by Mennell (1996) who suggests that while successive waves of immigration have had a major influence on Britain's eating habits, immigrants from Indo-China and north Africa have had less of an influence on French culinary culture. However there was also some evidence from the phase 1 French respondents of new foodstuffs becoming hybridized and accepted as part of everyday French food.For example, a teacher in Nantes explained:

> *"Let's take couscous for example; originally it was a dish from North Africa where the peasants prepared it. Then other people also living there, such as the French colonisers in Algeria for example took the dish and bit by bit it was modified by adding more meat, more vegetables and less actual couscous. And as such the dish was re-invented by the colonisers and it was also used by the Algerians who brought it with them when they came to France."* (1/F/9/M)

This respondent considered that cuisines generally had never been fixed and had always evolved in a way that reflected that country's exposure to global influences and this was supported by some others such as a mother and housewife (1/F/8/F) who added "*cooking styles will mix, all cultures will mix I think... it's an evolution, it's normal".* It appeared that while Britain, sometimes referred to as a 'culinary dessert', has found it acceptable to more quickly accept a broader range of new foods and cuisines from abroad, no country's food habits are immune from global influences and such foods,

often via a process of creolisation and naturalisation can become symbolic of a nation's eating habits and culinary culture.

8.4.6 Powerful American fast food cultures

Exposure to American fast food habits have been described as having a particularly powerful influence on the development of culinary cultures. Interestingly, while phase 1 respondents on both sides of the Channel claimed to rarely use the American franchised type of fast food outlets many more British respondents had used them, at least occasionally compared to the French respondents. Furthermore, among the British respondents there appeared to be a greater sense of resigned acceptance to the spread of such fast food restaurants and their inevitable impact on British ways of eating as summed up by a professional male in Cardiff who said:

> *"Pervasive American culture is creeping in everywhere... Coca Cola being advertised and McDonald's is everywhere... So I don't suppose Italy and France will be able to hold out. It is such a powerful marketing movement… I don't think you can ever stop them… fast food will creep all over the place, all over the world"* (1/B/21/M)

A further professional male from London tended to agree but concluded that there "*isn't a huge sense of it* [McDonalds] *sweeping France or Spain or Portugal" (*1/B/16/M). Certainly evidence gathered in France suggests that there is at least greater opposition to such establishments and less recognition that American fast food eating habits were likely to have a significant impact on France's culinary cultures. For example although five phase 1 French respondents expressed some concern about the influence of restaurants such as McDonalds in France, especially on the young, on balance they remained optimistic and confident that national and regional culinary cultures would continue to survive. At least 4 phase 1 French respondents considered there was now a duality of eating habits with both traditional and fast foods being consumed for specific occasions and while the young might be counter cultural and wish to follow an 'American style diet', with maturity they would return to a more traditional French culinary culture. The view appeared to be that youngsters would 'experiment' with McDonalds and the like and that it "*would be a pity if younger generations forget their culinary traditions...but I do not believe that this will rock the culinary culture of the country" (*1/F/8/F – a mother and housewife). There was a belief that "*people will return*

*to the foods of previous generations and that the phenomenon of fast food is a fashion…I think that it will stop" (*1/F/6/M – a single 43 year old male). Respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) also outlined how his

> *"research indicates that currently it is not a massive problem and I believe that perhaps McDonalds and the like have peaked".*

Such optimism was further expressed by a married male teacher in Nantes who added:

> *"For example I have a nephew who is 29 and grew up on …pizza, McDonalds… and now he is beginning to get interested in cooking. I thought it was all finished and he had chosen to follow an American diet but as he has got older he has started to rediscover a little about the culture around food"* (1/F/9/F)

American fast food habits are widely demonised as having the ability to undermine ideas of national cuisines and culinary cultures and while most British respondents appeared more passive about their influence, the French respondents tended to consider France to be immune to such culinary colonialism. They suggested that such foods and eating habits offer only a marginal threat to France's clearly structured and well established culinary culture and represent little more than a youthful counter cultural tendency that will be short lived. French respondents were also more eager to express their opposition to the spread of such establishments and three from phase 1 expressed their support for Monsieur Bové's anti-globalisation campaign and ultimate attack on a McDonalds in 1999. Bové's condemnation of industrialised agriculture and his emphasis on the allegiance of French cooking to French soil proved a popular rallying cry because for many, McDonalds undoubtedly represents *"the very embodiment of the American imperialism that they believe is threatening their culinary traditions"* (Fischler 1999: 541). Such was the public outcry after Mon. Bové was sent to prison that the State again grasped the opportunity to be seen to be protecting the national cuisine and promoting a culinary discourse that underpins French culinary arts, national identity as well as a government's popularity. Prime Minister Jospin was forced to agree that Bové's criminal act was "just" and stated that the defence of fine French food against American 'anti-cuisine' was a moral act and as result, Bové spent just six weeks in prison (see Bové and Dufour 2001). However, despite such national consensus about *'malbouffe'* ('bad food') and other icons of American culinary imperialism, "*you have 1,300 McDonalds in France, 1,500 in the UK"* (2/B/41 - a French chef living and working in Britain) and it would appear that numerically McDonalds has

successfully conquered the insular French market (see Law and Wald 1999, Fraser 2000).

8.5 Dietary divisions and cultural frameworks

Attitudes to food, eating and pleasure are deeply engrained in culture and it has been argued that there is a notable divide in relation to behaviour to food in Britain and France which has a significant impact on the continued development of culinary cultures. American and European academics (see Rozin *et al.* 2003; Fischler *et al.* 2008) have tended to place Anglo-Saxon nations such as Britain and the US at one end of an axis with a nutritional/individualistic type of food model and at the other extreme is located France with a gourmet/convivial type food model which adopts a more collective or societal approach to diet and health.

8.5.1 Attitudes to diet and health

Within such a broader cultural framework and in relation to diet and health, Fischler (2002) found that the French (and southern European countries) were almost twice as likely to stress *'moderation'* in relation to food so as to ensure good health as those in the UK (or the USA). The French also have been found to prioritise a varied and balanced diet of what they consider to be quality, fresh food, rather than follow any complex nutritional guidelines (see also IEFS 1996, INPES 2004). Certainly phase 1 French respondents discussed how they preferred to eat a variety of quality, natural, fresh foods so as to maintain a balanced diet while among the British phase 1 respondents there was greater discussion of the need for the individual to modify behaviour, control weight and avoid certain nutrients. For example, in Britain a married professional woman (1/B/17/F) explained her main considerations were to eat "*Low fat, low salt, low sugar"* and other respondents discussed special regimes such as *"WeightWatchers"* , *"Slimmer's World"* , "*the combining/non-combining diet"* (1/B/21/M – a professional man from Cardiff) or the need to adapt cooking methods(1/B/23/M – a manager from Cardiff) and to remove excess fat (1/B/20/F – a nurse from London). Evidence suggests that despite such intentions to control what they eat and to be healthier and slimmer, Britons (and Americans) are more likely to be overweight or suffer from CHD than their French counterparts (Rozin *et al.* 1999).

8.5.2 Food models: Anglo-Saxon individualism versus French collectivism

As noted, a significant difference in French and British culinary cultures is how the French tend to stress the social aspect of eating together. In brief, many French people appear to have a greater philosophical passion and enjoyment for food than their British counterparts who have been described as having a more mechanical and functional relationship with food (see Pettinger *et al.* 2004; INPES 2004; Fischler *et al.* 2008). Respondents 2/F/48 (a British chef living and working in France) explained: *"food is a very social thing in France…they do eat a lot more together"* and respondent 2/F/31 (a director of regional nutritional policy) added that *"people enjoy the chance to share a meal and be together…the French model"* while respondents 2/F/40 (a director of a research centre) and 2/F/30 (a senior health promotion officer) further developed the theme with the latter saying "*French people like eating with other people…always. It's more convivial".* Many phase one French respondents also described the pleasure and enjoyment they derived from food and eating especially if the occasion is shared with others.

Further evidence of Britain having a more individualised relationship to food was discussed by many phase 2 respondents in France and for example respondents engaged in nutritional policy and also a research and sociologist (2/F/36, 2/F/39 and 2/F/32) discussed the differences in culinary cultures between what they also referred to as the 'Anglo-American' or 'Anglo-Saxon model', which they regarded as including snacking between meals compared to the enduring 'French food model' based on the sharing of three meals a day. A phase 2 respondent in France who had spent many years in Britain said that in Britain: *"there is a lot more convenience foods available and they don't seem to socialise as a family together anymore, it is all very individual"* (2/F/48- a British chef in France). Such views were supported by many respondents in Britain including at least 3 from phase 2 and for example, respondent (2/B/34 - a director of a MNC) reported *"more isolated dining in families"* other than at weekends.

Respondent 2/F/39 (a French researcher & sociologist) referred to the Anglo-Saxon nations which he considered predominantly protestant and continued that there was a

"...growing process of individualisation in relation to food in certain countries because there is a degree of guilt associated with pleasure and this is a little different in the catholic world"

Certainly evidence has been presented that shows how Britons (and Americans) are more likely to feel a sense of guilt when eating certain foods which appear to have been negatively stigmatized such as 'chocolate cake' while the French were more likely to have positive associations with such foods and equate them with a sense of 'celebration' (Rozin *et al*, 1999). It appears that *"in France no food is sinful"* (James 1997:82) and furthermore recent food policy approaches in France in relation to diet and obesity have promoted fun and the non-stigmatisation of any food and this has also been reflected in their lack of enthusiasm for the traffic light food labelling system (Summerbell 2008).

As noted, many nineteenth century British cookery book writers adopted a relatively joy-less approach to food that did not refer to the pleasure that could be derived from food and eating. Such an approach is said to have influenced the development of attitudes to food and cookery (see Driver 1983, Mennell 1996). Phase 2 respondents in Britain tended to support such findings and for example commented how "*the British have a puritan idea that food is like money and sex and you don't talk about it, slightly vulgar really…pleasures of the flesh"* (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant) and respondent 2/B/46 46 (a professor of nutrition) agreed with the allegory that "*Britain is a more puritanical country when it comes to food…or sex. France is a more hedonistic society*... [and that there was a]...*culture of restraint, of waiting for something good...in Britain there is this culture where you want everything now".* In addition, phase 2 respondents in France believed *'"Puritan ethics* [to be] v*ery much present among the British and Americans"* (2/F/39– a researcher/sociologist) which prioritised attitudes associated with personal freedoms, *"individualism, choice and responsibility"* and respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) described the *"Americanisation of eating habits"* in Britain and agreed that "*in France we have a different view of choice, rights and responsibilities than the Anglo-American model"*.

American and French academics have also noted how the US and UK prefer to be offered a large choice of foods from which they can individually select and that food should be capable of being further modified to meet individual tastes whereas France is

seen as exhibiting more collective food values (Stearns 1997; Rozin *et al's.,* 2006; Fischler *et al.* 2008). Respondent 2/F/39 (a researcher/sociologist) highlighted such differences between what he referred to as the Atlantic model and anything continental and respondent 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) developed the concept of a division of dietary worlds further and explained:

> *"Choosing whatever you personally want to eat, at whatever time, from an oversized and overstocked fridge…this is a very individualised approach …personal liberty to choose. If personal freedoms to choose whatever and whenever one wants…and as a result becoming obese is a freedom, then perhaps in France we don't value such freedoms as perhaps the Americans appear to or maybe also in Britain. Freedoms of choice need to be within an environment that allows access to good and impartial information and to a large extent it is accepted as the state's role to intervene. To prioritise individual rights and freedoms as perhaps in America and maybe Britain, in an open environment dominated by the free market does not always seem to provide the best means of enabling truly 'free choice'"*

The need to make decisions and select foods that were only marginally different can in itself be stressful to the individual and respondent 2/F/39 continued to explain that it had promoted both greater levels of anxiety and greater incidence of obesity in the US but also in the UK. There was discussion that in the US and UK there was a nutritionalised food culture which relied on the notion of *"a rational eater"* (2/F/39) with each person individually responsible for making the 'right' decisions about which foods to select and consume. It has been argued that such emphasis on individual causes and cures in Anglo-Saxon countries in relation to diet and health has often resulted in Anglo-Saxons feeling the burden of such freedoms and responsibilities and a heightened sense of anxiety and how in turn this can lead to feelings of guilt for the individual choices they have made (see Mennell 1996; Fischler *et al.* 2008). Two phase 2 respondents in France strongly agreed and discussed how it was that the Americans, but also the British, who are the most anxious about the nutrients in the food they consume and yet their rates of obesity and diet related illness are among the highest in the world (2/F/32, 2/F/39). From this research it appears that in France, while individual responsibility for food consumption was considered important, collective, social, congenial and, perhaps, the "communion" aspects of eating were seen as the most important aspects in relation to the consumption of food (Fischler *et al.* 2008). From the findings presented it appears that many the French people believe that their state of health is influenced by factors over which they have little individual control and with their continued lower rates of

obesity and mortality from coronary heart disease, appear to worry less and have a more relaxed attitude to what is often regarded as a highly palatable diet that derives a higher percentage of energy from animal products and sugars[134].

Evidence has been presented which suggests that British (and also American) culinary cultures have picked up some Puritan characteristics and that this has generated extremes of self-discipline among the populations in relation to their food and their bodies. It also appears to have produced feelings of anxiety and guilt and some theorists have gone so far as to suggest that such an approach reflects a '*Protestant tendency'* (Fischler *et al.* 2008: 58). Meanwhile evidence suggests that the French derive greater pleasure from spending time eating and indeed talking about food with others, ask fewer questions of themselves and are more governed by customs and cultural norms and are more accepting of government intervention. They are able to take comfort from dominant, but not necessarily apparent, cultural steers that demand less soul searching and largely absolves them from individual responsibility for their diet. It seems that many French prefer to follow only a few basic guidelines in relation to diet and health such as moderation and the consumption of fresh, varied foodstuffs and are opposed to the stigmatisation of any food.

8.6 Declining coherence, counter cultural tendencies and contemporary changes to culinary practices

Food and diets appear less rooted in their own past or traditions and in Britain at least, food increasingly has its roots everywhere and has been described as a kind of cuisine *'sans frontiers'* (see Blanc 2002, Panayi 2008) or *'global cuisine'* (Defra 2008). While foods eaten and methods of preparation have always been influenced by contact with other continents, writers such as De Certeau *et al.* (1998) suggest that the current pace of change means that local conditions now rarely impose choice of dish or how it is cooked and this has inevitably undermined any shared sense of coherent regional cuisine – a view strongly supported by phase 1 British respondents. Globalisation, and in particular, the replacement of a local food system with that of a global one, has filled

[134] As discussed, this phenomenon has been referred to as the French paradox (see Appelbaum 1994; Drewnowski *et al.* 1996; Rozin *et al.* 2003; Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006; Millstone *et al.* 2008).

supermarket shelves with an unprecedented and often bewildering variety of foods on both sides of the Channel.

The declining significance of national and regional borders and the resultant 'global supermarket' has been cited as having prompted an important shift in Britain's eating consciousness. For example, Blanc (2002) suggests that Britain's recent interest in what he terms *'fusion cookery'* - cookery based on the best of local and globally sourced ingredients, represents a contemporary 'transition' in British culinary practices. There has been a growing number of writers and journalists who suggest that perhaps Britons can take comfort in the thought that while their culinary culture has all but lost the distinctive regional cuisines and culinary traditions that once defined it, Britain has undergone a food revolution in recent decades and is now more open than some of its neighbours to other ways of doing and eating things (Marr 2000; Rogers 2004). For example, Blanc considers France as having built a culinary empire based on a strong, universal culture of food and this encourages them to consider the recent fusion movement as an irrelevance. However, he believes this is dangerous because if tradition remains static it will lose its coherence and whither and that the cornerstone of France's culinary empire might also be its downfall (see also de Certeau *et al.* 1998). There has been increasing debate from cultural commentators too that compared to France, Britain is now the more exciting nation, more embedded into the new global markets, more creative and far more diverse in her cultures (Grant 1999, Marr 2000, Cartwright 2002). Cartwright notes how Jean Baudrillard described France as having a fetishism of the cultural heritage and concludes that many French people think that France must engage more in the outside world if it is not to become a museum culture.

It is interesting to note that certain British celebrity chefs and their approaches to food preparation have also started to gain acceptance in France. For example, the Economist (2004) published an article entitled *'France's identity crisis spreads to cooking'* and discussed how the home of gastronomy has now welcomed British celebrity chefs such as Jamie Oliver and Delia Smith. Jeffries (2002) and The Economist consider that Oliver's energy, simplicity and freshness of approach to cooking - as opposed, for example, to Reblochon's traditional, solemn and time consuming cooking techniques - has appealed to young married couples and

'housewives' who have lost the art, and also the time and inclination, for traditional regional cooking. Interestingly, The Economist considered that:

> *"...the embrace of an outsider in a land whose culinary tradition goes back to Escoffier, Careme and La Varenne touches wider concerns"*

Jeffries reports that Hachette, the French publishers of Oliver and Smith, agree that in France, as in Britain, people no longer have the time or the necessary skills to cook and that in France there exists again two cultures, the '*town and the country'* (see Mennell 1996) and it is largely only the country where the tradition of learning to cook at home remains. De Certeau *et al.*(1998) agree that much of the traditional regional recipes are too time consuming, especially for women in employment, and are often reliant upon rustic ingredients no longer easily available or affordable within increasingly urban settings. Complicated regional dishes, the decline in the oral culture of passing down recipes from mothers to daughters and the increasing urbanisation of younger generations and/or geographical distance from their mothers has resulted in many young persons in France simply not knowing how to cook such items and being increasingly reliant, if not on ready meals, on the media or local friends for information on cooking (De Certeau *et al.* 1998; Jeffries 2002).

Meanwhile, British journalists have increasingly been reporting on surveys that suggest how cooking is now more popular in Britain than France, for example among the younger generation (under 35s) (Sharp 2006). Willsher (2010) has reported on another survey of more than 3,000 persons carried out for 'Madame Le Figaro' and the BBC's food magazine, 'Olive', that showed the British cook more often, for longer and produce greater variety than their French counterparts. The survey also confirmed the increased use of ready prepared foods in France and Sharp (2006) agrees that the French were now less energetic than the British in their use of fresh produce and how the familiar rural way of life in France with successive generations coming from the same regional town is slowly disappearing along with the village market. Such developments are said to be resulting in further de-regionalisation of culinary cultures and a declining coherence of traditional regional cuisine and '*terroir'* (De Certeau *et al.* 1998).

While there was some comment among British phase 1 respondents that for example *"organic foodstuffs/farmers markets…the thing's kicked off like crazy and that is a trend to be cheered"* (1/B/23/M - a manager from Cardiff), most British respondents did not consider there to be any overall revival in cooking in Britain. British respondents tended to be largely unconvinced of any return to 'cooking from scratch' and were largely positive about the increased availability and convenience of ready prepared foods. Respondent 1/B/23/M further added: *"perhaps the likes of Jamie Oliver has encouraged cooking in the odd pockets but generally I think it is in decline"*. Such findings tend to support food writers such as Blythman (2010) who also remains sceptical of any cooking revival in Britain, and like most British phase 1 respondents, considers that France continues to understand food at a much more intrinsic level. Furthermore, at least four phase 1 French respondents felt confident that there was increasingly a return to past cooking and eating habits although this is not supported by statistics in relation to the sales of ready meals and fast food such as McDonalds.

8.6.1 La plus ca change

Considerable evidence has been presented that in many ways demonstrates greater resistance in France to the replacement of a local food system with that of a global one. However, the pervasive influence of globalisation continues and inevitably brings in to question the structuralist dominance over the sociology of food and eating, particularly prevalent in France (see Fischler 1990). It may be that the pursuit of fixed codes and structures to explain eating habits in France is undergoing a process of 'destructuration' and that domestic food practices are now evolving more rapidly in France (see Mennell 1996) Certainly if this were the case such notions of change fit more neatly within the developmental perspective that emerged in English speaking countries (see Goody 1982, Fischler 1990, Mennell *et al.* 1992). Developments in globalization and urbanization since the 1960s on French culinary cultures were noted by respondent 2/F/48 (a British chef living and working in France) who wondered whether "*bigger towns, say Paris, Toulouse, Montpellier are more going down the convenience route, more like living in the UK"* however, the majority of phase 2 respondents in France considered that access to regional cuisines, local foods and *'terroir'* would endure because*'the French people seem to like this contact with their culinary past'* (2/F/32– a project manager of nutritional policy) and because "*town dwellers love the country and*

most French I think will go back to the country one day" (2/F/4747- a GM within an international hotel group). *T*here are undoubtedly changes and some convergence of culinary cultures however as respondent 2/F/40 (a director of a research centre) pointed out:

> *"The trends which are active at the moment, in both countries, are similar to one another – trends linked to globalisation, but when we talk about such trends we must speak about forms and degrees of change"*

Respondent 2/F/36 (a civil servant within the Ministry of Health) also focused on the differences and degrees of change between both countries and considered any analysis that concluded "*it's just a lag and they* [France] *will catch up eventually"* fails to explain "*why the difference, and why the lag...and if it is a lag, maybe we can derive some interesting knowledge out of it".* In addition, Fischler (1990) ultimately questions whether a few decades of an abundant global food supply in France and other changes brought about by globalization will be able to fundamentally de-structure domestic food and eating practices that have been forged over hundreds of years.

Chapter 9 : Comparative analysis of policy debate in France and Britain

9.1 Introduction

The current rates of obesity and diet related diseases continue to attract Government attention and funding in both France and Britain. The increased availability of calories, the high levels of consumption of cholesterol, saturated fats, sugar and salt and in particular the increased consumption of meat, alcohol and convenience foods remain a major cause for concern (Schmidhuber *et al.* 2006). Of course, levels of being overweight and/or obese vary both between and within each country and significantly the average BMI in France remains much lower than that in Britain and is among the lowest in Europe (WHO 2007; IOTF 2008).Similarly, despite diets in France being higher in total fats, death rates from being 'over-nourished' such as from CHD are almost a third of those recorded in Britain (Millstone *et al.* 2008;Appelbaum 1994; Mudry 2010). However, obesity rates have been increasing in France and in particular obesity rates among French children have been rising more quickly (Belasco 2008).

9.2 Policy responses in relation to diet and health

All nine phase 2 respondents living in Britain were concerned about diet, health and rising obesity levels and agreed that government policy was required in relation to the broad area of food education, especially where children were involved. However, their main frustration was not that there was insufficient policy but that there were too many government departments, partnerships, agencies and small scale initiatives involved and these lacked coordination, strategic long term planning and funding. Respondent 2/B/43 (a professor of psychology) summed up many of these views and said:

> *"Unless you get joined up thinking and determination between education and health and maybe Defra as well to tackle it seriously then, yeah, you will go round in circles for another couple of decades"*

Three phase 2 respondents in Britain discussed the use of behavioural change type interventions and social marketing techniques as a means of realising dietary change. For example, respondent 2/B/44 (a food consultant/campaigner) said *"it has to be about positive messages …the 'don't do' approach isn't terribly productive"*. Since these interviews, the Change4Life campaign has been developed in the UK and draws on some social marketing techniques although its long term funding, governance and effectiveness is under review.

In France the focus was less exclusively about obesity and indeed there was recognition that to stigmatise such a condition was likely to be counterproductive. Instead the focus was more about the importance of nutrition and exercise to health generally and in contrast to Britain, policy was more centralised. Typically, the Ministry of Health would demand a range of agencies to collect evidence and for example, undertake longitudinal surveys, on which nutritional policy and promotion would be based. A civil servant within the Ministry of Health (2/F/36) said:

> *"... it would be unbelievable to tackle public health objectives without quantifying them – fruits, vegetables, lipids, physical exercise, alcohol, cholesterol - a whole range of specific and quantified objectives that we will continue to pursue from now until 2010"*

Whilst research was regarded as thorough and health promotion campaigns were described as strategically planned and with evidence of transparent and long term funding, over half of the phase two respondents in France questioned their efficacy. For example, it was particularly apparent that among those less involved in nutritional policy there was concern about "*the nutritionalisation of food and how the question of obesity accentuates the nutritional dimension of food"* (2/F/40 – a director of a research centre) and that a more holistic approach that celebrated the enjoyment of food was required. Respondent 2/F/38 (a director of an academy) added:

> *"...the Ministry of Health is Mr. Nutrition…cooking without feeling or emotion. They talk about calories and more of this and less of that and so on. It's a way of living that is without pleasure, neither to the eye or the mouth"*

Others highlighted what they considered to be the over-centralisation of policy and lack of regional autonomy and how those involved with health promotion and nutrition simply had to put in place policy decisions which had been made at the national level in Paris. It appeared that whilst there was some scope to establish regional priorities, these would have to be within broad national parameters and furthermore, many semi-independent regional agencies were described as frequently under political pressure to promote certain messages. There was also concern that evidence suggested there had been little change in actual consumption patterns, especially among the lower socio-economic groups. This was summed up by a respondent now living in Britain and working as a professor of nutrition who had previously lived and worked in France. She said:

> *"... the first campaign was very…nation led…loads of glossy brochures...it was criticised quite a lot for the fact that it was really targeted at middle class people, really literate people which is why the PNNS 2 is more looking at lower income groups where there is more obesity"* (2/B/46)

Four phase 2 respondents living in France discussed that rather than nutritional policy alone, food remained a political issue and they described broad policy areas that had or could be further acted upon. These included laws to control the publicity and promotion of foodstuffs, laws to restrict food vending machines in schools, continued support for the *'semaine du gout'* and respondent 2/F/48 (a British chef in France) explained how the government had introduced the 35 hour working week partly to protect people from the erosion of time spent *'en famille'* including time spent cooking and eating together.

9.3 Cooking and its significance to food policy

In Britain, but increasingly in France too, there has been an increase in consumption of foods that demand little cooking in the home and these are frequently 'energy dense foods' (EDFs). Given such changes and the corresponding impact on rates of obesity and diet related disease, it has been shown that many writers and interview respondents consider that the ability to cook along with an increased knowledge about food generally could be one of the factors that could help people make more informed choices from a wider variety of foods about what to eat which may include healthier choices. Phase 2 respondents stressed how the ability to cook was essential for a healthy diet and considered that cooking skills were an important influence on domestic cooking practices and in turn how any diminution of such skills could have a negative impact on diet and health. This research has shown that while the French continue to exhibit higher levels of confidence in relation to cooking than the British, both countries have expressed concern about whether children are now growing up equipped with the necessary skills to cook and make educated choices about what to eat.. Of course, providing people with the skills to cook does not necessarily ensure people go on and cook, but it has also been demonstrated that confidence to cook tends to influence the extent to which people find cooking to be an effort and this in turn can influence their ultimate cooking practices (Short 2002).

Before going on to consider the policy options, it is necessary to re-consider the evidence in relation to how people have learnt about food and cooking so as to focus on what methods of learning might be effective in the future.

9.4 Learning to cook

People learn about cooking in a variety of ways although the main source of cooking knowledge in France and Britain appears to be the family and especially the mother (HEA 1998, Caraher *et al.* 1999, Seb/BVA 2003; NFM 2001). However, factors such as age, gender, class, income and ethnicity have been seen to influence how an individual learns about cooking. For example, women in both countries claimed not to have explicitly learnt to cook from their mothers but nonetheless had 'picked things up' from them and a French housewife and mother (1/F/8/F) summed this up as follows: "*I did not help much. However I watched and that taught me and then it's true that I learned by doing it myself".* Phase 1 male respondents in France and Britain appear to have helped less in the familial kitchen and whilst they had seen their mothers cooking they had not been encouraged to learn from them. Men were more likely to have learnt how to cook from their spouses or girlfriends as confirmed by four British respondents and three French respondents respectively. Other familial sources of learning included grandparents, sisters and one woman had learnt some specialities from her husband. Fourteen phase 1 respondents from France and Britain specifically mentioned learning to cook from friends and 11 were male (4 British and 7 French) who were typically seeking guidance from flat mates in their quest to live independent of their parents such as when embarking in work or university study away from home.

However, from those interviewed in phase 1, the most significant approach to learning how to cook, especially among both French and British males on leaving the parental home appeared to be experientially although this was often mixed with other methods. For example two professional males living in London explained that they learnt via *"trial and error"* when he *"went to live in a flat"* (1/B/16/M) and "*I knew how to cook an egg and heat up a can of beans...I picked up other stuff from them* [male flat mates] *like they use to cook rice" (*1/B/19/M). A single French professional female respondent also explained how she had learnt experientially and said: "*I didn't really learn…there are things that one does naturally and then little by little"* (1/F/5/F). This tends to support

earlier findings that showed for example 30% of the women in France aged over 50 that were questioned by Seb/BVA (2003) claimed to have neither primarily learnt to cook from their mothers nor grandmothers and had largely either taught themselves or learnt from books and other media. A further 35% of their sample aged 25 to 34 also considered that the family was not their primary source of learning cooking skills and knowledge and on both sides of the Channel it has been suggested that the inter-generational methods of passing on cooking skills is increasingly under pressure due principally to mothers now spending less time at home cooking. Significantly, Seb/BVA (2003) found that those in France most likely to be taught cooking at home at a young age were appreciably more likely to 'agree' that they are confident with cooking and to describe themselves as competent cooks (see also Oakley 1974 and 1990; Murcott 1998a; NFM 2001).

With the inter-generational method of passing on cooking skills apparently in decline, school might appear to be ideally situated to ensure relevant food and cooking skills get learnt by future generations. However, 'home economics', including aspects of cooking has not been part of the national curriculum in France since the 1960s and was removed from the national curriculum in England in 1994 although has since appeared in various guises for boys and girls as an optional technology subject. However, while all the British female phase 1 respondents discussed having undertaken 'domestic science/home economics' at school, they considered it of little use and typical responses came from a district nurse in London who said: *"We had domestic science but I can't remember what we did. It doesn't really stand out in my memory"* (1/B/20/F) and a secretary in Cardiff added: "*yes I got tips from school as I vaguely remember...but more from my mum than school"* (1/B/22/F). No French respondent interviewed had explicitly studied cooking at school although diet and nutrition had partly been addressed in science.

Another source of learning how to cook is via the media and for example, The NFM (2001) found cookery books and other printed media remained the most popular means of accessing recipes. Data from phase 1 also found such sources to be popular with 25 persons making some reference to recipes either in books, magazines, newspapers or food packets and such respondents were fairly evenly spread across Britain and France and also across gender. Approximately half the female respondents in both countries

also discussed cutting out and keeping of recipes from various sources although their ultimate usage appeared limited. Interestingly the French respondents were much more likely to say they used the printed media to learn how to cook as opposed to simply accessing recipes such as via *"a monthly magazine called 'Cuisine Actuelle"* (1/F/10/M – a male teacher and father) and *"Golden Fingers... in 10 volumes"* (1/F/5/F – a single female teacher). Of course, such sources of information tend to be more significant for higher social classes (Caraher *et al.* 1998b; HEA 1998).

As regards the media such as TV cookery programmes and celebrity chef shows, the British sample was far more vociferous about these and about 12 British and just 4 French respondents discussed them. The French were altogether less enthusiastic about them, regarding them as little more than 'day time TV' designed principally for the housebound. Of the 12 British respondents, the six males were most likely to comment that the programmes were interesting but they too admitted to rarely being influenced by them. Of the 6 British females, half said they might try a recipe from a programme, especially for special occasions. The use of the internet for cookery information at the time of this research was insignificant.

9.5 The role of schools in delivering effective food policy

All phase 2 respondents living in Britain considered the government now had an important role to play in directing policy in relation to cooking, diet and culinary cultures generally. Furthermore, given the power of the modern food industry, it was felt the state had to counter such influences and publicly funded schools were regarded as the most appropriate conduit for delivering such messages. Children attended school daily, learnt about food, often ate at school and schools were trusted and perceived as independent of commercial influence and thus ideally located to deliver a much needed national strategy. Although mindful that such interventions might be interpreted as creating a 'nanny state' respondents believed the situation to be sufficiently dire that such action could be defended in the case of school children. In addition, given the scale of the problem, it was felt that schools had a captive audience and "*children are malleable and I do think you can make a difference in terms of shaping lifestyle habits"* (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology).

Although fewer French respondents discussed the need for food policy to be developed and delivered at school, there was a growing realisation that not only were cooking skills in decline and in need of protection but that the food industry was increasingly making inroads into the school environment and that policy had at least been enacted to ban 'unsuitable' vending machines. The need for further action such as to curb the growth of large private food service companies within the school meals service was also discussed by two phase 2 respondents living in France and engaged with the implementation of nutritional policy at the local level.

9.6 The need to develop cooking skills at school

Parents in Britain appear increasingly concerned about the lack of cooking in schools and fearful that as a result, children will be less able to cook for themselves and more reliant on highly processed foods (MORI, 1993; OPCS, 1995; Stitt *et al.* 1996; NFM 2001). The HEA Survey (1998) found that between 95% and 99.2% of men and women respectively considered it important to teach both girls and boys at school how to cook and such findings have been mirrored in previous surveys (MORI, 1993; OPCS, 1995). Such sentiments were echoed by all but one of the 9 phase 2 respondents living in Britain who considered that the compulsory re-introduction of the teaching of cooking in schools should be a priority of government policy. Respondents were concerned that if there was now a generation of parents who themselves had not been taught cookery then the inter-generational transfer of cooking skills could not be relied upon. Concerns about children's limited knowledge about food and lack of cooking skills in Britain has also attracted media attention[135] and phase 2 respondents agreed that many children were no longer exposed to 'healthier'/raw foods and that the best way of increasing exposure would be via the teaching of cooking skills as part of an adequately funded national policy. Many phase 2 respondents living in Britain went further and tended to agree with Lang *et al.* (2001) and considered knowledge about food and cooking to be an essential life skill and this was summed up by a community health manager who said:

[135] For example, via the TV programme, Jamie Oliver's School Dinners

> *"Of course children should come out of school and be actually capable of catering for themselves and others. They should know all about cooking, they should know where food comes from; they should be able to make food choices based on sound knowledge. It should be a basic skill, a life skill…it should be so fundamental that I would see that as being integrated throughout the whole of the educational system"* (2/B/42)

Two phase 2 respondents living in Britain did question whether there was any correlation between teaching cooking skills and the changing of children's eating habits so that they might consume healthier diets. However, they did agree that when such a policy of teaching children to cook was combined with other educational initiatives in relation to food then this was more likely to influence them "*into wanting to eat good food more"* (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology). Certainly since the establishment of the School Food Trust (SFT) in Britain there has been some effort to improve food skills through food education generally including a network of cooking clubs in schools although these tend to be both voluntary and rather piecemeal.

Evidence from this research suggests that the French are also beginning to be concerned with a perceived lack of actual cooking skills among the young. For example, Seb / BVA (2003) found that 81% of the French persons they interviewed considered that it would be beneficial if future generations were taught cooking at school and there is also wider media and policy discussion of the value of teaching cooking skills at school (INPES 2004). Such concerns were discussed by at least four of the phase 2 respondents living in France. For example, a researcher & sociologist agreed that "*it would probably be very good idea for both sexes"* (2/F/39) to learn about food and cooking. There was also broad agreement that there was currently too much focus on the 'nutritionalisation' of food and that *"the idea of developing food education would be preferable to nutritional education" (*2/F/40 – a director of a research centre). It was felt that this would not only help youngsters develop an appreciation of food but as in Britain, also help provide them with the skills necessary to make informed decisions about the foods they might buy.

9.7 School meal policy

Phase 2 respondents living in Britain tended to agree that government policy in relation to effective food education in Britain had to be more than either telling people what to eat or simply teaching cooking skills in isolation and that a 'whole school approach' was needed. Respondents discussed the importance of re-establishing minimum standards in relation to school meals although they were aware of the difficulties in establishing such standards as have been developed by the SFT. At least four respondents discussed how the provision of school meals needed to be about more than simply 'healthier meals'. In particular, respondents considered school lunch times could be part of children's socialisation and also used to encourage social interaction where children were not only offered wholesome foods but learnt about the social aspects of eating together. A community health manager said:

> *"Sitting down and eating…and I think building a social value to eating, inculcates eating as a social activity and therefore something desirable"* (2/B/42)

It was felt that the eating environment including the amount of time available to sit down to eat a non-snack meal needed policy guidelines as currently children often spent longer queuing for foods than they spent standing up eating a sandwich from a plastic carton. Respondents discussed the need for teaching staff and the entire school population to value lunch breaks and be able to sit together in a comfortable room and enjoy *"a proper meal at lunchtime"* (2/B/33 - a university professor). However, three respondents also discussed whether simply providing freshly cooked foods in a pleasant dining environment would actually encourage children to eat such foods if they had never come across them at home and also if they faced peer group pressure not to each such foods. Clearly any policy development would need to create a culture whereby students felt supported to try new foods and would require a mix of interventions. It was suggested that food demonstrations, tastings, enlisting parental support and reward systems – many of which have been implemented in the 'FoodDudes' initiative now operating in Ireland - could beneficially be developed into *"a combined package which is pretty strong in terms of* [behavioural] *shift"* (2/B/43 – a professor of psychology). Interestingly, no respondent living in Britain discussed limiting choice, banning packed lunches brought from home, disallowing children from leaving

the premises at lunch time or making school meals free to all despite such policy direction having been suggested by some of those in the field in France.

Unlike in Britain, the school meal policy in France was considered to have little changed since the 1960s and debate centred on protecting the status quo. The midday meal at school continues to be seen as an important reflection of the traditional French model of three square meals a day, of which the midday meal remains a significant part. The biggest concern was *"to keep the powerful food companies out of the schools"* (2/F/32 – a project manager of nutritional policy) as it was felt that the private sector would want to promote foods that were more profitable rather than the most nutritionally balanced and one respondent cited what had happened to school meals in Britain once the service had been privatised. Another respondent explained how there had been considerable lobbying of elected representatives responsible for decision making in this area regarding the benefits of a self managed and operated school meal service. Whilst it was agreed that there was local and regional variation regarding the standard of meals, strategically planned health education committees working at *a 'department'* or regional level were charged with the responsibility for improving the quality of school meals. However, unlike in Britain there was less discussion of the need to train school meal cooks in cooking skills but rather that training workshops, toolkits and also dieticians were made available to help guide school cooks to implement current nutritional priorities.

More than half the phase 2 respondents living in France commented upon the important teaching role of school meals and discussed how it was important to develop children's sense of taste and appreciation for well prepared and presented, nutritionally balanced meals. The social aspect of eating with others was again positively commented upon and reflects a key priority of meal patterns in France generally. For example a civil servant within the Ministry of Health summed this up by saying:

> *"...not only the nutritional quality but the atmosphere and ambiance are important...the chance of eating together in groups, of warmth and conviviality and eating around a table to talk"* (2/F/36)

Unlike in Britain, there was concern among respondents in France whether choice of foods at lunch time for school children was appropriate. Respondents were anxious that such freedoms might enable the selection of nutritionally inferior foods and in particular, encourage a snacking culture. It has to be remembered that most respondents regarded snacking as the most serious threat to the traditional French meal model which they believed has helped protect the French population against the tide of rising obesity levels. Careful control and timing of the mid morning snacks and a set daily menu were some of the policy priorities discussed by respondents with expert knowledge in the area, for example 2/F/30 (a senior health promotion officer), 2/F/31(a director of regional nutritional policy), 2/F/32 (a project manager of nutritional policy) & 2/F/36 (a civil servant within Ministry of Health). Respondent 2/F/32 also discussed how schools were being encouraged to develop a *"school meals policy"* which prioritised the use of seasonal and local fruit and vegetables so as not only to minimise transportation and support local producers but also to educate children about the taste and quality benefits of seasonal foods and the availability of local foods. There was also concern that rather than offering under ripe and/or exotic fruit which children had found unappealing and/or *"culturally unacceptable",* that only fully ripe fruit should be available. He added:

> *"Schools are being asked to visit suppliers at least once a year, privilege local produce, respect the 'terroir' and consider buying a slightly inferior quality of fruit and vegetables because while their appearance might be less perfect, the eating quality is often better"*

Of course in Britain under the School Fruit and Vegetable scheme introduced in 2004, all four to six year old children in LEA maintained infant, primary and special schools have been entitled to a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day although evidence suggests that such a scheme has had little long term impact on increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in Britain (Schagen *et al.* 2005). More recently the Agriculture Council of Ministers has agreed on an EU-wide scheme to provide free fruit and vegetables to school children in an effort to encourage good eating habits throughout life and reduce the incidence of obesity[136].

[136] The 'EU School Fruit Scheme' was implemented in the school year 2009/2010 and the Commission is providing €90 million per year for the scheme. However, governments have the choice of whether to participate or not and the programmes have to be co-financed on a 50/50 basis in the case of both the UK and France. Such money cannot be

9.8 Other broad policy interventions

At least five phase 2 respondents in Britain enthusiastically discussed the need to more broadly re-connect children with the food chain and stimulate interest in food more generally. For example, respondents were in favour of teaching children in school about how and where food grows, visiting farms and getting children involved in growing food at school. Respondents also discussed how children could be taught about how food was transported and processed and the impact on the environment of such actions. They could also be taught how it could be transformed by domestic cooking which could be undertaken at school or as a community health manager explained: *"do the magic on it and turn it into something that you can actually eat and enjoy"* (2/B/42). However a professor of psychology (2/B/43) considered that while it might be a good idea to get children more involved with cooking and the food chain generally was less certain whether such a relationship with food would necessarily change children's eating behaviour and, for example get them eating more fresh fruit and vegetables. He said of such educational initiatives:

> *"All of this is great but one has to be suitably cautious in understanding those relationships and not expect too much out of an educational programme on how food is produced or even cookery skills"*

Respondents tended to agree that no single initiative aimed at fostering a more positive relationship to food and encouraging a healthier diet would be successful. However, at least three respondents (2/B/45 – a food and school meal consultant, 2/B/43 – a professor of psychology, and 2/B/35 - a director of an academy) mentioned how focusing on children in schools was a good starting point because children there were a "*captive audience"* where the State's resources should be strategically targeted. They discussed how positive messages could powerfully and affordably be delivered in competition to the messages promoted via the large advertising budgets of the food industry.

There was also discussion in Britain of the role of charities, private industry and community action groups in teaching people about food. Most were focused at children and young persons and included *'Adopt a School', 'Feast', 'Junior Chef's Academy'*,

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used to replace existing national financing of similar schemes and is aimed at encouraging additional activities. The scheme is due to be evaluated in 2012 (Europa 2010).

and *'The Hoxton Apprentice'* scheme. These were well established and respected however their budgets were inevitably limited, there was often reliance on volunteers, goodwill, philanthropy and/or the enthusiasm of one or two key individuals and the numbers of children engaged remained limited and often self selecting. As such, their effectiveness in bringing about whole scale change in relation to domestic food practices and diets remained questionable.

Among phase 2 respondents in France, there was little discussion of any broader educational debate and/or any charitable or community involvement in such areas. However, the Academy of Culinary Arts of France, (ACdF) was similarly involved in the placement of chefs from industry in schools as their sister Academy in Britain (ACA) did via their 'Adopt a School Programme.' In France however, many more schools were involved but this took place over just one week –the *'semaine du gout'.* This week of taste remains the principle initiative aimed at broadly celebrating and promoting food in France, particularly French food and *'terroir'*, and *"promotes knowledge, consciousness raising and pleasure in relation to food" (*2/F/37 - a director of national institute). It was positively acknowledged by nearly all phase 2 respondents in French and although established by government in association with the'French Institute of Taste', relied on funding from the food industry as well as charitable donations. Much of the necessary funding had initially been provided largely without strings from what was described as the relatively benevolent CIDIL (the dairy industry…the *Centre Inter-professional de documentation de l'industrie laitiere*) and OCHA (*Observatiore cniel des habitudes alimentaires*). However there was increasing concern that for example the French sugar industry was now playing a more significant role in the *'semaine'* and it was noted that it wanted to use the occasion to promote sugary food products. Respondent 2/F/37 (a director of national institute) concluded that as the initiative had grown so it had lost its independence and become more commercialised. As a result, the Institute of Taste now had little involvement with the *'semaine'* and the Institute was now more involved with the commercial provision of 'taste classes' for industry and also children which were sometimes delivered in schools and "*sometimes the projects that we have, for example to visit certain municipal schools are funded by the municipality but we are not subsidised by them" (*2/F/37 - a director of national institute). It expired that such classes, whilst taking a broad approach to food education were far from national in their scale of delivery and its long term development remained uncertain.

Chapter 10 : Conclusion and evaluation

10.1 Introduction

This thesis set out to explore the policy debate surrounding the alleged decline in cooking skills within contemporary society and to evaluate the factors influencing the extent of both change and continuity in relation to domestic food practices in France and Britain. A powerful and highly concentrated global food industry has often been blamed for driving change and moulding the public into passive consumers of energy dense convenience foods which demand little skill to prepare. However, as this research has shown, domestic food practices are also deeply embedded in culture, are often profoundly meaningful and resistant to change and such cultural attitudes have a significant impact on the application of cooking skills and food choice. However, while many aspects of culture are deeply engrained and slow to change, culture remains a fluid construct, influenced by a myriad of factors operating in the wider environment. Similarly culinary cultures are rarely static and this research aimed to compare the extent to which structural and cultural changes have been accepted, resisted or rejected in Britain and France. In particular, it sought to establish the pace, manner and rhythm of any transition in their respective culinary cultures and the significance of any such changes, to health, everyday life and policy formation. Clearly, food policy which wishes to influence food choice aimed at improving public health needs to consider domestic food practices within a wider economic, social and cultural context and this cross-cultural comparative research promoted the investigation of similarities, differences and explanations within and between two countries and has helped to develop a deeper understanding of social reality that could be used to help inform policy debate and development.

10.2 Changes in people's diets and domestic food practices

Like many developed countries, there has been unprecedented change in relation to food supply and energy availability in France and Britain and this has been accompanied by an increase in obesity levels and other diet related diseases. It has been noted that if consumers in either country are unable or unwilling to cook s/he becomes increasingly reliant on convenience and ready prepared foods which are frequently higher in calories however, while the French on average eat a diet

containing more meat and saturated fat than Britons, their average BMI remains considerably lower, as does their rate of mortality from CHD – the 'French paradox'. However in recent years there has been some increasing convergence of diet and food practices in France and Britain.

With rising levels of obesity and diet related illness in Britain since the 1980s there has been recognition from government and various agencies that policy needs to promote the consumption of a healthier diet (and lifestyle). This has been supported by a range of national and local initiatives by NGOs, professional groups and charities and between 2006 and 2009 some decline in those recorded as overweight and obese has been recorded[137]. In France, concerns about obesity arose later, around the 1990s, and were accompanied by research, policy reform and educational campaigns coordinated by the Ministry of Health with the aim of modifying food consumption, increasing physical activity levels and reducing the prevalence of overweight and obesity[138].

In relation to domestic food practices, it has been noted that food continues to be transformed in the home in to culturally appropriate meals. However the aim of this research was to examine changes over time to the cooking skills required for such transformational activities, the factors influencing change and whether such changes amounted to a transition in culinary cultures. Certainly the weekly rota of slow cooked meals that respondents in both countries discussed their mothers fitted in around other domestic duties appeared to have all but disappeared. While the 'proper' and structured meal remained popular there was undoubtedly a trend towards greater simplicity and greater substitution of more processed and convenience foods. Furthermore, the total number of meals prepared in the home had declined as a result of more meals being eaten away from home and in addition, domestic kitchen technology had also reduced the amount of time spent on food preparation activities.

[137] In the UK between 2006 and 2009 there has been an approximate 2 percentage point decline in the number of people classified as obese and a 1 percentage point decline in those classified as overweight (Health Survey for England 2009).

[138] No further survey on rates of obesity has been carried out in France since 2006/2007.

French respondents from both phases of this research described how ready prepared crudités or charcuterie might be served as a starter, pan fried fish fillets or meat and potatoes or salad served as the main, followed by cheese and/or fruit and/or a branded dairy dessert were typical. While it remained more common in France for respondents to express pride in the fact that the greater part of the meal would be cooked from scratch, increasingly in Britain it was more likely that the main food item needed to be 'oven ready' such as lasagne or breaded fish although this might be accompanied with fresh vegetables and potatoes. Unlike in France, some 'phase 1' British respondents considered that a 'takeaway' meal offered a similar meal experience to a home cooked meal and afforded a welcome break from the mundane chore of cooking. Starters in Britain remain largely reserved for special occasions and while in the past, desserts might have been home prepared, as in France, individual yoghurt pots and the like were now more prevalent. While people in both Britain and France now chose to cook with a mix of raw/fresh foods and pre-prepared &/or convenience foods fairly interchangeably, it was apparent that more French respondents and to a greater extent, continued to rely on raw ingredients from which to more regularly prepare a meal. Perhaps as a result they appeared to have retained more confidence in relation to cooking, demonstrated greater willingness to cook and were more prepared to experiment or be inspired by the offer of foods available in shops. The British respondents demonstrated a greater range of confidence levels in relation to the application of cooking skills and this appeared to be an important influence on the willingness and frequency with which they cooked from scratch. While some were prepared to experiment and cook new dishes, the majority were more inclined to rely on 'tried and tested' recipes, if indeed they were required.

10.3 Factors driving change in relation to domestic food practices

10.3.1 Work, domestic life and change

In the past, in both France and Britain, women have often had sole responsibility for food provisioning in the home and nearly all phase 1 respondents described how their fathers only rarely cooked and food preparation was the responsibility of the mother. However over the last fifty years there has been a significant and similar

increase in the number of women in employment in both countries and women interviewed for this research reported now having less time and/or inclination to cook. In contrast, among the phase 1 men being interviewed, it was evident that they were cooking more now than men had in the past however there was considerable variation within each country and in addition, their contribution to the everyday cooking for the family was at times difficult to determine. The literature suggests that their contribution is less significant than their reported enthusiasm for occasional and special meals prepared during their leisure time. Among the men interviewed and living alone or sharing accommodation with non family members it was evident that cooking took place on a more regular basis although the extent that this might continue into later life is not known. This research has also shown that with an increase in such household types along with rising divorce rates, re-marriage and new living arrangements, which often included children from previous marriages/relationships living with fathers on an occasional basis, had resulted in many such men from phase 1 in both France and Britain taking greater responsibility for cooking on a regular basis.

The review of literature indicated that increasingly urban lifestyles and the need to travel further to work has also resulted in less time in the home to prepare meals from scratch and further driven demand for the commercial provision of midday meals to be eaten away from home. Interestingly though, both primary and secondary data suggested that the French remain more inclined to return home for the midday meal than the British although there was considerable variation within and between the two countries. Complex living patterns among phase 1 respondents in both countries, including increased engagement in a range of social and leisure activities, also often required people to spend further time away from home and seek faster and more convenient meal solutions.

10.3.2 The food industry

Such modern lifestyles have been accompanied by considerable growth and sophistication of a global food industry. The transformation of raw food commodities into ever more processed and marketed convenience food products proved not only

highly profitable but literature suggests also popular among many consumers on both sides of the Channel. While phase 2 respondents in Britain were more inclined to consider that the decline in home cooking was being driven by an aggressive food industry, respondents in France were more likely to consider the industry's growth to be due to their ability to exploit market opportunities and satisfy consumer demand. In comparison to the French, it appears from this research that the British generally buy more ready meals, spend less time cooking and are more prepared to accept individualised eating habits made easier by the availability of foods that can simply be re-heated albeit with considerable variation within each country.

Respondents in both countries welcomed the increased food offer and now buy the majority of their food from supermarkets which clearly play a key role in circumscribing their choices. However, there was greater acceptance of the 'weekly supermarket shop' in Britain and evidence suggests that despite the closure of many independent shops, more of the French respondents remained predisposed to visit specialist food shops and street markets for at least some of their shopping. Furthermore, although the overall structure of the industry is similar in both countries, this research has shown that French supermarkets have to satisfy continued demand for local and regional foods unlike British supermarkets where even the country of origin appears rarely important.

In France, eating away from home at midday among workers is particularly significant, often bolstered by works canteens or luncheon vouchers. French respondents from phase 1 & 2 described how traditionally structured meal patterns remained popular in canteens and it was evident that restaurants also benefitted from the voucher system and might offer a *'formule rapide'* with a choice of two or three courses. Since the advent of the 35 hour working week in France, lunch breaks tended to be shorter and afforded less time to return home at midday and evidence suggests this has also been accompanied by a growth in sandwich shops and fast food outlets where luncheon vouchers are more likely to cover the entire cost of a midday meal. In contrast, lunch breaks appear much less ritualised for many Britons and British phase 1 respondents who worked outside the home were

more likely to describe bringing in a sandwich or salad from home which was frequently consumed at their desk as they were too busy to stop for lunch.

Secondary sources indicated that eating in commercial establishments as part of a leisure activity was increasingly popular in both countries. However,overall the French phase 1 respondents described eating out more often that their British counterparts, were more likely to be in larger social groups, tended to spend more per head and were more likely to visit restaurants serving French cuisine. Such findings contrast with statistics that suggest that on average the British eat out more oftenthan the French but confirms that less money is spent on each occasion and that this might be as a result of an increase in more 'utilitarian' eating out styles for many in Britain. No phase 1 British respondents discussed eating in restaurants serving British cuisine, other than branded carveries and ethnic styled restaurants were universally popular, such as those purporting to offer Indian or Chinese food. Such foods were often also bought at takeaway establishments and eaten at home, a concept little known in France, other than the more traditional '*traiteur'* type shops. American style fast food outlets are clearly popular in both countries among certain individuals and while the majority of phase 1 respondents said they used them rarely, on average, they were more visited among the British respondents.

10.4 Change and continuity in relation to meal patterns

Meal patterns in France appeared more resistant to change and the French food model of three highly structured meals per day served in the company of others remain an integral part of everyday life for many French citizens and were deeply rooted in French culture. While writers such as Poulain (2002) suggests there to be some 'destructuration' of the French model, little other evidence has been found that the daily rhythm and communal nature of meals served at set times to be in decline, even among adolescents (Michaud *et al.* 2000). All but one of the phase 1 French respondents discussed how they continue to routinely eat structured meals although accepted that depending on the occasion, might 'skip' the starter and/or cheese course. Phase 2 respondents living in France confirmed such simplification but considered 'destructuration' to be limited and that the eating of set meals, rather

than snacking, remained central and of symbolic significance. While such structured meals may now contain more processed foods, the main item remains likely to have been cooked from scratch albeit simpler and quicker than in the past. While phase 1 French respondents described how rice, pasta and couscous offered convenience and had been enthusiastically welcomed in to their homes, many classic French meat and fish dishes, prepared from fresh ingredients, remained popular and as noted, the French still tend to *"fly the flag"* in relation to meals prepared and eaten. Even when due to work commitments the midday meal is eaten away from home[139] it remains a vital part of the day and phase 1 & 2 respondents in France described how it is often eagerly anticipated and discussed among many French persons. The eating of food at midday, or indeed at any time, remains a focal and social activity that people prefer not to have rushed or interrupted and while the overall amount of time spent cooking has declined, the amount of time spent eating has little changed although there is of course, considerable variation among individuals and household types.

In Britain, while the pattern of three meals a day of which one was considered to be the main meal remains widely recognized, it has been less resistant to change and for example, phase 1 British respondents confirmed how the midday meal at work is frequently a "*re-fuelling"* occasion often undertaken whilst "*on the go"* (1/B/23/M). Everyday meals in Britain have usually contained fewer courses than in France but on average, the timing, frequency and content of meals has changed far greater than in France. The 'proper meal' of meat and two veg. remained popular but along with classic British dishes, were now more likely to be reserved for special occasions. Many Britons have been more prepared to accept foreign influences and an eclectic mix of foods and taste from which has developed a kind of cuisine *'sans frontiers'* (see Blanc 2002, Panayi 2007, 2008) or *'global cuisine'* (Defra 2008). However such cooking styles appear to offer little more than a quick and easy means of enlivening often plain British food and represents little change in what has been regarded as the fundamental culinary markers of British food culture where food is more frequently about necessity, saving time and money rather than pleasure (see for example James 1997). British culinary cultures appear to have

[139] However, 68% of midday meals in France are still eaten at home and 60% of those surveyed ate three or more courses (INPES 2004).

largely been less able to resist the promotion of highly processed foods, 'ethnic' style meals and the possibility of individualised mealtimes and solitary snacking and this is particularly evident among many British teenagers and those in their early twenties.

10.5 The significance of culinary cultures

Many people in Britain and France have been seen to have strong cultural attachment to certain foods and eating habits, however no phase 1 British respondent considered Britain now possessed any identifiable national cuisine or culinary culture although 10 phase 1 British respondents identified France as having one. Britain has been described as losing its indigenous culinary culture as early as the mid eighteenth century and certainly by the third quarter of the nineteenth century, any sense of regional diets and local traditions appear to have grown remote *(*Driver 1983; Chaney 2000; Lane 2010). Like Postgate (1966), phase 2 respondents in Britain, discussed the lack of any national or regional cuisines and were indeed unsure whether Britain had ever had a strong culinary culture. Britain's colonial history, its industrial revolution and openness to both foreign trade and immigration along with its alleged lack or neglect of any culinary anchor have all contributed to the faster evolution of Britain's culinary cultures towards a more homogenous and industrialised food system often bereft of regional differences.

In contrast, all phase 1 French respondents discussed their pride and confidence in a clearly defined French cuisine and its continuation. French respondents from both phases enthusiastically described how regionalism in food and cooking had in many aspects survived and how French cuisine was part of what made them different and confirmed a sense of identity and belonging to a distinctive national identity in an increasingly globalised world. Regional culinary specialities have been promoted as popular symbols of a shared community and despite growing urbanisation, terms like '*terroir'* and contact with their ancestral '*territoire'* remain meaningful for many French persons, if only to bring back some affordable, authentic and local specialities when visiting the countryside to share with friends on their return to town as discussed by some phase 2 respondents. Unlike in Britain, conversation of which region produces the best of a particular type of food remains a popular and highly

charged topic of conversation in France even when such a product might have been bought at a large supermarket. No British respondents discussed the 'Protected Designation of Origin' status of any British foods and while the increase in 'farmers markets' in Britain might suggest an increasing interest in local foods, such markets are less significant in comparison to markets in France which sell local and non-local foods to a larger number of more socio-economically diverse people.

For a significantly large number of French persons, the persistent and positive re-enactment and ritualisation of time-honoured behaviour patterns around food, its preparation and consumption continues to underpin social events. It frequently plays a crucial role in confirming a sense of cultural identity and nationhood and often acts as a bulwark against the globalising tendencies within the contemporary food system. To stray from the dominant norms of behaviour risks being cast as an 'outsider', and phase 1 French respondents expressed confidence that while the young might experiment with counter cultural tendencies, such as American fast food, with maturity they would discover the pleasures of traditional French cooking and eating habits and return to the fold[140]. The articulation of a powerful culinary discourse has indeed been successfully circulated over many centuries and continues to underpin local culinary traditions which are celebrated by many throughout modern France. Britons generally appear more predisposed to accept their industrial heritage and acknowledge their colonial history of imported spices, rich mixtures and multi-cultural society and few local culinary traditions have received the support necessary to withstand the homogenising impact of a global and industrialised food system.

10.6 Is there a transition in culinary cultures?

Societal, technical and ideological change has continued to influence the development of culinary cultures in many countries including France and Britain. In particular, since the nineteen sixties a sophisticated and increasingly global food industry has promoted an increased variety of foodstuffs which to a greater or lesser

[140] It was in France, of course, where a peasant farmer (Mon. Bové) was heralded as a national hero for his respect of French soil and defence of French cooking in the face of culinary imperialism and *'malbouffe'* ('bad food').

extent have infiltrated people's domestic food practices on both sides of the Channel. Changing work patterns and family structures, perceived lack of time and increased disposable income have contributed to the popularity of such food products, stimulated huge growth in the eating out market and promoted a corresponding decline in the amount of time spent cooking in the home. Large multinational corporations exploit economies of scale and whether it is McDonalds, Camembert or Cheddar cheese, products are increasingly industrialised, standardised, delocalised and marketed to global consumers. The food environment most citizens in France and Britain now find themselves is fundamentally different than it was just twenty years ago and the pace and scale of such structural changes has been shown to be accelerating. As such, it can be concluded that there have been transitions in food supply which have influenced culinary cultures although the manner in the way they have been adopted and adapted requires further consideration.

In addition to many of the powerful global influences, attitudes, knowledge and the experiences people bring to domestic food practices also shape the development of their culinary cultures. Food, cooking and eating is symbolically important to many French people's cultural identity and sense of nationhood and compared to Britain, such citizens appear to have radically different "*underlying attitudes towards the enjoyment of eating and its place in social life"* (Pettinger *et al.* 2004: 307) which is further underpinned via the circulation of an often powerful culinary discourse. In Britain, all respondents described a weaker indigenous culinary culture which has been more open to an increasingly global and industrial food supply. The combined impact of the 'Enclosure Acts', the industrial revolution, the repeal of the 'Corn Laws' and subsequent growth of imported foodstuffs ensured that large numbers of nineteenth century factory workers had access to processed foods that could be quickly prepared on limited cooking facilities or buy takeaway foods from street vendors. Unlike in France, British domestic food practices were massively disrupted at this time and such changes have been blamed as part of the reason Britain has been more susceptible to industrially produced foodstuffs and even "*junk food than others"* (Lawrence 2008*:* 174). Even among Britain's growing middle classes at this time, the circulation of any culinary discourse received little support from powerful elites and that which was in circulation tended to revolve around the notion that food

should be plain, simple and economical. Whereas in France, cuisine was transferred from the kitchen into the broader cultural arena, the writings of women such as Eliza Acton preached a joy-less and repressive approach to food, cooking and domesticity rooted in Britain's Cromwellian protestant culture. With the lack of any strong culinary anchor, Britain has also been seen to be more open to multi-cultural influences upon its food and cooking practices. However, despite some celebration of a fusion or global cuisine, such developments represent little change in the underlying culinary markers of British culinary culture of finding a means to quickly and effortlessly enliven plain British food. The popularity of industrially prepared, readymade, 'ethnic' meals, takeaways and 'stir in sauces' have, for many people, further obfuscated the need to cook in the home.

The existence of culinary cultures in Britain would appear to have always been less significant than in France and while they have continued to evolve in both countries, France has largely continued to '*fly the flag'.* While there are undoubtedly major differences and changes to domestic food practices in both countries, France's overall culinary culture is deep rooted and more resistant to change and continues to act as a bulwark against globalising tendencies within the food system. As such, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that there has been a fundamental change or transition in France's culinary cultures although the power of such global and structural factors now present in the food supply sector should not be underestimated. In relation to Britain, many of the current attitudes to food and cooking, although appearing to be very different from those in France, also appear rooted in Britain's own particular historical past. As such it might be concluded that there has been no sudden departure from the fundamental markers of its culinary culture and its acceptance of industrialized, globalised and processed foods merely represents an on-going trend. However, in the last twenty years, technological developments in the food industry have greatly accelerated, marketing has become increasingly aggressive and in the face of little significant and collective attachment to distinctive national or regional culinary cultures, there has been considerably less protection or resistance to such influences and as such, it is concluded that unlike in France, there has been recent, fundamental shifts or transitions to Britain's culinary cultures.

10.7 The development of an explanatory framework

It has been suggested that there is a fundamental divide in relation to behaviour to food between Anglo-Saxon nations such as Britain and the US at one end of an axis and at the other extreme is located France and other European Mediterranean countries (see Stearns 1997; Rozin *et al.* 2003; Debomy 2005; Fischler *et al.* 2008). Along with other researchers (see Pullar 1970, Mennell 1996; Rozin 1997; Thomas 1997; Rozin *et al.* 1999) they have attempted to analyse the significance of religious traditions to culinary cultures and some have suggested that behind such behavioural differences lie a difference in the dominant religion, namely Protestantism in the northern Anglo-Saxon countries, including Britain and the USA and Catholicism in the more southerly Latin European nations including France. While any causal link between such religious ethics and behaviour around food practices has not been proven (see also Mennell; Pitte 2002), underlying cultural differences offer a more plausible framework with which to explain fundamental differences to attitudes and behaviour in relation to domestic food practices.

It has been shown that there is a greater tendency in France for the individual to consider that they should broadly take responsibility for their diet in so much as they should aim to eat in moderation and that the guiding principle should be to eat a varied and balanced diet of quality, fresh food. Many French have also been seen to emphasise the social and pleasurable aspects towards food and eating. In Britain, an individualistic and functional relationship to food was more apparent and evidence suggests that many individuals were more concerned about following complex nutritional guidelines so as to enhance health and control body weight. At the same time, in Anglo-Saxon nations such as Britain, the incidence of people snacking or ‘grabbing a bite to eat’ in isolation and/or whilst engaged in other activities was more prevalent. Furthermore, Britain was described as being more puritanical and exhibited a greater sense of guilt associated with the enjoyment of food. In France it appeared more widespread that all foods could be enjoyed in moderation and any stigmatisation of food was to be avoided.

Differences in the interpretation and desirability of freedoms of choice also need to be represented on any explanatory framework. Although there is considerable variation within each country, in Britain there appears to be greater prioritisation of personal freedoms where the individual can choose whatever s/he wants at a time convenient to that individual. Furthermore there is a greater tendency for people to desire a wider selection from which to make that choice, demand that it can be further modified to suit individual preferences and are less prepared to wait. However from such choices, it has been shown that many individuals become burdened with the responsibility to make the 'right' choices in relation to nutrition and this can produce feelings of stress, anxiety, guilt and lack of self discipline if the diet chosen does not deliver the expected outcomes. Evidence suggests that more Britons worry about complying with scientific-medical advice in relation to food choice rather than any pleasure derived from the sharing of whatever foods are made available. In addition, more Britons than French persons, despite going to greater lengths to alter their diets in the service of health, reported finding it more difficult to eat healthily and a more 'nutritionalised' food culture has been blamed for producing the 'tormented eater' in search of the perfect foods with which to fuel their bodies (Fischler 2002).

Overall, this research has shown that France demonstrates a different interpretation of choice, rights and responsibilities with a greater prioritisation of a collective and social aspect to food and eating over individual preferences. For example, the ability of the free market to offer increased personal liberties in relation to food, although popular, appear less attractive than an offering circumscribed by factors outside the individual's control and operating within a broader framework of shared and highly accepted rights and responsibilities. The French attach greater importance to the congenial and "communion" aspects of eating and are less compromised by complex nutritional guidelines or concerns about the health consequences of consuming particular foods. More French people appear to take comfort from dominant, but not necessarily apparent, cultural steers that demand less soul searching and which largely absolves them from individual responsibility for their diet.

With the lack of conclusive evidence to support a religious explanation, a broader cultural framework more accurately explains the underlying causes and continued division of dietary worlds and the respective development of distinctive culinary cultures in France and Britain

10.8 Is there a 'Culinary Skills Transition'?

The inspiration for this research was the *'Culinary Skills Transition'* thesis (Lang *et al.* 2001) and as such it is necessary to conclude whether there has been any such transition. Evidence has shown while there are considerable internal variations withinboth countries, foods continue to be prepared in the home and many raw foods continue to be cooked via the application of heat or energy. However, nearly all phase 1 respondents had spent less time cooking than their parents had and many were increasingly dependent on the food industry having undertaken some or all of the mechanical tasks. Phase 1 British respondents in particular discussed how the selection of a mix of food items, both 'convenience' and raw products was increasingly the norm however, it was apparent that such a combination of food items still required the application of skills to transform them raedy for eating. Furthermore, literature has suggested that clear distinctions between *'cooking from scratch'* and cooking using convenience foods are grossly exaggerated. Not only do the academic and perceptual skills remain necessary and widely practiced but skills of timing and judgement are still relevant and phase 1 respondents also discussed the need of organisational skills and the ability to combine appropriate foods to suit the preferences of those being fed. Skills associated with food hygiene remain important and phase 1 respondents discussed the need to prepare a nutritionally balanced diet and also displayed an understanding of cooking terms and techniques. In addition, cooking as a leisure activity proved to be popular among all the phase 1 French respondents and just under half of the British respondents who in turn frequently discussed employing creative skills to produce such meals.

However, among phase 2 respondents there was discussion of a *"de-skilling process" (*2/B/42) and it was suggested that while in France "*there is a very clear difference, the tendency is the same, but we're not starting from the same point"* (2/F/39). Nearly all phase 2 respondents in Britain agreed that Britons were cooking

less in the home than a generation ago and this raised concerns about how this undermined confidence to cook and knowledge about food more generally. Five such respondents also discussed how such a decline was already having a negative impact on the domestic inter-generational transfer of cooking skills. However, while both the British and French phase 1 sample indicated that they were fairly confident to prepare a range of foods, the British respondents, with two exceptions, appeared more reticent about their cooking skills than the French respondents. For example, many British women explained they were confident with the *"basics"* (1/B/27/F, 1/B/17/F), were not creative and preferred not to experiment and preferred *"a recipe and method"* to follow (1/B/22/F). Meanwhile, most French women from phase 1 appeared more confident and the French men, both frequent and occasional cooks, whilst expressing some reservations about their skills, went on to describe the preparation of dishes that required quite complex skills such as *"beef bourguignon"* (1/F/9/M), *"mayonnaise... flambés with a cream sauce"* (1/F/7/M) and another who based the family meal on whatever was available in the shops/market that day (1/F/10/M).

It is evident that many people, especially women, continue to have a range of culinary skills that enable them to transform food into culturally acceptable meals. However, with the increased availability and popularity of a diverse range of convenience type foods it appears that there has been some sort of restructuring of the skills required. For example, while there is considerable variation within each country and across social divisions, many of the practical and mechanical skills now appear less in demand or have significantly changed, and this may reflect some sort of transition, but those persons who do cook continue to demonstrate a range of academic and perceptual skills. Indeed, rather than any fundamental transition in the skills required it is more that the precise nature of the required skills have evolved and reflect broader changes in relation to the foods available and personal lifestyles. Respondent 2/F/31added; *"cooking habits are always evolving... changes in how we live...have always impacted on domestic practices".* Perhaps then, not only are the skills required for cooking evolving over time but with them, what is commonly understood to constitute cooking in contemporary society (see Short 2002; Caraher *et al.* 2010).

10.9 Policy Implications

10.9.1 Cooking and its significance to health and food policy development

In summary, evidence has been presented that demonstrates that respondents from both phases considered that the possession of domestic cooking skills remained important to health as well as family and social life, were an essential life skill and provided the individual with greater independence and autonomy[141].

Whilst evidence suggests a likely relationship between cooking skills and healthier diets there is no conclusive evidence of any causal link. However, the ability and willingness to cook are important factors that offer the consumer a greater choice of foods s/he can select and prepare and thus empowers them to exercise greater control over their diet. Evidence also suggests that confidence to cook, attitudes to cooking and people's culinary cultures more generally, rather than mechanical/ technical skills, are more significant in influencing the degree to which people find cooking to be an effort which in turn influences their ultimate cooking practices. Not having confidence to cook was seen as putting people at a disadvantage as they were less able to make choices around health and nutrition and became more dependent upon a sophisticated food industry and their offering of ready-prepared and takeaway foods. While many of the more expensive, highly processed foods may constitute part of a healthy diet, many others are frequently high in calories, fat, sugar and salt and the consumer is not only reliant on the financial means to buy their way out of an energy dense diet but also reliant on understanding complex food labelling. Phase 1 French respondents in particular considered that with the increasing influence of the food industry it was important for the individual to be able to exercise control over their diet and that the ability to cook offered them the opportunity to understand what goes into their meals. Phase 2 respondents in Britain echoed that the ability to cook was essential for a healthy diet, that

[141] French respondents also discussed how home cooked foods tasted better and how cooking was an important part of being French.

inadequate knowledge or use of such skills would have a negative impact on health and was at least partly responsible for rising obesity levels.

While cooking per se is less significant than the diet people eat and that everyday cooking is often described as a chore (especially among some phase 1 British women respondents), nonetheless, all the French and just under half the British phase 1 respondents said they enjoyed the social aspect of eating meals with others which often entailed cooking oneself. The centrality of food and eating to family, community and identity remains a key means "*by which citizens can engage with the social norms of a society"* (Lang *et al.* 2001: 7). 'Sharing from the same pot' of largely home prepared food was particularly important among the French sample and the casualisation and individualisation of cooking and eating was regretted, but reluctantly accepted among many of the British sample. It appears that it is the 'eating together' as a family, even in front of the television, which is most important as it has been found to be associated with healthier eating habits compared to children who ate less regularly as a family (Caraher *et al.* 2010). While the social aspect of cooking and eating remains important to most respondents, and was described as contributing to mental health, its occurrence was certainly more prevalent in France.

Confidence to cook appears more important to health than complex cooking skills and there now exists the need for a broader range of 'food skills' to suit current lifestyles and eating habits. Policy development aimed at improving diet needs to take this into account but also that cooking skills do not operate in isolation of other economic and social influences and that the cultural attitudes of a society play an important role in both the application of cooking skills and food choices.

10.9.2 Review of policy and initiatives in relation to cookery skills and food education

Policy interest in relation to the teaching of cooking to both children and adults has waxed and waned ever since the middle of the nineteenth century in both France and Britain. As noted, the rationale has been driven by various concerns including that the poor were ignorant in such matters, that family life would be improved if only

women could cook as well as cookery skills being essential for domestic servants. The ebb and flow of such debates has continued and while some of the older female phase 1 French respondents remembered being taught cookery in school, this was not the case for those at school in the late 1960s onwards unlike their British counterparts who all recalled being taught cookery in school.

However domestic science was removed from English secondary schools in 1994[142] and cooking skills were increasingly seen as an irrelevance in a modern society which offered affordable and technological solutions to food preparation as promoted by an urbane food industry. After all, it was argued that the individual, if they so wished, could still learn to cook at home and the most significant source of cooking knowledge in both France and Britain has been shown to be from family, especially the mother. For example, all phase 1 British female respondents had undertaken 'domestic science' at school but concluded they had learnt more from their mothers and those who had learnt at home were more likely to 'agree' that they were confident and competent cooks. However, the inter-generational transfer of cooking skills is in decline and respondents from both countries considered that due to work commitments and less time available for domestic cooking, there was greater reliance on more processed foods and combined with the increased consumption of foods away from home resulted in there being less opportunity for children to learn cooking skills in the home. As such, generations were emerging who cooked still less in the home and as it becomes less of an everyday activity so it further erodes confidence to cook and knowledge about food more generally. Phase 2 respondents in Britain suggested there were now two or three generations of parents who lacked the skills to cook confidently, further undermining the effective inter-generational transfer of cooking skills.

Amidst growing concerns about diet, health and rising levels of obesity and in an attempt to address the vicious circle of decline in the inter-generational transfer of cooking skills, the last UK government decided to re-introduce cookery lessons for 11 – 14 year olds by 2011 in England as a means of helping children consume a healthier diet. However, the current UK coalition government appear to have

[142] It was then replaced by a Food Technology option, largely in response to lobbying from industry for children to develop skills appropriate for employment in the growing food industry

abandoned such a policy (Rayner 2011). While there have been some calls for the re-introduction of cooking classes back in to the national curriculum in France, and over 80% of those questioned in one survey considered that it would be beneficial if future generations were taught cooking at school, government support remains marginal (see Seb / BVA 2003; INPES 2004).

In addition to varying government commitment in Britain, resourcing issues to the teaching of cooking in schools remain a significant issue. As a result, a range of initiatives continue to be developed by various NGOs, charities and private companies in an attempt to fill the perceived gap in children's education and each with a different agenda[143]. There has also been a range of interventions to reinstate cooking skills among the adult population in Britain as witnessed by the growth in community led food skills initiatives and 'local food projects'. These tend to attract short term funding from statutory agencies, charitable bodies such as the Big Lottery Fund, as well as those funded via the Department of Health's Change4Life. Jamie Oliver's 'Ministry of Food' initiative of walk-in shops offering cookery lessons and advice to the public continues to attract support from some local councils although central government support to develop a national network has so far not been forthcoming and participants, often in disadvantaged areas, normally have to pay for such classes. For the more affluent, adult and children's cookery classes are available via a range of commercial providers in both France and Britain[144]. In an attempt to educate people about consuming healthy diets, some French hospitals are now running cookery classes which stress the importance of preparing and enjoying structured meals.

Wider policy response to cooking in France continues to be very different and this is due to several reasons. Firstly, there is less evidence of any decline in cooking skills and in addition, diet related non-communicable diseases and obesity levels,

[143] These have included *Let's get cooking* (SFT), *Food for Life* (BNF), *Focus on Food* (FSA, RSA and others), the Academy of Culinary Art's *Chefs Adopt a School* and *Can Cook Will Cook* programmes, *'Food For Life Partnership'* (Soil Association and others) as well as the *Junior Chef's Academy* sponsored by business and various agencies. Companies such as Sainsbury's and Flora margarine have also developed cooking in schools' initiatives and there are a variety of local initiatives run by individual schools or by health agencies in association with schools (Caraher *et al.* 2004; Caraher *et al.* 2010).

[144] For example Waitrose Cookery School in London as well as those offered by the likes of Rick Stein, Leith's, Raymond Blanc, Cordon Bleu, Paul Bocusse and the Paris Ritz. Many other national and local cookery schools exist and adult classes typically cost the equivalent of around £150 per day up to £18,000 for a year's training

although increasing, remain far lower than in Britain. Secondly, food and cooking are highly significant to a shared sense of national identity and deeply embedded in French culture and as such legislation has attempted to institutionalize such cultural practices, celebrate France's gastronomic heritage and promote the congenial and familial/collective aspect of food and eating rather than focus on cooking per se. Under the auspices of the Ministry for Cultural Affairs, along with corporate support, the *'Semaine du gout'* (Week of Taste) was established[145]. In schools, the midday meal is seen as an important reflection of the traditional French food model and the Ministry for Education has directed that lunch breaks must form part of a broader educational project that promotes socialisation, conviviality and healthy eating practices and that the Republic's schools have a responsibility to arouse among children the taste for 'eating well' *(bien manger),* local foods and French culinary traditions. Finally, the French state is highly centralised and national government has tended to reflect broader, centrally coordinated, strategic priorities around nutrition, diet and health[146] and part of their responsibilities were to modify food consumption and increase physical activity levels via education and communication. In particular they chose to focus on the protection of the French food model of set meals of sequenced courses and the avoidance of snacking underpinned by the belief that when good quality food is enjoyed and forms a significant part of the day, people tend to eat less and remain healthier. Since then, EPODE, a community health intervention programme, has developed into a European Network (EEN) and has focused on the implementation of community based interventions to reduce obesity levels across participating EU countries and has adopted a behaviour centred approach not dissimilar to that adopted by the UK's Change4Life and with similar corporate support and backing.

[145] Not only does this aim to promote France's culinary tradition but via the assistance of *L'Academie Culinaire de France,* professional chefs visit schools each autumn to teach children about taste, *terroir* and the significance of France's culinary heritage.

[146] Most significantly perhaps has been the establishment of PNNS in 2001 followed by INPES in 2002.

10.9.3 Future policy in relation to cooking

The teaching of cooking skills has seen to be inadequate for the twenty first century, particularly in Britain, and yet cooking skills remain important not least because they are an essential component in relation to increasing people's confidence to cook, changing food preferences, improving nutritional knowledge and promoting healthier eating habits. As such policy needs to be developed to direct such teaching.

Policy in relation to any re-introduction of cooking classes in British and French schools would be advised to focus on the teaching of practical cookery skills as opposed to the technological, design and nutritional aspects of food. Schools have often confused food education with the teaching of cookery skills, often because they lack the resources to teach practical classes. While a broad approach to food education that teaches where food comes from, how it is grown, processed and sold is important, it is the hands-on aspects of preparing, handling and cooking which supports and reinforces knowledge presented in the classroom which in Britain has been proven to be most effective in modifying children's behaviour. Schools require not only appropriately equipped rooms but also trained specialist teaching staff to replace the skilled staff that has left the profession. Policy development will also need to establish explicit guidelines as to how compulsory cooking classes would be incorporated in to the curriculum, ascertain the optimum duration and frequency of such classes, the content of the curricula and more importantly at what stage in the primary and/or secondary school such life skills should be embedded so as to have maximum impact on eating behaviours[147]. It has also been suggested that to maximise long term behaviour change, such interventions need to be delivered regularly, sustained over a longer period and attract on-going funding (Contento *et al.* 1995). Clearly the effectiveness of all cookery classes need to be carefully monitored and rigorously evaluated to ensure public money is being appropriately targeted.

[147] An evaluation of the *Chefs Adopt a School* initiative delivered in primary schools demonstrated that even just two sessions, including one practical, resulted in small but significant improvements in eating behaviour and confidence in cooking skills with some positive evidence of transference of such behaviour and confidence to the home environment (Seeley *et al.* 2009)

The initiatives developed by NGOs, charities and industry in Britain are usually optional and often dependant on dedicated parents or teachers to volunteer their time and as such, access remains limited and their effectiveness in bringing about change in relation to confidence in cooking and improvements in eating behaviour are rarely evaluated. However, 'Let's get cooking' and 'Licence to cook' are currently being monitored by the Cooking in Schools Programme Board established by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and 300 of the 5,000 *'Let's get cooking'* clubs are taking part in an evaluation process to measure the extent to which the consumption of healthy foods have increased over the consumption of less healthy foods among their participants, the extent to which there has been skill transference into the home environment and whether those participating have demonstrated their new found cooking skills to another person (see Caraher *et al.* 2010; Elms 2010). Initiatives developed for schools by industry such as those by Sainsbury's and Flora margarine, expose children to powerful marketing messages and Britain would be advised to learn from France in that amidst concern there about the penetration in to schools by the food industry, and how this undermined free choice and education of taste, the PNNS ensured that all educative material circulated by industry either conformed to their overall policy or was withdrawn. Ultimately, it has been estimated that over £30 million is currently being spent on cooking related programmes in the UK and by in large there is little evidence as to whether they are effective and too few resources to evaluate the sustainability of any long term behaviour outcomes or any long term improvements to health (Caraher *et al.*). As such, and no matter whether the initiatives are voluntary or form part of a school's compulsory curriculum, the outcomes along with feedback from children and parents will need to be analysed so that best practice can be identified, shared and used to develop a coordinated and independent strategic response.

Community led food skills initiatives and 'local food projects' in Britain continue to play a role in the development of skills and confidence to buy and prepare food and can contribute towards improving dietary choice, especially among adults living in disadvantaged communities. However, without government commitment and long term funding, such projects have difficulty in attracting the necessary human resources and much energy is spent on attracting new revenue streams which

frustrates and confuses the delivery of long term objectives and threatens their sustained presence within the community. For such initiatives to be successful they must consult with the local community, ensure an appropriate needs assessment is undertaken and have the opportunity to operate within a supportive policy environment.

Appropriate policy development in Britain in relation to cooking skills and food education more generally needs to ensure an end to the current ad hoc, reactive, short term and fragmented offering of initiatives and offer a 'joined-up' policy approach. The involvement of too many government departments along with a plethora of partnerships, agencies and volunteers has produced a range of small scale, often local interventions which lack coordination and strategic planning. Such *'quick fix'*, piecemeal solutions which are dependent upon chasing short term funding and state philanthropy are no solution to achieving long term behavioural change in relation to diet and health

10.9.4 The significance of food culture to a broader food policy environment

The isolated teaching of cooking skills, even when combined with broader food education is unlikely to be successful in addressing the complex web of reasons behind the rise in diet related non-communicable diseases and obesity. As this thesis has demonstrated, people's domestic food practices, eating habits and lifestyles are influenced by a myriad of factors other than just cooking skills. Policy development needs to take account of powerful macro factors such as the increased availability of calories, the relative costs of different foods as well as how they are produced, promoted and made available via progressively more global players in the agro-food industry. Without a climate of 'joined-up' policy towards food, the success of any single initiative in relation to cooking will not bear fruit and furthermore, if the outcome of any such cookery interventions are measured only in their ability to reduce obesity levels it is likely to be concluded that they are ineffective and thus risk being withdrawn (see Fordyce-Voorham, 2009; Caraher *et al.* 2010).

The policy approach in France has directed little attention to cooking skills and instead policy remains largely centrally planned, attracts long term funding and tends to develop broader strategic priorities around nutrition, diet and health. However, in France there has been concern about the effectiveness of such 'nutritionalisation' of food, its focus on obesity and its ability to modify eating habits. Policy has since developed to embrace a more holistic, cultural approach to food and attempted to address criticisms that its educational campaigns and overall approach failed to penetrate the more vulnerable sectors of society where obesity rates are rising fastest. Evidence also suggests that centralisation of policy has been at the cost of regional autonomy and future policy will need to address concern among semi-independent regional agencies who demand greater de-centralisation and autonomy as they are often under political pressure to promote certain initiatives at the cost of others deemed more important for the locality.

However, while there has been criticism that policy in France has achieved only limited change in actual food consumption patterns, in many ways, this has been its success up until now. Policy has embraced a wider agenda and for example set out to safeguard the French food model of three highly structured meals a day, often served in the company of others, as a significant part of everyday life and an important part of French culture. Such a model has tended to provide a relatively healthy, enjoyable diet and protected the French against the de-routinisation and individualisation of eating habits. A coherent culinary discourse continues to be effectively circulated by presidents, government ministers, elites and citizens who place food, cooking and eating at the very heart of what it is to be French and what makes them different in an increasingly globalised world. However the same powerful macro factors within the food environment are present in France as they are in Britain and future policy development will require supportive legislation to ensure French culinary culture continues to be able to resist many of the excesses of the global food system and that the food industry is adequately regulated.

Britain has been described as having a broken food culture and the state has rarely focused on protecting any culinary heritage. There has been some renewed interest in food as evidenced by the popularity of celebrity chef shows, cookery books, farmer's markets and some commentators have said that Britain has recently embraced a food revolution. However, such attachments tend to be transitory, lack coherence and remain inaccessible to many and indeed food culture is rarely mentioned in food policy documents. France's culinary cultures have tended to evolve more slowly and their culinary empire remains based upon a strong and inclusive, universal culture of food which can be manipulated to achieve certain goals whether they are the unification of France in the nineteenth century or certain dietary goals as in the twenty first century. Whether Britain could mend or re-invent its food culture and create a culinary anchor within which future policy might take root and be accepted across social groups appears fraught with difficulty.

However, a broader understanding of how people now engage with food and cooking and how food choices are made from a given food environment according to cultural practices and habits is vital for policy formation which wishes to bring about consumer change and healthier, more sustainable eating habits. The beginnings of 'joined-up' food policy began to emerge following The *Foresight Report* and perhaps culminated with Defra's *Food 2030* which highlighted the importance of understanding the social determinants of food choice but also the significance of food culture and norms of behaviour if policy is to be effective in bringing about dietary change. However, such policy has now largely been abandoned (Dibb 2011). One relevant initiative that has not so far been scrapped is the SFT's promotion of a 'whole school approach' which is not only changing the availability of foods in school from which children can choose but attempting to change the very culture of school food along with the attitudes children have so as to help them develop a healthy relationship with food that will last throughout their life.

As Mayo (2011; 24) recently indicated*, "taking account of people's behaviour works a good deal better than ignoring it"* when attempting to encourage healthier eating practices and a 'Behavioural Insights Team' has recently been established in the Cabinet Office to help with the design of policy based on how people's behaviour

can be influenced (Hallsworth 2011). Developed from approaches long used by industry, the UK government is increasingly using marketing techniques and behavioural economics to differentiate between social groups as to what their problems are and what messages and drivers might bring about behavioural change. The *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives* White Paper, highlighted the use of social marketing campaigns to persuade people to change their behaviour, their lifestyles or their existing habits so as to make healthier food choices. It has been suggested that such a focus on individualised responsibility for health is able to achieve better outcomes for *'consumers'*, either by complementing more established policy tools or by suggesting more innovative interventions (Hallsworth). Such "*nudge thinking",* pioneered by Thaler and Sunstein (2008), is rooted in libertarian paternalism and is attractive to many governments as it undermines the need to regulate the food industry or the need to forbid people from doing certain things but instead aims to guide their behaviour in a more permissive manner (MacMillan 2011). In the UK (and also France), such thinking chimes with the mood of politicians who want to prune back the size of the state, attract support from industry and provide an ideological and attractive alternative to statist 'nannying' (Rayner 2011; Warde 2011). Both the UK's Change4Life and France's EPODE initiatives embrace such a liberal philosophy to public health, preferring to leave it to markets, avoid regulation and instead develop consultation and partnerships or, in the UK, 'Responsibility Deals' with a receptive food industry.

Nudge politics, how companies can positively influence consumers and voluntary responsibility are increasingly seen as preferred policy options and, for example, supermarkets clearly already play a key role in influencing consumer choice. However, as Warde (2011) suggests, if supermarkets are 'nudging' consumers towards a diet that is not commensurate with individual's or the nation's health objectives, is it not easier to get industry to reform their business practices rather than target all their millions of customers. Of course, without structural and institutional reform it remains unlikely that a highly profitable food industry will wish to voluntarily make the massive changes that are required. Such lack of intervention by government enables the agri-food industry to further drive down prices on fats, sweetened drinks, calorie dense snacks and convenient meal solutions. Without tough government action, industry is unlikely to support controls such as those on

advertising of foods to children or significantly reducing the salt content of food and have mounted strong and effective pan-European opposition to coherent food labelling such as the voluntary traffic light system. As a consequence of this market dominated approach, the food environment in which people live is increasingly flooded with special offers of food in every petrol station, newsagent and supermarket. Most people know what they should eat but it is difficult to 'nudge' them to make healthy choices amidst such a food environment that promotes poorly labelled, instantly desirable and unhealthy options at attractive prices (Davies 2011; Dibb 2011). Remedies based on individual action and personalised approaches are unlikely to be successful when what is required is to examine the context in which people live their lives and develop a policy package of interventions to bring about a positive population-wide shift not only in food intake and levels of physical activity but in the foods made available, how they are marketed and priced.

Working in partnership with business is rarely effective unless government shows leadership including a coherent policy framework and readiness to resort to regulation. Any government now prepared to tackle such issues would be advised to adopt a Foresight-type system analysis and address the multifaceted interplay of issues operating within the food system. Policy must draw on successful 'bottom-up' approaches and the expertise and assistance of range of people rather than any single set of 'experts'. The situation demands a range of collaborative, cross departmental strategic approaches which are well coordinated, recognise the complexity of the problems and develop a coherent policy environment supported via state intervention and the community. This needs to be complemented with a further understanding of how cultural practices underpin how people make the choices they do from their food environment. Now is not the time for the French or British state to collude with the food industry but is the time to take strong leadership and government has a duty to take tough action across the food environment if there is to be any transition towards healthier diets. However such policy action currently looks unlikely by governments committed to shrinking the role of the state, 'nudging' the consumer and creating a 'Big Society' via the fostering of partnerships with industry rather than engaging in state intervention.

10.10 Evaluation of research

From the first thoughts about embarking on a research degree to the subsequent development of a proposal, followed by registration as a PhD student at City University in October 2003 and through to submission, has spanned a 10 year period. Inevitably, as a part time candidate with full time employment and family responsibilities, at times the process has been painfully slow and some of the literature which appeared up to date at the outset now looks more dated. However, throughout the project, the researcher has been able to broaden and deepen his understanding of the subject area, developed a keen insight into the policy domain and be ideally located to monitor and access the output of key writers in the field so as to further refine his research. It has truly been an iterative process and working for such a period of time within a research environment has exposed the researcher to challenging ideas and a range of views which has enabled him to deeply question and critically evaluate the significance of important developments. The bibliography represents an extensive, systematic, and at times eclectic trawl through secondary sources that have been used to construct a comprehensive overview of a dynamic subject area. Governments have come and gone, ideologies have fallen in and out of favour and policies have been born and forgotten. Whilst there are arguments that the execution of such a task should be timelier, hopefully the gestation of this research project reflects the journey the researcher has travelled and contains an historical context and cutting edge, contemporary research so as to be able to produce a conclusion that reflects where we are today.

Comparative research is always difficult and this research has been no exception. This research chose to focus on France and Britain and comparable datasets have often been difficult to locate. At times it has been necessary to consult data that relates only to England or indeed the entire UK because no comparable data was available for Britain. Furthermore one is also often compromised by different national conventions and research traditions. Furthermore, the purpose for which research was gathered, the criteria used and the method of collection may vary considerably from one country to another. Researchers may select different populations, sampling techniques and sample sizes as well as being undertaken at different times, asking different questions and employing different methods of

coding and analysis. In such circumstances, this research has endeavoured not to rely on any one set of data and for example has reviewed different surveys, market reports and research papers before any conclusions could be attempted. Official large scale pan-EU surveys, although useful have tended to focus for example on the consumption of individual nutrients, dietary changes, healthy eating and so on rather than attempting to understand food (or culinary) cultures and their impact on attitudes to food, cooking and eating. Recent research such as that carried out by Fitzpatrick *et al.* (2010) on understanding and comparing food cultures across certain European countries, including France, was of some use but being funded by NHS Health Scotland, did not focus on the rest of the British Isles. Whilst there are an increasing number of comparative studies being done across Europe which relate to Britain and France, such as those undertaken by Eurostat, and hopefully this one will contribute to the collection, there is still an urgent need for further EU funded, large scale research investigating the cultural basis of food choice, domestic food practices and the implications for policy development.

A feature of this comparative research has been working across two languages and language is not only a means for conveying concepts, but part of the conceptual system, reflecting institutions, thought processes, values and ideology. While the researcher is competent in French, he is not a native speaker and where possible 'official' translations of secondary sources have been sought thus avoiding any researcher bias or misunderstanding. In relation to primary research, all interviews were recorded and translated by the researcher, a proportion were subjected to verification by expert translators and where difficulties arose in relation to understanding the precise meaning of what was said, it was possible to seek advice from a number of French persons known to the researcher residing in Britain or France. Nonetheless, such translation required another layer of interpretation and practical difficulties of capturing the true essence of certain words or concepts such as '*terroir', 'bien manger' 'malbouffe'* or indeed the translation of English phrases such as a 'proper meal' proved problematical. After all, meanings are culturally embedded and how individuals understand any word or phenomena, even in his/her own language varies and so the nature of this research has been to probe and explore the sense people make of the world around them and how they convey this sense of their reality. Indeed, the approach throughout this research has been

interpretive and to accept that meaning is not fixed and that realities can only be mental constructions based on an individual's interaction with phenomena and as such there is no single true or valid interpretation (see Guba *et al.* 1994; Hantrais, 1995; Crotty,1998). Furthermore, the benefits of cross-national comparative research were considered to outweigh the benefits of research into a single nation and given the researcher's sound knowledge of the different national contexts, the need to make compromises was reduced.

A qualitative methodology has been justified for this research and for phase 1 of the fieldwork, one to one in-depth interviews were undertaken to discover what food practices actually occur in the homes of a cross section of people living in France and Britain. With hindsight it might have been worthwhile to further consider alternative research strategies to gather data and certainly since starting the research, the researcher has become more aware of alternative techniques and future research could usefully draw on such ideas [148]. Nevertheless, phase 1 interviews, which lasted on average around forty minutes, produced extremely rich and insightful narrative, and although the researcher lacked some confidence, practice and a well planned interview schedule helped him probe key areas, overcome initial awkwardness and discover much about people's real world experiences.

Whilst socially diverse participants were sought for the phase 1 interviews, it was recognised that social variables are but one dimension of diversity and the variety of ways people relate to objects in their lives is unknown. Guidelines were developed to direct the selection of broadly comparable participants from the two countries and a research corpus was constructed based on the on-going reflection and selection of data sources so as to build a wider body of knowledge. Nonetheless, looking at the thirty phase 1 respondents, it might be concluded that they are disproportionally middle aged and middle class however it was never the intention of this research to use social class as a lens with which to observe domestic food practices. As regards age, it was apparent that young adults, were often in transitional periods

[148] For example, solicited audio, photographic or on-going email diaries, the use of timelines to record daily food practices, mind mapping, the sorting of illustrated cards according to certain criteria, informal conversations in settings where people can elect to take part or not or with people going about their daily lives, paired or group interviews and combinations of the above all require further investigation.

themselves and while they might currently adhere to certain domestic food practices, such habits were frequently in a period of flux and were being influenced as much by rapid changes to their working and living arrangements as they were by the food environment in which they found themselves. It would however be very interesting to focus future research on the domestic food practices of young married/co-habiting couples who were relatively settled. This research, while far from representing anything in particular, did represent a variety of household types, especially in relation to the presence of children and gender roles without creating '*data dungeons'*.

Those selected for interview were initially drawn from Nantes in France and London however once the Nantes and initial five London interviews were completed and some preliminary comparative analysis undertaken, it became apparent that certain differences might be becoming exaggerated due to one sample being drawn from a provincial city in France and the other drawn from the capital city of Britain. As such, it was decided to select British respondents from a city more similar to Nantes and Cardiff, a city with which Nantes is twinned, proved to be a highly comparable city. Nonetheless, primary data was only drawn from these cities and clearly there are strong regional differences in each country. However, such data has been compared with extensive secondary research, national surveys, comparative national as well as regional research and was also scrutinised by Phase 2 respondents who were drawn from locations throughout France and Britain.

Phase 2 of the research employed a second and complimentary round of interviews with a range of key 'experts' within the field so as to verify, extend and further examine the emerging issues. An ideal sampling frame was developed which represented key areas within the policy domain along with comparable groups from each area and country although it was not possible to always match 'like with like'. For example, it was relatively straight forward to arrange interviews in France with national or regional statutory/semi-statutory bodies while in Britain appropriate experts tended to come from a broader range of 'quangos' and agencies that were less directly accountable or funded by government. In contrast, business involvement in the policy area was easier to access in Britain than in France. The lack of exact matching might be considered a weakness however, it was clear that

there were different debates and policies in each country and in turn, these were being 'driven' by different groups as befitted the political and cultural context of the two countries. Of course, acquiring consent from those with comparable expertise and policy engagement proved difficult, took over a year to complete and resulted in many costly but agreeable journeys to many parts of France and Britain[149]. While a British consumer group finally agreed to take part, no French consumer group consented to be interviewed despite prolonged efforts and while further interviews might have been interesting, saturation (and exhaustion) point was felt to have been reached.

Finally of course, there are always critics of qualitative research some of whom consider it little more than subjective, 'sound bites'. While the justification for adopting a qualitative approach has been given, it has to be reiterated that the underlying belief for this research was that people's attitudes and feelings in relation to domestic food practices are inevitably highly individual and as such it did not set out to prove objective truths. While it may be argued that such research lacks validity, reliability and generalisability it cannot be said that this research lacks rigour, credibility or that the process of research was not transparent and auditable. From the establishment of the research questions, on to the design and testing of the research procedures through to the data analysis and conclusion building has been meticulously described. The sample represented a variety of character representations which were clearly recorded and the development of a research corpus was an on-going and reflective process. Each interview was clearly explained to the respondents, the truthfulness of the answers tested and they were transcribed and reported verbatim ensuring a context-rich, 'thick' description that has been carefully coded and systematically reported. Interviewer bias remains an issue and social interaction can never be ignored however the intention of the researcher remained to understand what was being said, faithfully reproduce it while at the same time accepting the influence of the researcher's culture on his interpretation of such meanings. The narrative that was generated from phase 1 research was exposed to scrutiny by experts who were asked to comment on its plausibility and authenticity in an attempt to add further rigour, breadth and depth to the research although it remains for the reader to draw their own conclusions about the applicability of the research to other situations.

[149] A total of 19 individual 'experts' (10 in France & 9 in Britain) were finally interviewed.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Economic overview of UK & France

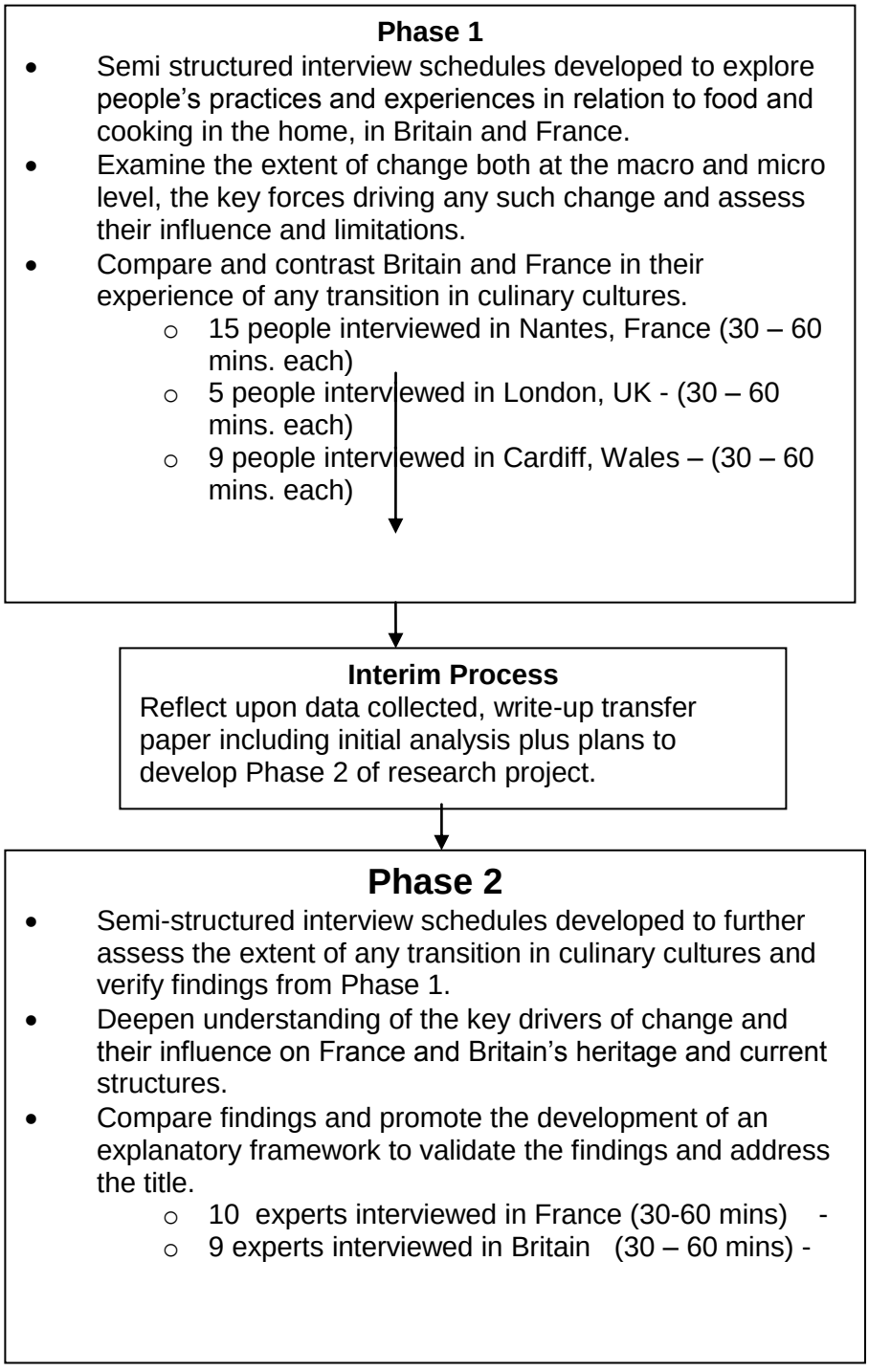
Economic Overview

	France	UK
GDP 2007 est (purchaing power parity):	$2.067 trillion	$2.147
GDP 2007 est Real growth rate:	1.8%	2.9%
GDP –2007 est Per capita (PPP):	$33,800	$35,300
GDP – 2007 est Composition by sector:		
Agriculture	2%	0.9%
Industry	20.7%	23.6%
services	77.3	75.5% (2006 est)
Labour force: 2007 est	27.6 million	30.71 million
Labour force by occupation:		
Agriculture	4.1%	1.4%
Industry	24.4%	18.2%
services	71.5% (1999)	80.4% (2006 est)
Unemployment rate: 2007 est	8%	5.4%
Population below poverty line:	6.2%	14%
Household income or consumption by percentage share:	Lowest 10%: 3%	Lowest 10%: 2.1%
	Highest 10%: 24.8% (2004)	Highest 10%: 28.5% (1999)
Distribution of Family Income – Gini index (2005):	28	34
Inflation rate (consumer prices): 2007 est	1.5%	2.4%
Public Debt: 2007 est	66.6%	43.3%
Exports - commodoties	machinery & transportation equipment, aircraft, plastics, chemicals, pharmaceutical products, iron and steel, beverages	manufactured goods, fuels, chemicals; food, beverages, tobacco
Export partners (2006):	Germany 15.6%, Spain 9.6%, Italy 8.9%, UK 8.2%, Belgium 7.2%, US 6.7%, Netherlands 4%	US 13.9%, Germany 10.9%, France 10.4%, Ireland 7.1%, Netherlands 6.3%, Belgium 5.2%, Spain 4.5%

Adapted from Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Factbook (2008)

Appendix 2: Summary of research design

Summary of Research Design



Appendix 3: Interview schedule (Phase 1 - English)

Interview Schedule

A. Introduction, general questions and access information of foods eaten in the home, current attitudes to food, cooking and a "proper meal", importance of cooking, recollection and comparison of memories of food and cooking.

1. Lets start with a very general question. Can you tell me a little about the sorts of foods you eat at home?…..away from home?…your family's preferences?

2. Are they similar to the foods you ate as a child?….what were they and what are the differences…why?

3. Do you spend as much time cooking as you remember your parents doing….why and how is this possible? ….. use of ready-prepared foods/convenience foods?….eating outside the home or take-aways… why is this?

4. Do you think it is important that people should cook in the home?…why?…why do you cook/not cook? …are people cooking less nowadays than a generation ago, young persons…is it important?

5. What do you think makes up a "proper meal"?

B. To access questions of skill and skill acquisition, preferences in cooking and influencing factors, decision making, frequency and attitudes to special meals and their cooking.

6. So how did you learn to cook?….and nowadays, what sources of information do you use to learn about cooking?…would you like to learn more?

7. How confident are you to cook a meal from basic ingredients?… cooking methods, …types of food, etc.

8. Can you tell me a little about the sort of foods you tend to cook? …. when …how often do you cook? …why?

9. What sort of things influence your choice of foods to cook?…preferences of others in household, time, cost, ease, availability, , safety/scares, diet, health, organic /vegetarian etc… …and where are you most likely to eat such a meal?

10. What foods do you most enjoy cooking…least enjoy?…when and why?…for a special occasion?

C. To enquire about eating habits when little or no cooking takes place such as when eating in restaurants/canteens, or using some ready prepared/ take away foods. To consider regional differences, global similarities, culinary cultures and their influence on future food habits.

11. Do you consider diet and cooking to be similar throughout the UK/France or are there regional differences….do you think eating habits are becoming more similar the world over?….which countries do you think still regard cooking as an important activity?

12. And finally, what changes do you think there will be in relation to cooking say over the next 10 years?…and does it matter?

Appendix 4: Collection of personal information (Phase 1- English)

Personal Information.

Date and time:	
Location:	
Personal Details.	
Name:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
E-mail:	
Gender:	Male: Female:
Date of birth:	
Nationality:	
Year of entry into UK:	
Ethnic origin:	
Occupation:	
Highest educational qualification achieved and type of establishment attended:	
Marital status:	
Number of adults living in the house: **Your relationship to adult 1:** **Your relationship to adult 2:** **Your relationship to adult 3:** **Etc.**	
Number of children (under 18) living in the house: **Relationship to child 1** **Relationship to child 2** **Relationship to child 3** **Etc.**	

Appendix 5: Information & consent form for research participants (Phase 1 - English)

Information & Consent Form for Research Participants

1. Should you agree to be interviewed as part of my research the interviews tend to last between 30-45 minutes but it does not matter if they take more or less time.

2. I am employed as a Senior Lecturer at Thames Valley University, London and this research forms part of my academic studies for The City University, London, where I am enrolled as a research student.

3. I am investigating domestic food practices and influences on cooking habits in the home in both Britain and France. The interview does not intend to test your cooking skills but to simply enquire about the everyday use of food within the home and any thoughts you might have on the subject.

4. I would like to record the interview on to an audio cassette so that I can capture the exact words you use when discussing the subject. Please let me know if you object to this or at any time feel uncomfortable about the interview being recorded. If I make any notes during the interview you are welcome to read these.

5. Everything that is discussed will be treated in complete confidence and the recordings and material used from the interviews will be stored and used anonymously.

6. There is no obligation to answer any question you do not want to and please let me know if you do not fully understand any question or would like clarification.

Many thanks for your time and contribution to my research.

Name:.....(please print)

Signature:.....Date:.....

Andy Gatley
The London School of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure
Thames Valley University
St. Mary's Road
London, W5 5RE
Tel 020 8231 2239
Email andy.gatley@tvu.ac.uk

Appendix 6: Interview schedule (Phase 1 – French)

Translated Interview

A. **Introduction, general questions and access information of foods eaten in the home, current attitudes to food, cooking and a "proper meal", importance of cooking, recollection and comparison of memories of food and cooking**.

1. **On commence avec une question tres generale. Pouvez vous me dire quel genre d'aliments vous mangez a la maison?…a l'exterieur ?…les gouts de la famille?** *Lets start with a very general question. Can you tell me a little about the sorts of foods you eat at home?…..away from home?…your family's preferences?*

2. **Ces aliments sont ils differents de ceux que vous mangiez enfant?…quel style d'aliments et qu'est ce qui differe aujourd'hui…et pourquoi?** *Are they similar to the foods you ate as a child?….what were they and what are the differences…why?*

3. **Dans votre souvenir, passez vous autant de temps a cuisiner que vos parents…pourquoi et comment c'est possible? Utilisez vous des plats tous prepares.. .repas pris a l'exterieur ou plats a emporter…quelles sont les raisons?** *Do you spend as much time cooking as you remember your parents doing….why and how is this possible? ….. use of ready-prepared foods/convenience foods?….eating outside the home or take-aways… why is this?*

4. **En general pensez vous que cuisiner a la maison est important? Pourquoi?…pourquoi vous le faites/ne le faites pas?…pensez vous qu'aujourd'hui les gens cuisinent moins que les generations precedentes, et les jeunes…est ce important?** *Do you think it is important that people should cook in the home?…why?…why do you cook/not cook? …are people cooking less nowadays than a generation ago, young persons…is it important?*

5. **Pour vous un repas normal c'est quoi?** *What do you think makes up a "proper meal"?*

B. To access questions of skill and skill acquisition, preferences in cooking and influencing factors, decision making, frequency and attitudes to special meals and their cooking.

6. **Comment avez vous appris a cuisiner?…et aujourd'hui ou puisez vous vos connaisances pour apprendre la cuisine?…aimeriez vous apprendre plus?** *So how did you learn to cook?….and nowadays, what sources of information do you use to learn about cooking?…would you like to learn more?*

7. **Vous sentez vous a l'aise pour preparer un repas avec tous les ingredients de base?…differentes cuisson?…tout type d'aliment, etc.**

   How confident are you to cook a meal from basic ingredients?… cooking methods, …types of food, etc.

8. **Pouvez vous me dire quel genre d'aliment vous cuisinez au quotidien?…quand…cuisinez vous regulierement?…pourquoi?**
   Can you tell me a little about the sort of foods you tend to cook? …. when …how often do you cook? …why?

9. **Quelles sont les raisons qui influencent votre choix d'aliment?…les gouts des autres personnes dans le foyer, le temps, le cout, la facilite, l'offre, la securite alimentaire, le regime, le sante, le choix biologique/vegetarien etc…les differents lieus ou vous prenez ces repas**
   What sort of things influence your choice of foods to cook?…preferences of others in household, time, cost, ease, availability, , safety/scares, diet, health, organic /vegetarian etc… …and where are you most likely to eat such a meal.

10. **Quels sont les aliments que vous preferez cuisiner…le moins cuisiner?…quand et pourquoi?…pour une occasion particuliere?**
    What foods do you most enjoy cooking…least enjoy?…when and why?…for a special occasion?

C. To enquire about eating habits when little or no cooking takes place such as when eating in restaurants/canteens, or using some ready prepared/ take away foods. To consider regional differences, global similarities, culinary cultures and their influence on future food habits.

11. **Pensez vous que la facon de manger et de cuisiner est la meme partout en France ou avec des differences regionales?…Pensez vous que les habitudes alimentaires deviennent similaires sur toute la planete?…pour vous quels pays attachent beaucoup d'importance a la cuisine?**
    Do you consider diet and cooking to be similar throughout the UK/France or are there regional differences….do you think eating habits are becoming more similar the world over?….which countries do you think still regard cooking as an important activity?

12. **En definitif, dans les 10 ans a venir, quel sera l'evolution des habitudes alimentaires?.. est ce que c'est important?**
    And finally, what changes do you think there will be in relation to cooking say over the next 10 years?…and does it matter?

Appendix 7: Collection of personal information (Phase 1 – French)

Recueil D'Information

Le date et l'heure:	
Le lieu:	
Renseignements Personnel	
Nom:	
L'adresse, numero de tel. email,etc	
Sexe:	
Date de naissance:	
Nombre d'annees residant en France:	
Influence culturelle liee aux origines:	
Profession:	
Niveau des etudes. Etablissement frequentes.	
Situation famillialе:	
Le nombre de personnes qui habite dans le foyer:	
Nombre de personnes supplementaires vivant dans le foyer. **Lien avec l'adulte 1:** **Lien avec l'adulte 2:** **Lien avec l'adulte 3:** **Etc.**	
Le nombre des enfants (moins de 18 ans) dans le foyer: **Lien avec l'enfant 1** **Lien avec l'enfant 2** **Lien avec l'enfant 3** **Etc…**	

Appendix 8:- Information & consent form for research participants (Phase 1 - French)

Thames Valley University

Faculty of Professional Studies

Fiche d'information et de consentement pour les participants à la recherche

1. Si vous acceptez de participer à mes recherches, les entretiens dureront environ 30-45 minutes mais c'est sans importnace si ils sont plus ou moins longs.

2. Je suis employé en tant que professeur d'université à Thames Valley University et mes recherches font partie integrante de mes etudes. Je suis inscrit en tant qu'étudiant à l'université.

3. J'enquete sur les pratiques alimentaires à la maison et les influences sur les habitudes de cuisine en Grande Bretagne et en France. Lentretien ne cherche pas à de tester vos competences en cuisine mais de me renseigner sur les pratiques alimentaires quotidiennes pratiquées à la maison ainsi que d'avoir vos idées sur ce sujet.

4. Je souhaiterais enregistrer l'entretien sur une cassette audio afin de m'assurer d'avoir vos mots exactes sur le sujet. Merci de bien vouloir me faire savoir si cela vous pose un probleme ou si cela vous mets mal à l'aise. Les notes que je prendrais pendant l'entretien seront à votre disposition.

5. Tout élement de discussion sera traité en toute confidentialité et les enregistrements et materiels utilisés pendant l'entretien le seront de façon anonyme.

6. Vous n'avez aucune obligation de repondre à toutes les questions. Merci de bien vouloir me dire si vous ne comprenez pas une question ou avez besoin de clarifications.

Je vous remercie pour votre temps et votre contribution à mes recherches

Name:.....(please print)

Signature:.....Date:.....

Andy Gatley
The London School of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure
Thames Valley University
St. Mary's Road
London, W5 5RE
Tel 020 8231 2239
Email andy.gatley@tvu.ac.uk

Appendix 9: Quota sampling frame for use in France & Britain

Revised Quota Sampling Frame For Use in France and Britain

	Within or Outside Family		With or Without Higher Education		TOTAL
Male	**Within**	**Outside**	**With**	**Without**	
10					
	1		1		2
	1		1		2
	1		1		2
	1			1	2
	1			1	2
		1	1		2
		1	1		2
		1		1	2
		1		1	2
		1		1	2
Female					
10					
	1		1		2
	1		1		2
	1		1		2
	1			1	2
	1			1	2
		1	1		2
		1	1		2
		1		1	2
		1		1	2
		1		1	2
Total	**10**	**10**	**10**	**10**	

Appendix 10: Sample profile & coding of interviewees (Phase 1)

Phase 1 Sample Profile & Coding of Interviewees

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**10**	
Code	**Nationality**	**Gender**	**Age**	**Life-stage**	**No. in Household**	**Occupation**	**Post 18 Ed?**	**Location of interview**	
A married French woman, born 13/04/52, lived 6 years in Algeria with parents as child. Completed 3 years college education and had worked as health worker but no longer in paid employment. Lives with husband and adolescent son from previous marriage who stays with them alternate weeks. (ex husband also interviewed - 1/F/10/M) in Nantes where interview took place. She was a confident cook, enjoyed cooking, especially '*traditional dishes. Maybe more now because I have more time than when I worked' and* liked the social aspect of eating with friends and family.									
1/F/1/F	French	F	49	Family	2 or 3	Housewife	Yes	Nantes	
A widowed French woman born 9/3/27. Previously separated from husband (20+ years ago) and had led much of her recent life alone and retired. Has grown up daughter and son, both of whom also interviewed (1/F/5/F & 1/F/6/M). Willing to be interviewed but rather nervous despite explanation and daughter being present at interview that took place in her own apartment in Nantes centre/suburb. She explained that she felt confident to cook a range of simple meals, that she rarely ate outside the home and that her cooking/living habits etc were very regular.									
1/F/2/F	French	F	74	Widow & Empty nester	1	Retired	No	Nantes	
	French	M	**FAILED TO RECORD**					Nantes	
	French	F	**FAILED TO RECORD**					Nantes	

A single French woman born 22/2/51 and daughter of 1/F/2/F. University educated and worked as high school teacher. No children and lives in apartment in Nantes suburb/centre where interview took place. She was a confident and regular cook with a repertoire of dishes and thought cooking was important and that people should take responsibility for their diets and added: '*It is important…it is a way of living. The first thing that is important is the quality of what we eat'.* Recently modified diet due to high cholesterol. Last 2 interview questions not completed due to her time constraints.									
1/F/5/F	French	F	51	Single	1	Teacher	Yes	Nantes	
A single French man, born 23/9/58 and brother to 1/F/5/F and son to 1/F/2/F. No post 18 education, currently unemployed but had previously worked in docks as a logistics technician and also as a driver. Lives alone in an apartment in Nantes centre/suburb but interviewed at sister's apartment above. Little reluctant/nervous to develop answers initially but then discussed how he was confident and able to cook 'from scratch' although preferred not to cook. Did occasionally eat at fast food outlets but hoped ready meals and fast foods were a passing fad.									
1/F/6/M	French	M	43	Single	1	Unemployed	No	Nantes	
A married French man, born 26/6/55, university educated (BAC + 5) and self-employed as architect working from studio in home in Nantes suburb where he lives with wife (also interviewed 1/F/8/F) and two children under 10. Interviewed in his home and he explained how his wife was not employed outside the home and did most of the cooking although he might cook a *'couple of times a week'* and felt confident to prepare '*simple things'* such as steaks. Had recently been diagnosed with high blood pressure and was now more mindful of diet.									
1/F/7/M	French	M	46	Family	4	Architect	Yes	Nantes	

A married French woman and wife of 1/F/7/M, born 30/8/57. Grew up in a family of ten children with limited budget and had often helped in the kitchen. Left school at 18 and was not employed other than housewife. Lives with husband (above) and her 2 young children in Nantes suburb where interview also took place. She enjoyed cooking, was confident, although *'not an expert'* and cooked most midday and evening meals for the family. She also liked talking about food and cooking and the interview lasted fifty minutes.									
1/F/8/F	French	F	44	Family	4	Housewife	No	Nantes	
A married French man, born 1/5/46, university educated and employed as high school teacher. No children and lives with wife in own home in Nantes centre/suburb where also interviewed. Had lived a total of 7 years in French territories/colonies in Indian Ocean also mainly as a teacher. Considered that he *'cooked very little'* and lacked confidence but went on to say that he cooked every evening. Thought cooking skills were important so as not to *'break the ties to our culture'* but found shopping, cooking and clearing up a chore and the reason he often ate out.									
1/F/9/M	French	M	55	Married, No children	2	Teacher	Yes	Nantes	
A French man, born 12/5/55, university educated and employed as high school teacher. Lives in rented house in Nantes with female partner where also interviewed. Child from previous relationship lives in house alternate weeks along with the 2 children of present partner's children. Mother of his child also interviewed (1/F/1/F – see above). He enjoyed cooking, especially for family and friends and was concerned about a powerful, global food industry and hoped '*people will continue to eat around a table and share some pleasant times together. That is what food and eating is all about'.* .									
1/F/10/M	French	M	46	Family	2 or 5	Teacher	Yes	Nantes	

A single French man, born 10/2/66, university educated (BAC + 2), employed as a computer technician and lives alone in apartment in Nantes centre/suburb. Interviewed in the home of 1/F/10/M. He was becoming more confident with cooking and found it '*…very satisfying to prepare some food and eat well'.* He cooked most days, would sometimes *'grab'* a takeaway, eat in a restaurant or use some convenience foods but preferred fresh foods cooked at home because '*You know what you are eating because when you go out you don't know how it has been prepared'.*									
1/F/11/M	French	M	35	Single	1	Technician	Yes	Nantes	
A married French man, born in Algeria to Algerian parents on 3/1/55, university educated (BAC + 5), moved to France when he was 25 and now self employed as fruit and vegetable market retailer/manager in and around Nantes. Lives just outside Nantes with wife, 2 children plus one stepson and interviewed in the home of 1/F/10/M. Due to his working hours he ate out at lunch times and rarely cooked although enjoyed cooking and experimenting for family and friends when he had the time. He was particularly concerned that children grew up to enjoy good quality (French) foods.									
1/F/12/M	French/ Algerian	M	46	Family	5	Fruit & Veg Trader	Yes	Nantes	
A French woman and partner of 1/F/13/M, born 13/5/67, no post 18 education and employed as a librarian. Lives in house in Nantes centre/suburb with partner and their two young children and location of interview. Considers cooking to be '*a pleasure…part of everyday life…to take the time to prepare something to eat. To eat well is special and it's a good moment for the family to be all together'.* She thought food habits were changing and that *'traditional cooking will be reserved for the weekends and days off'.* Interview a little rushed as she needed to return to work.									
1/F/13/F	French	F	34	Family	4	Librarian	No	Nantes	

A French man and partner to 1/F/12/F, born 14/2/64, no post 18 education and employed as an electrician. Lives in house in Nantes centre/suburb with partner and their two young children and location of interview. He enjoyed cooking, especially for friends, was confident and said he cooked *'at least once a day'* although sometimes it would have to be *'something quick, maybe steak and chips',* especially as he often returned home for lunch. Like his father, when friends were invited for a meal he would like to experiment with cooking and cook '*something that you don't have everyday'*
.

1/F/14/M	French	M	37	Family	4	Electrician	No	Nantes	

A young, single French man, born 20/1/79, university educated (BAC + 2) and employed as an IT developer in Nantes. Parents separated and now lived with grandparents just outside Nantes who tended to cook for him. He said he had the confidence to cook most of what he wanted and enjoyed cooking when he had the time and space. He also often preferred to *'do other things'* than cook and found '*takeaways and drive-ins...like McDonalds'* to be very practical but also liked dining in '*good restaurants'* and at times enjoyed cooking *'a really nice meal'.*

1/B/15/M	French	M	23	Single lives with grandparents	3	IT Developer	Yes	London	

A London based, married, British man and husband to 1/B/17/F, born 5/9/47, college educated and employed as an architect. No children, lives in own house with wife where he was interviewed. Cooking was shared and because busy lives, meals had to be quick, fresh, nourishing '*and low in fat and sugar because of weight problems'.* These were often eaten off the lap in front of TV. He enjoyed local, ethnic restaurants and would often have *'cheap and cheerful'* Indian takeaway home delivered on a Friday. He liked *'the social thing'* of a meal especially at weekends.

1/B/16/M	British	M	55	Married, No children	2	Architect	Yes	London	

A London based, married, British woman and wife to 1/B/16/M, born 22/3/47, college educated and employed as a lecturer. No children, lives in own house with husband wife where she was interviewed. Cooking was shared and fairly mundane during the busy week and she did not much enjoy it although very much enjoyed food, eating out in (ethnic) restaurants and eating with friends, when her husband would normally cook and there was more time. She said she lacked creativity and if by herself would often prepare something just to fill up on but rarely chose ready meals									
1/B/17/F	British	F	55	Married, No children	2	Teacher	Yes	London	
A London based, widowed British woman, born 22/3/47, college educated and employed as an Information Manager. No children, lives in own house where she was interviewed and with one paying guest/tenant. Finding herself living alone again she did not want to spend a lot of time cooking but would *'put meals together …I mean I do cook as well, I usually do something very quick…at the weekend I spend a bit longer.* She said she was not an adventurous cook but was prepared to adapt recipes and experiment with familiar foods and enjoyed cooking more elaborate meals for friends.									
1/B/18/F	British	F	55	Widow, No children	1 or 2	Information Manager	Yes	London	
A London based, married, British man and husband to 1/B/20/F, born 2/10/44, university educated and employed as lecturer. Lives in own house where he was interviewed with 2nd wife and her daughter from previous marriage and has himself 3 daughters from 1st marriage who stay most weekends. There was a rota as regards cooking and shopping to ensure the work was equally divided between himself and his wife and that he enjoyed '*the satisfaction of cooking'* and eating together as a family, even if the television was on. Last 2 questions omitted due to his time constraints.									
1/B/19/M	British	M	58	Family	3 or 5	Teacher	Yes	London	

A London based, married, British woman and wife to 1/B/19/M, born 31/5/47, university educated and employed as a district nurse. Lives in own house where she was interviewed with 2nd husband and her daughter from previous marriage and with the 3 daughters of current husband who stay most weekends. A hot family meal was prepared every evening by either her or her husband and was *'sort of cuisine from all over the world… it is very cosmopolitan'*. She enjoyed home prepared food but due to work/time constraints resented having to spend time cooking regularly.									
1/B/20/F	British	F	55	Family	3 or 5	Nurse	Yes	London	
A married British man, born in Belfast in 14/12/45, university educated and self employed as an optometrist in Barry, near Cardiff where interview also took place. Lives with wife, their child plus daughter from previous marriage and her boyfriend. Has an extended family who are largely vegetarian and include 3 children from previous marriage all who lodge in family home occasionally. Although busy, he *'loved'* cooking, was confident and enjoyed spending a couple of hours preparing a meal in the kitchen-dining room with *'a glass of wine while we're doing it'.*									
1/B/21/M	British	M	58	Family	5+	Optometrist	Yes	Cardiff	
A married British woman born on 3/11/73, no higher education and works as secretary in Cardiff where she was also interviewed but only 30 minutes available. She is a diabetic & lives nearby with husband and 20 month child. She had little time for cooking but enjoyed '*readymade meals...because I am working and my husband works away and I have a young son so it is convenience really, still healthy and fresh vegetables with that'.* They treated themselves to *'an Indian the last Friday of the month'* and would normally have a roast meal on a Sunday .									
1/B/22/F	British	F	30	Family	3	Secretary	No	Cardiff	

A married British man, born 22/4/02 with one year of university education (level 4) and employed as manager for BT where interview took place. (He was also responsible for arranging other BT interviews. Lives with wife and 2 children just outside Cardiff. He tried to share the cooking and shopping with his wife and because of his and his wife's work and *'schedules'* they tended to cook a range of mainly *'convenience foods'* and *'oven ready meals'* which might be served with fresh vegetables. He always cooked the Sunday lunch which he enjoyed and got '*a sense of pride as well'.*									
1/B/23/M	British	M	40	Family	4	Manager	Yes	Cardiff	
A married British woman, born 29/9/61, no university education and working as an administrator for BT in Cardiff where interview also took place. Lives with husband and son near Cardiff, & eldest son has left home. Initially nervous but appeared clearly passionate about food and opposed to the 'commercialisation of food'. She very much enjoyed cooking, was confident, found it *'fun'* and was *'very fussy'* about what she ate. She explained: *'I spend hours in there* [the kitchen & alone] *cooking...puddings and desserts and cakes and …Sunday... we have about 10-15 people up for dinner'.*									
1/B/24/F	British	F	42	Family	3+	Administrator	No	Cardiff	
A married British/'Welsh' man, born 9/12/52, achieved HNC at catering college but after 1 year as chef at BT in Cardiff, re-trained as a telephone engineer. Interviewed at work. Lives with wife and 2 children just outside Cardiff and came from a rural background. He enjoyed cooking, unlike his wife, and explained that they ate: '*Pasta, roast dinners now maybe twice a week...we occasionally have casseroles, Friday nights we tend to go out…just my wife and I,… the children, 14 and 16, stay home and eat…we don't eat as much together round the table, maybe three time a week'.*									
1/B/25/M	British/ Welsh	M	49	Family	4	Tel. engineer	Yes	Cardiff	

A married British man, born 30/12/59, military education & 14 year army career but now employed as BT wngineer at Cardiff where interview also took place. Manchester background but living just outside Cardiff with wife, 2 step children and joint child and *'a total of 9 children in family'* from previous relationships.Had partly learnt to cook in the army but cooked infrequently because: '*My wife won't let me. She has the food ready for me when I get home'.* The children enjoyed convenience foods such as *'burgers, fish fingers'* and treats such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut and KFCs.									
1/B/26/M	British	M	44	Family	5+	Tel. engineer	No	Cardiff	
A married 'Welsh'/British woman born 5/5/46, no qualifications given and works as secretary in Cardiff where interview took place. Lives nearby with husband and children had left home but lived locally and often in contact.. Appeared not to enjoy food/cooking very much although confident to cook the *'basics'* and thought cooking was important as it was *'cheaper'* and *'you know what you are eating'*. This was also important as she wanted to lose weight and had become a *'bit of a health freak'. H*er husband never cooked although *'he does make a nice cup of tea'.*									
1/B/27/F	British/ Welsh	F	57	Empty Nester	2	Secretary	No	Cardiff	
A single British man, with Estonian grandparents and born 15/5/73. University educated and employed as an administrator in Cardiff where he was also interviewed. Lives nearby with girlfriend, brother and paying tenant. He had often helped his father cook, enjoyed cooking was fairly confident and had '*about five kinds of nice meals I can do from scratch'* and did the majority of the cooking at home: '*I don't really look at it as a chore…but I do get a bit bored with doing the frozen stuff'.* He enjoyed sport and outdoor activities and wanted to follow healthy dietary guidelines.									
1/B/28/M	British	M	30	Single with Cohabitees	4	Administrator	Yes	Cardiff	

A single British woman with continental European parents, born 11/2/61 and university educated. A complex life and due to cancer & treatment had since become an administrator in Cardiff, where interviewed, and had also returned home to live with her ageing parents nearby. She tended to cook the evening meal although at weekends '*we all end up cooking together'. C*omplex family dietary requirements, including her and her mother being '*overweigh*t' resulted in the preparation of complicated diets. The subject of food appeared to illicit a lot of happy and sad memories.									
1/B/29/F	British	F	43	Single with parents	3	Administrator	Yes	Cardiff	

Key to Phase 1 Sample Details & Coding of Interviewees

Column	Information
1 Code	First number refers to phase of research, (1 or 2), next letter refers to nationality (French or British), next number is personal identifier and refers to the order in which respondents were interviewed. Final letter refers to gender i.e. male or female. Thus 1/F/2/M refers to a phase 1 interview, with a French person whose personal identifier number is 2 and they are male.
2 Nationality	As referred to by respondent i.e. French or British. Some respondents also added extra remarks e.g. Welsh or Algerian and these have been added accordingly.
3 Gender	Male or Female
4 Age	Record of their age at time of interview.
5 Lifestage	For clarification it may also be necessary to also refer to 'No. in Household' column. Refers to whether respondent co-habits but with no children, lives as a family with co-habitee and siblings, is single and lives alone, is single but may live with other co-habitees e.g. grandparents, widow empty nester (children left family home) or widow not having had children.
6 No. in Household	Records number living in household and due to divorces, split families, step children, siblings boy/girlfriends having moved in etc. number in household may vary at different times. As such numbers tend to indicate minimum and maximum.
7 Occupation	As recorded by respondent although sometimes simplified e.g. college lecturer becomes teacher.
8 Post 18 Ed.	Respondents were asked to record their highest educational achievement. If this was achieved after they were 18, e.g. university qualification incl HNC, BAC + 2 etc they received a 'yes'.
10 Location	Refers to where the interviews were carried out such as London or Cardiff in Britain or Nantes in France.

Appendix 11: Organisation and comparison of key findings of phase 1 data

Organisation and Comparison of Key Findings of Phase 1 Data

1) Memories of food/cooking in the past.

- The French sample were more likely to recall good memories of food from their childhood while the majority of British respondents remembered their mothers to be good plain cooks, even experts at roast and two veg. plus more evidence of home baking in the past than in France.

2) Why cook?

- Respondents both in Britain and France reported enjoying cooking, especially if part of a leisure activity and thought it was an important activity. However they also stated that due to time constraints they often needed to modify their approach to meal preparation.

- French respondents stressed the need to be responsible for their own diet and the importance of knowing what goes into home cooked meals such as the quality of the ingredients and the nutrients. While the social side of cooking was mentioned in both Britain and France, the French also stressed socialisation of the family and links to culture.

3) What is cooked and how changed from the past?

- The British sample commented upon traditional/'proper' meals which were now prepared less frequently, as were cooked breakfasts, with more snacking and assembling of cooked ingredients.

- Respondents both in Britain and France commented on greater variety of foodstuffs available and in London and Nantes discussed greater internationalisation of foodstuffs and the availability of 'ethnic' foods.

- Cardiff respondents, especially the youngest ones, were more likely to discuss the use of convenience foods, citing reasons such as lack of time or tiredness and even laziness and also acknowledged feelings of guilt. However they also commented upon such foods not being very 'healthy' and as they wanted to eat healthy fresh foods often sought 'quick and easy' solutions that combined convenience foods such as ready made lasagne with a fresh, 'healthy' salad or vegetable. The French respondents reluctantly acknowledged occasional use of convenience foods due to constraints of work/children.

- The preparation of sauces and other complex preparations were more frequently cited in France although the London respondents considered 'ethnic' styled foods had infiltrated their repertoire.

. 4) Who cooks and shops/how. Gender roles

- The data collected from the sample suggested that cooking was less gender differentiated and there was evidence of men cooking more than women, especially for special occasions but with some variations. More men positively commented on their enjoyment of cooking but percentage of the everyday cooking done by them unknown.

- Men in both countries also shopped, especially for 'occasional meals', although among the British sample, evidence that they were not always trusted with aspects of shopping.

5) Location of cooking

A) Use of convenience foods

- The French and both British samples used some convenience foods/ ready made meals to albeit to varying degrees. It was often cited as an indulgence such as when a key member of the household was not present or when eating alone and this pattern was more prevalent among the Cardiff respondents. The purchasing of prepared foods in France was often from a local *traiteur/charcuterie* and not from a supermarket.

- The British sample was more likely to mention the purchase of tinned pulses and beans to be used in the assembly of a quick salad or for use in 'ethnic' styled dishes. Lack of time was a key determinant and among the Cardiff respondents, so was the lack of enjoyment of cooking.

B) Eating outside the home/Use of restaurants

- All appeared to use restaurants and more so than their parents had. However, this was a more frequent occurrence in France and this sample displayed greater familiarity and had a more relaxed attitude to the experience.

- The London sample discussed the use of restaurants for celebratory/family events while the French sample discussed eating out with friends and socialising as something occurring more regularly. Children influenced where people chose to eat with the French respondents mentioning creperies, pizzerias, etc while the British samples mentioned branded/themed restaurants, often with special offers, being preferred by their children. Special 'meal deals' were also cited by the Cardiff sample.

- The London sample appreciated and stressed the availability of good 'ethnic' restaurants which also offered value for money.

- At lunchtimes, there was greater evidence of the French sample eating in work canteens or cafeterias, eating in local restaurants and also of returning home for

lunch. Of the British sample, nobody returned home for lunch and there was greater prevalence of people preparing a lunchtime snack and taking it in to eat whilst at work.

C) Use of Takeaways and fast food outlets.

- The more traditional style of take-aways in France *(le friterie/merguez*) were used in people's youth and continued to be used in special instances such as when watching live football matches.

- In Britain, the traditional fish and chip shop was referred to, but due to cost and changing eating styles, 'ethnic' take-aways including those offering home delivery were now preferred. The concept of either buying a take-away or having one delivered to be eaten at home was almost unknown in France, other than the use of a *'traiteur'*.

- The vast majority of respondents in both countries expressed dislike of the major chain or franchise type of 'American style' fast food outlets although many had used them occasionally. The presence of children in the family increased their familiarity with such establishments. The youngest respondent in France had regularly used such fast food outlets at lunchtimes and another French respondent said he used them when abroad.

6) Where food is consumed in the home and the watching of TV at mealtimes?

- There was evidence among the French sample of a more open plan downstairs area with a larger, centrally located dining table and limited or little used alternative seating. As such the dining table served as a focus of social life including the consumption of meals. Among the British sample there was evidence that the dining room was likely to be a separate and often more formal room and because of the availability of alternative seating on the ground floor such as in a 'sitting room', the dining table was less of a focus for social life.

- Among the French sample, the watching of TV during the eating of a meal was generally not accepted although exceptions were made. Those in the French sample who lived alone were more likely to cite watching TV whilst eating. The British sample was more likely to watch TV whether in the dining room whilst eating a meal at the table or whilst eating a meal off their laps in the 'sitting room'.

7) Level of Skill/Confidence

- The samples indicated that they were fairly confident to prepare a range of foods although the French indicated a greater level of pride in their ability to cook, whilst the British sample expressed greater reticence.

8) How learnt about cooking/Sources of information?

- Few respondents in either France or Britain claimed that they had learnt about cooking as children from their parents in the home. School was also rarely cited as a location where they first learnt to cook. Some female respondents from London and Cardiff mentioned 'domestic science' and cake making at school, but considered it of little significance. Overall, the most cited method of learning how to cook was after leaving the parental home and being driven by necessity to experiment and to seek advice from friends.

- Three of the eight French males cited learning from girlfriends and the importance of learning to cook so as to invite girlfriends home. One of the two London males cited learning from his 'mates' whilst sharing 'digs' and a Cardiff respondent cited learning whilst a 'scout'.

- Cookery books and recipes were used by the French and British sample. The London and Cardiff sample often commented upon celebrity chef shows unlike the French respondents. Few French respondents wanted to learn more about cooking while many of the British did.

9) The Proper Meal

- The French sample emphasised defined and structured courses, although there was evidence of a reduction in the number of courses.

- The French respondents reported how a 'proper meal' always had to contain a '*plat principal'* and whilst the British sample discussed 'meat and two veg' as constituting a 'proper meal', in reality they indicated that there was increasing variations from this format.

10) Influencing Factors

A) Anxieties/Health

- The French sample exhibited a more philosophical approach to food scares and displayed greater confidence with state regulatory systems. Individuals from the London sample reported distrust of the British regulatory systems and organic foods were more popular among this sample.

- The French sample was less anxious about genetically modified foods and more concerned about quality and a balanced diet and this informed their thinking on nutrition and decision making. The British sample reflected a more chaotic perception of nutrition, with some mixed messages with reference to a range of governmental advice and its interpretation. They also reported greater evidence of complicated food avoidance patterns and dietary requirements.

C) Seasonality

- Only those among the French sample mentioned seasonality as an influence on food choice although home grown vegetables were mentioned by some Cardiff respondents.

D) Time.

- Complex working and living arrangements as well as lack of time were a universal influence on cooking and leisure time was cited as the preferred time to cook.

- Interestingly, as a result of such working and living arrangements and lack of time, there was greater reliance on such things as pasta and in Britain, such things as stuffed jacket potatoes, while the French discussed quickly cooked grilled meats. The London sample was more inclined to mention a mechanistic, re-fuelling type approach to cooking and eating although also reported some innovative approaches to the subject. Both the London and Cardiff samples also relied more on takeaways particularly at the end of the week.

11) Social Aspects

- The majority of those interviewed in each country enjoyed sitting down with family and/or friends to share a home cooked meal. The food was an important element as was wine and a relaxed environment. The preparation of something out of the ordinary was important but it was often drawn from a repertoire of favourite, 'tried and tested' dishes. The use of cookery books and recipes to supplement such a repertoire of dishes was more apparent among the British sample and such effort increased anxieties. Both the French and British samples stressed the importance of the addition of extra courses or making extra effort for such occasions.

- Among the French sample, having friends round to share food was more frequently reported while the London sample felt more constrained by lack of time and reported greater anxiety. From the data it was apparent that such social events in Britain were less spontaneous and were more planned and formal in style such as a 'dinner party'. Two Cardiff respondents did very little cooking for friends or family and would prefer to 'go out'.

12) Food Culture/Regional Cookery

- The French sample demonstrated great pride and confidence in French cuisine and its longevity and commented on how it was engrained in the French psyche, underpinned cultural events and confirmed social belonging.

- The French sample considered regional differences in cuisine remained significant while the London sample struggled to identify British regional cuisine and that what had existed had been overwhelmed as a result of greater cosmopolitanism, affluence and access to industrially produced foods.

13) Globalisation of food culture

- Some of the French respondents considered there to be some benefits resulting from ‘globalisation’ including greater variety of foodstuffs and restaurants and a less insular outlook generally. There was some agreement that cultures were always changing and fewer blamed multi-national companies (MNCs), considering that they exist because consumers want their products. However concerns about the homogenising effect of globalisation of culture and the increasingly industrialisation of food production were also voiced.

- The British sample expressed concern about the concentration of power in the hands of fewer and more powerful MNCs within the food supply system and a general sense of powerlessness.

14) Future of Cooking and Eating

- The growth in eating outside the home, and for the British eating ‘take-aways’ at home, was often raised and that such a trend is likely to continue due to societal changes and that it was enjoyable.

- The French sample considered the consumption of fast foods was no more than a fad or ’counter culture’ for the young and that they would in time return to traditional eating and cooking habits.

- The French sample reported how food, cooking and eating continued to occupy a central position in French life and they were more confident that the role of cooking would remain significant. They recognised that it would be modified as a result of lack of time but that traditions would remain and that there was increased demand for high quality, fresh produce and choice. Many French respondents considered that the future direction of food culture was the responsibility of the individual and could not be blamed on a powerful food industry.

Summary of key differences between France and Britain:

- **General:** Amongst those interviewed, cooking remains an enjoyable and significant activity for most respondents although lack of time was identified as a constraint. As a result, they reported simpler, less traditional meals being prepared from a greater variety of foodstuffs. Processed foods were increasingly purchased but more prevalent among the British sample. Food related activities were now less gender differentiated

- **France:** The sample were more relaxed and less anxious around the subject of food, more likely to eat with friends, sit around a dining table, visit restaurants, mention eating as part of socialisation which linked individuals to a French identity, underpinned cultural and family events and confirmed social belonging. They were less inclined to believe in any ‘conspiracy theory’ and prioritised the need for the individual to act responsibly when selecting food and maintaining a

healthy diet. The French sample had a more fundamental and influential understanding of nutrition. They exhibited confidence and pride when discussing cooking and most would regularly cook complex meals from raw, often seasonal, ingredients although a range of convenience products were also used on occasions often purchased from specialist shops. Few wanted to learn more about cookery. Lunch, whilst at work was more likely to be a social event taking place in a cafeteria, restaurant or by returning home to a cooked meal. There was confidence in the continuity of cooking in the home and the existence of regional cuisines.

- **Britain:** Amongst those interviewed, attitudes and confidence in relation to cooking were more varied and many exhibited some anxieties in relation to food supply, diet, cooking certain foods and cooking for others. Meals appeared less central to social life and there was greater evidence of snacking, assembling meals and eating off laps in front of the TV. The hosting of ‘dinner parties’ appeared more formal and stressful and less common than friends eating together in France. Themed restaurants were used especially for celebratory meals, and ‘ethnic’ restaurants were popular especially among the London sample. Lunches at work were often brought in from home and eaten alone. Unlike the French sample, the use of take-aways, especially Indian or Chinese, to be eaten at home was common and these were often delivered and for some was an end of week institution. Many enjoyed celebrity chef shows and wanted to learn more about cooking. Regional cuisines were considered unrecognisable and many were fearful of the future cooking abilities and diets of those brought up on fast and/or convenience foods.

Appendix 12: Biographical profile of phase 1 respondents

Biographical profile of phase 1 respondents

French respondents

Respondent 1/F/1/F

A French woman, aged 49 at the time of the interview which took place in her home in Nantes which she shares with her husband and son from a previous marriage who stays with them alternate weeks (other weeks the son stays with father/ex-husband, 1/F/10/M, who was also interviewed). As a child she lived six years in Algeria with her parents. Post 18 she completed 3 years of college education to further train as health worker/district nurse which has been her main occupation. She currently describes herself as housewife. Interview progressed well and husband was in the house but not present during the interview which lasted approximately forty minutes.

She described how she enjoyed cooking mainly fresh ingredients and felt it was important to provide a healthy balanced diet, especially for her thirteen year old son. She had learnt to cook partly from her mother and explained how such Breton/Normandy food cultures still influenced her cooking. She considered herself to be a confident cook and enjoyed the social aspects of sitting and eating round the table with friends and family both at home and also in restaurants. Now she was no longer working outside the home she enjoyed spending more time cooking and said:

> *I don't have a microwave, so it's true I tend to cook lots of traditional dishes. Maybe more now because I have the time than when I worked. One must have the time. I like cooking, taking my time.*

She was fairly confident that cooking and regional French culinary cultures would survive but accepted that there was greater variety of international foods and culinary styles. She largely felt positive about the increased variety of foodstuffs available throughout the year but was also aware of the increase in product standardisation and convenience/ready made foods that she believed inevitably would have some impact on French cooking cultures.

Respondent 1/F/2/F

A French woman and the eldest person interviewed, being 74 at the time of the interview which took place in her home in Nantes. She separated from her husband over twenty years ago, described herself as widowed and had spent much of this time living alone. She had worked in a shop before having two children who are now both adults and were also interviewed separately (1/F/5/Fand 1/F/6/M) although her daughter was present for the duration of the interview. She was rather nervous and uncertain of the purpose of the interview despite explanation from daughter and self however she did become more relaxed as interview progressed. The interview lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Her living habits and indeed cooking habits appeared very routine and she said that her stomach was a little *'delicate'* these days. She explained that she felt confident to cook a range of simple meals and that she rarely ate outside the home. She discussed how she liked to eat a lot of fresh vegetables, including potatoes which she considered a regional speciality/staple. She commented that her main meal was in the evening when she might cook meat chops, usually with potatoes and also prepare a simple starter and sweet and that lunches were lighter and explained:

> *I eat a starter such as crudités, salads, tomatoes. A slice of ham with mashed potatoes, butter and mustard to season it all. Then a little chocolate cream dessert. I like cheese, but I do not eat it everyday*

She indicated that the war years had meant that she had grown up fast with little food and little time in which to prepare it. She had learnt some basics from her mother and then, after she married, out of necessity. Whilst she herself ate very little convenience foods/ready meals and discussed how food and cooking were a part of French identity she was also aware how that nowadays, with more women working outside the home, there was less time to cook than in previous generations and that eating habits were changing as a result.

Respondent 1/F/5/F

A single French woman aged fifty at the time of the interview which took place in her home in Nantes where she lives alone. She has no children, had been university educated and worked as a teacher of English. She expressed some interesting ideas in relation to food, cooking and society during the thirty five minute interview which was interrupted before the end. Her mother (1/F/2/F) and brother (1/F/6/M) were also interviewed.

She said she was a confident cook and had a repertoire of dishes she cooked regularly. Indeed she said:

> *I am comfortable enough to know what I am doing. It is not necessarily very elaborate, but it will be good.*

She had learnt little cooking from her, and when young, had bought, and still uses, ten volumes of 'Golden Fingers'. Otherwise she had learnt *'peu par peu'.* She thought cooking was important and stressed that people should take responsibility for their own diets and added:

> *It is important…it is a way of living. The first thing that is important is the quality of what we eat. Because one then knows what one eats.*

Because of high cholesterol, she had modified her diet and now generally had a single dish, such as a rice dish with chopped vegetables and meat or fish. The vegetables and fish might be tinned or frozen depending on the season but otherwise she ate few convenience products partly because of the taste and salt and sugar content. She also made quiche, composite vegetable dishes and batch cook some elaborate dishes. She often returned home for lunch and her evening meal was often spent in front of news programmes on the television.

She thought people, especially working mothers and others who worked, were cooking less than in the past and had the impression that others who did little/no work, unnecessarily filled their shopping trolleys with cheap processed foods. She was concerned that children in such households would not receive the necessary education and socialisation to be able to adequately cook and follow a healthy diet in future years.

Respondent 1/F/6/M

A French man aged forty three at the time of the interview which took place at his sister's (1/F/5/F) home. He was also a Nantais and described himself as single, living alone and currently unemployed. He left school at eighteen, had worked in the docks in Nantes, been made redundant and had since worked as a *'logistics technician'*. The interview lasted half an hour and he was initially reluctant to develop his answers although he did later relax. His mother (1/F/2/F) and sister(1/F/5/F) were also interviewed.

He considered that he was confident to cook certain foods, single dishes that he was familiar with. However, he did discuss some quite complex dishes he cooked for friends and continued:

> *Yes, I think it is important that people should cook in the home. In fact it's a paradox but it's true that the times when I prepare a meal I much enjoy it. I don't know why I don't get round to doing it more often. When I invite people over I always cook and I like doing it, but I do not do it very often, despite everything.*

He said he did not spend a lot of time cooking because it did not *'really appeal'* to him but when he did cook this was largely 'from scratch' although he also used his microwave to re-heat certain ready meals. He described how he would occasionally use McDonalds, pizza takeaways and the like, especially if abroad with work and at lunch time when he might be rushed. He said that he had learnt to cook largely from girlfriend(s) when in his early twenties and continued to ask friends for advice in relation to cooking. He considered that regional cuisine remained vibrant in France and that '*regions have their own culinary identity'.* He also considered there was some backlash to ready meals and also fast food with new restaurants opening serving traditional foods in competition to the fast food outlets. He concluded:

> *I think, I hope that that the period of ready-made meals will be over and people will return to traditional foods and the phenomenon of fast food is a fashion and I don't know if it will last. I think that it will stop.*

Respondent 1/F/7/M

A French man aged forty six at the time of the interview which took place in his home in Nantes where he lives with his wife and his two children. He studied at university and was now an architect. He was a little nervous at the start of the interview but then began to open up. The interview lasted about forty minutes and his wife, 1/F/8/F, was then interviewed.

He explained that his wife did most of the cooking in the home although he might cook a *'couple of times a week'* and felt confident to prepare '*simple things.'* He discussed how it was his responsibility to quickly cook any steaks and also sautéed seafood and steak dishes for special occasions – all of which he very much enjoyed eating. He worked from home where he would usually have his midday meal. He preferred to eat fresh, unprocessed foods and spoke of raw vegetables as a starter (crudites) and preparing a fresh and balanced diet for his children. Frozen and/or tinned fish and vegetables were also used depending on the seasons. He had also been diagnosed with high blood pressure and was now having to be more mindful of his own diet. He added:

> *It is important to cook and to eat things that are good and that are healthy.*

He considered that he had learnt little about cooking from his mother and had never cooked in his parent's house. Once he left home he *tried things out'* and also had a useful 'ABC' type guide to cooking. He was of the opinion that there was still identifiable regional food, cooking and culture in France but *'perhaps less now than before, because things are becoming more global'.* He viewed such changes as possibly a good thing and said:

> *…a bit of everything, very varied…It's not worse and in some ways it is better in that we know the cuisine from other parts of the world. There is more choice, people can buy ready made-meals or go to restaurants, fast food restaurants or foreign restaurants as well, but at home they retain some tradition. There are both…. both coexist ….*

Indeed he believed that France had *a 'culinary tradition, to eat well and that remains'* and that France was a country that appreciated good restaurants and good food perhaps more than other countries.

Respondent 1/F/8/F (EM)

A French woman, aged forty four at the time of the interview which took place in her home where she lives with her husband and her two children in Nantes. She left school at eighteen, has rarely been employed and described herself as a housewife. She clearly liked talking about food and cooking and the interview lasted fifty minutes. Her husband (1/F/7/M) was interviewed immediately before she was interviewed.

She enjoyed cooking, was confident, although 'not an expert' and cooked most midday and evening meals for the whole family although her husband did occasionally help. She now spent less time cooking elaborate dishes due to having children who anyway preferred simpler dishes. For her cooking was:

> *…important because above all cooking is something that we know how to appreciate, how to share, it is very convivial, and it is also an art, a discovery. I like cooking, it's true… I cannot find the word, it's like pottering about, you build something, you have the basic foundations that you respect then you can let your imagination run…*

She also liked to know *'the amount of salt, the amount of sugar and the freshness of the ingredients'* and the use of fresh seasonal fresh foods to create a balanced and varied diet was important to her. She limited her use of convenience foods although would use frozen fish and vegetables which she considered to be of good quality and explained:

> *In view of the fact that I am at home, I have the time and I prefer… I think that ready meals, there are very good ones, but…I think that for one's health they are not the best thing.*

Growing up in a family of ten children with a limited budget, she had often helped in the kitchen and learnt about cooking from watching her mother. Nowadays, she would take recipe ideas from magazines and newspapers and enjoyed using them to create something *'original'*. When friends came round to eat she never liked doing the same thing twice and said:

> *I have always taken a risk regarding this, in doing things that I never do usually, and discover them together with your friends. So at times it is a success, at other times not.*

She was concerned that particularly young adults were cooking less and relying more on ready meals and fast food and felt that they would lose the knowledge of how to cook and the taste for a range of *'real'* foods. She explained:

> *…a child's taste evolves. But they must be allowed to develop their taste. If you do not give a child the opportunity to try a bit of everything they will have very limited tastes when adult.*

She did consider that regional culinary cultures were still very evident, but recognised that the differences were decreasing, '*…an evolution…it's normal, all people mix, cultures mix, couples are more mixed*' and that this need not necessarily be a bad thing but:

> *What would be a pity is if younger generations forget their culinary traditions.*

Respondent 1/F/9/M

A French man, aged fifty five at the time of the interview which took place in his home in Nantes where he lives with his working wife. He has no children. University educated and employed as a high school teacher and had also spent seven years teaching and living on French speaking islands in the Indian Ocean. He spoke extensively about food and society and the interview lasted fifty five minutes.

He considered that he 'cooked very little' and lacked confidence but then went on to say that he cooked every evening and:

> *I can manage and that's partly because I have to because my wife cooks even less well than I do, therefore I am obliged to but…well, I can use basic ingredients. I can cook an omelette; I can cook a steak, a beef bourguignon, a stew, most meats and fish if you like but beyond that…*

At lunch times he tended to eat in the canteen at work or local inexpensive brasseries and if he returned home he ate simply believing that:

> *If you take some really fresh produce and of good quality and you don't overcook it, it should be okay.*

He thought cooking skills were important so as not to *'break the ties to our culture'* but found shopping, cooking and clearing up a chore and the reason he often ate out. He particularly disliked large supermarkets and said:

> *Its almost a personal vendetta against them, it's their style of operation, the way they present themselves as convenient and so on.*

He agreed that the *'malbouffe'* existed but considered it due to urban poverty and a lack of food and cultural education and that the abundance of fast food restaurants was the *'consequence not the cause'.* He did recognise that they conveniently offered a *'practical and quick'* solution for some people but generally considered that people eat better today than fifty years ago *'and I see no reason to worry ourselves'*. He tended to believe in the need of technology to ensure adequate and safe food for a growing global population.

Respondent 1/F/10/M

A French man, aged forty six at the time of the interview which took place in his home in Nantes that he shares with his female partner. Alternate weeks his son from a previous relationship (whose mother, respondent 1/F/1/F, was also interviewed) and the two daughters from his partner's previous relationship also stay in the house. University educated and employed as high school teacher, the interview lasted about fifty minutes and the respondent spoke extensively about food and politics.

He enjoyed cooking, especially the weeks the children were present and engaged in it more regularly than his partner. He thought it was important *'as regards taste and the pleasure of eating and it's rather nice to vary what one eats'.* He particularly stressed the social side of eating together whether with family or friends, at home or in restaurants.

He prioritised the use of fresh and affordable seasonal foods although did use some frozen or tinned vegetables and fish and the odd ready meal in an *'emergency'.* As a child he was banished from the kitchen but after leaving home bought over forty editions of *'Cuisine Actuelle'* from which he had learnt the foundations of cookery and found that he continued to pick up ideas. He explained how he might decide upon an evening meal as follows:

> *Sometimes I have no idea but then I see some lentils so I might then take some pork or some sausages or something like that. Or, I don't know… if I see a little veal that looks interesting, then I'll think about maybe a casserole of veal with, I don't know…some spices, some coconut milk, a little curry and some rice to go with it. I don't always need a fixed idea.*

He said that regional and national culinary differences continued but that there was increasing similarities due to what he considered an overly powerful global food industry. While recognising a decline in cooking in France he concluded:

> *I hope that as long as it is possible, people will continue to eat around a table and share some pleasant times together. That is what food and eating is all about.*

Respondent 1/F/11/M

A French man, aged thirty five at the time of the interview which took place at respondent 1/F/10/M's home in Nantes near to where he lived. He was single, lived alone, had been university educated and was employed as a computer technician. He was a little nervous, gave mainly short answers and the interview lasted thirty minutes.

The respondent cooked most days and when asked why replied; 'b*ecause I'm hungry (laughing)…and I like it'.* He would sometimes *'grab'* a takeaway, eat in a restaurant or use some convenience foods but added:

> *…generally fresh foods not frozen…things that I can cook straight away. I prefer fresh foods and anyway I haven't a freezer and I like cooking*.

He had learnt a little about cooking from his mother, but also from books and friends. He explained how he was becoming more confident in his cooking and that he found it:

> *…very satisfying to prepare some food and eat well. You also know what you are eating because when you go out you don't know how it has been prepared.*

He explained how he would batch cook and re-heat portion as required although noted that generally, more people were buying ready prepared foods and cooking less than in the past. He believed that regionally distinct foods continued but:

> *Perhaps less nowadays. You can find foods from everywhere but each region still has their specific specialities.*

He considered that France still enjoyed a strong and identifiable food culture(s).

Respondent 1/F/12/M

A French man of Algerian parentage who lived in Algeria for his first 24 years of life. Aged forty six at the time of the interview which took place at respondent 1/F/10/M's home in Nantes. He lived just outside Nantes with his wife, two children and one older stepson. University educated and now managing a fruit and vegetable retail business in markets around Nantes. He was clearly interested in food and the interview lasted forty minutes.

Due to his work arrangements he ate out at lunch times and rarely had time to cook often which he regretted. He might cook three or four times a week in winter, especially the more *'complex things'* and if friends or family were visiting and explained:

> *Yes I have more or less mastered cooking and even for large numbers.*

He did not find cooking difficult and had learnt from watching his mother, friends and girlfriends and sometimes used book recipes as a base but said:

> *I like experimenting and taking some risks even if I make some little mistakes. I like trying things.*

He prepared mainly fresh, seasonal and *'traceable'* foods which he obtained from his work. He believed it important that his children saw their parents cooking and that children's choices were generally over prioritised. He explained that children should be encouraged to taste foods so that they would learn to appreciate them rather than liking *'simple things…always the same things'*. He considered that people:

> *…cook a lot less than a generation ago. I say this because in my profession I see that in the food markets… there are more and more stallholders that specialise in the sale of take away and ready prepared meals… it's quicker.*

He was concerned about such a trend and considered that Mon. Bove had usefully raised the alarm in relation to global standardisation in food. However he considered this was more pronounced in other countries and that France maintained strong regional culinary traditions.

Respondent 1/F/13/F

A French woman aged thirty four at the time of the interview which took place in her home in Nantes which she shares with her husband (respondent 1/F/14/M – also interviewed) and two children. She left school at eighteen and works as a librarian. The interview was a little rushed as she had to return to work and lasted thirty minutes.

She shared the domestic cooking with her husband and considered it to be:

> *…a pleasure and it's a part of everyday life…to take the time to prepare something to eat. To eat well is special and it's a good moment for the family to be all together.*

She preferred to cook fresh seasonal and therefore less expensive ingredients but lack of time and children's preferences meant she would sometimes rely on ready prepared foods such as pizzas and galettes. She also found pasta and different sauces to be a practical solution and commented:

> *It can save me from having to prepare several different dishes if I can do one dish that everyone likes.*

She had learnt to cook from her parents, friends and experience and considered that she was a confident cook although would follow a recipe from one of her books if something new.

She enjoyed the availability of *'new and foreign foods'* but was also concerned about the increasing influence of global food companies, ready meals and fast food operators. However, she considered regional culinary differences remained and that *'France is different'* to other nations. She concluded that food habits were indeed changing slowly but that there was a resurgence of interest in *'more natural products and fresh foods after all that has happened'* but inevitably *'traditional cooking will be reserved for the weekends and days off'.*

Respondent 1/F/14/M

A French man, aged thirty seven at the time of the interview which took place in his home in Nantes which he shared with his wife (respondent 1/F/13/F, also interviewed) and two children. He left school at eighteen and is employed as an electrician. He was initially reluctant to develop his answers and the interview lasted thirty five minutes.

He enjoyed cooking, especially for friends, was confident and said he cooked *'at least once a day'* although sometimes it would have to be *'something quick, maybe steak and chips',* especially as he often returned home for lunch . He learnt to cook from his parents and by asking friends and explained how his father had often cooked at home '*like I do a bit, especially if there were people coming, my mother also but less, it wasn't her thing'.* For such social meals he preferred to cook '*something that you don't have everyday'* and he would sometimes refer to books for ideas but added:

> *There are some things that I don't know, but you can learn. If it doesn't work at first, afterwards you get there. Anyway I have never cooked two meals that are identical, they are always a bit different…it depends on the meat and what you add for example.*

He had fairly traditional tastes although positively commented upon the increased range and styles of food now available. He preferred fresh seasonal foods but would sometimes use tinned vegetables and other convenience products but said:

> *The taste is poor and also it is all portioned, often too small and it is expensive. Often one can do it oneself, it's nothing, there is nothing to do and one could have done it oneself…it doesn't take a lot of time, in fact it's fairly quick to make a decent meal.*

He considered that regional cooking styles would continue in France but recognised the growth of fast foods and ready meals but was not prepared to predict the influence they may have in the future.

Respondent 1/F/15/M

A single French man and the youngest interviewed being twenty three at the time of the interview which took place at the interviewers house in London. He lived just outside Nantes with his grandparents, had been university educated and was employed as IT developer. The interview lasted forty minutes.

His grandparents served a meal most evenings and the respondent explained that often he would cook only once in a week. He also often ate outside the home and explained that he had *'a lot less time available as well as a desire to do other things'.* At lunch time he might eat a sandwich to save time or eat a *'plat du jour'* from a basic restaurant and at other times he enjoyed good restaurants and also:

> *Not so much home delivery but more the takeaways and drive-ins...like McDonalds and things like that. Quite a lot of drive-ins, it is practical, you arrive and 10 minutes after you have your food and you return home.*

He had the confidence to cook most of what he wanted and added:

> *I can get by. Really at my standard if I wanted something very good I would prefer to give a lot of money to a restaurant. I do like doing my own little dishes and meals and I like testing out new things.*

He enjoyed cooking when he had the time and space and would prepare quick pasta dishes and at times *'a really nice meal'*. He might use some tinned ingredients but never *'complete meals for the microwave'.* He was the only French respondent to have followed a technology option at school in which he *'had to make a cake and work out how to make it commercially available in the large supermarkets'*. He considered a distinctive French culture and regional culinary differences continued but supermarkets, for example, now made regional culinary specialities available throughout France. He also explained how and why people were cooking less in France nowadays but concluded:

> *But if there is something special, as soon as there is an occasion then we take the time to go in to the kitchen and prepare something for the people who are coming.*

British Respondents - (London)

Respondent 1/B/16/M

A British man aged fifty five at the time of the interview which took place in the interviewer's house in London. He lived nearby with his wife and neither had children. He had a Diploma in Architecture and was employed as an architect. His wife (1/B/17/F), who also worked, was interviewed immediately afterwards. The interview lasted forty five minutes.

He cooked for over half the occasions in the home which would typically be evening meals and some weekend lunches. Because of busy lifestyles, meals had to be *'a) reasonably nourishing, b) fresh and c) quick'* and also low in fat and sugar because of '*weight problems'* and he gave some *'simple'* examples such as pasta, chops and salads which were often eaten off the lap in front of TV. He did not like most convenience foods although, if alone, might re-heat a ready meal in the micro-wave. He normally took a sandwich or salad to work for his lunch. He liked *'the social thing'* of a meal especially with friends and family and at weekends when there was more time to prepare dishes such as:

> *…casseroles and a stock range of things. Again it really depends on how much time we have. We are great ones for the 'me-me' principle, which is minimum effort, maximum enjoyment.*

He enjoyed the range of local, ethnic restaurants and due to being tired at the end of the week, most Fridays would have a *'cheap and cheerful'* Indian takeaway home delivered after his wife returned from the weekly supermarket shop . He explained he liked to use the local butcher and farmer's market when time permitted.

He had no positive childhood memories of food and eating and learnt to cook after he left home via trail and error, his first wife and books and magazines. He considered himself to be a fairly confident cook although *'not ambitious'* and he '*wouldn't particularly experiment'* especially if '*we had people coming round'.* He explained he got '*too up-tight about quantities'* but would:

> *…create my own dishes mainly around eggs with vegetables; I'll just cook a kind of large omelette. Something that I know is going to be safe*
> *.*

He saw little culinary regional differences and lamented *'the power of the conglomerates'* and '*this globalisation of the American dream'* and said:

…in France, Spain or Portugal, they have a much stronger view of food and culture, their own culture. We don't seem to have that in Britain about food. I see a generation of people who eat burgers, whose mum and dad ate burgers, whose grannies were eating burgers and I'm wondering if you can break that.

Respondent 1/B/17/F

A British woman aged fifty five at the time of the interview which took place at the interviewer's house in London. She lived nearby with her husband and neither had children. She had a post graduate qualification and was employed as a college lecturer. Her husband (1/B/16/M), who also worked, was interviewed immediately beforehand. The interview lasted forty minutes.

The narrative that emerged concurred with much of what her husband had said in relation to the cooking, shopping and foods eaten and explained:

> *I cook regularly …in the week it is mundane stuff, we're tired, it's chops under the grill, pasta…I'll cook probably a couple of nights, my husband cooks a couple of nights and Friday we order a curry.*

She also liked eating in restaurants, often ethnic ones, and about once a week, although she equally enjoyed a Sunday lunch in a pub. She preferred cooking when friends came to visit, although her husband normally took responsibility for such meals, but was not sure if cooking itself was important, adding:

> *Whether I'd describe it as pleasure or not…if somebody said I'll bring you a cooked meal every night and you don't have to lift a finger I can see myself saying yeah.*

She often might prepare something just to fill her up although this would rarely be ready meals. Like her husband she took salads to work and explained:

> *I don't enjoy them to be honest but then I don't enjoy being fat either. I eat them because I don't want to be hungry and I know that it is better for my weight and I do sometimes describe food as fuel. I don't like it but it is fuel.*

She had studied domestic science at school but only recalled making cakes and that she last made a cake *'when England won the World Cup'*. She said she lacked creativity and tended to use certain recipe books for ideas and guidance nowadays. She considered food culture to be much the same throughout Britain although there might be a few odd differences such as *'the Welsh might have a Welsh stew and maybe the Scots have porridge and stuff.'*

Respondent 1/B/18/F

A British woman and widow, aged fifty five at the time of the interview which took place at her home in west London where she now lived mainly alone except for one paying guest. She was university educated and employed as an information manager. The interview lasted forty minutes.

Finding herself living alone again she did not want to spend a lot of time cooking but would *'put meals together'* and explained:

> *I eat more quick meals…I rarely spend a long time cooking. I tend to eat a lot of salads and uncooked meals. I probably buy a little bit of coleslaw to go with some lettuce and it might be fish, it might be tuna out of a tin, I love sardines…that sort of thing rather than tinned meats. Yeah, I mean I do cook as well I usually do something very quick…at the weekend I spend a bit longer.*

Her evening meals might be eaten in front of the television and once a week or two, when in a *'hurry or tired',* she would buy a *'one dish ready meal'* to microwave. She clearly enjoyed food and could no longer afford to eat in a restaurant or have a takeaway more than once a month although regularly ate at the canteen at her work. She also thought cooking was important because:

> *…you know what you are eating and you can control what you are eating. I think if I ate out every day I would probably find it difficult to keep to a reasonable weight.*

She said she was not a very adventurous cook, lacked certain techniques and was largely self taught but was prepared to adapt recipes and experiment with familiar foods and enjoyed cooking more elaborate meals for friends.

Regarding British culinary cultures she concluded that *'it is probably more a rich/poor divide than a north/south divide'* nowadays. She also thought there was an international *'cross fertilisation of influences'* on the British diet which she found *'quite positive really because I don't think we had a particularly interesting diet'*. She thought things were *'changing in France because they are relying more on fast foods and pre-cooked, pre-prepared foods than before*' but that food remained a *'way of life'* to the French.

Respondent 1/B/19/M

A British man, aged 58 at the time of the interview which took place in his home in west London where he lived with his wife (respondent 1/B/20/F, and interviewed immediately afterwards) and her daughter from a previous marriage. He also had three daughters from a previous marriage who stayed in his home most weekends. He was university educated and was employed as a college lecturer. Because of time constraints the last two questions were not asked and the interview lasted thirty minutes.

He explained that there was a rota as regards cooking and shopping to ensure the work was equally divided between himself and his wife and as such cooked three or four times a week. He enjoyed '*the satisfaction of cooking'* and added:

> *I believe wholeheartedly in the concept of a family meal. It is a pity we always have the TV on when we eat together, but it is a family occasion that should never disappear.*

He learnt to cook largely from watching others while sharing accommodation after he left home and explained:

> *Over the last few years I've got a bit more adventurous, I've looked at recipes in books and that sort of thing. I like to think that I'm a much more confident cook than I use to be. But if I'm stuck for doing something new I usually stick fairly rigidly to the recipe, particularly in quantities.*

What he cooked was somewhat dependant on who was in the home at the time but discussed *'favourites'* like '*sausages and mash, shepherd's pie'* and also:

> *…spaghetti bolognaise is a favourite because the children like that, chilli con carne ditto and we do actually cook it from basics as opposed to, umm, getting the packet out. I will do, lamb curry, chicken curry, we don't eat beef. When the children are not here I'll do stewed lamb for instance or lamb couscous that sort of thing.*

Takeaways might be bought if alone or if one child was present and he liked eating in spacious and smarter restaurants but found them too expensive. For work day lunches he took sandwiches and a packet of crisps and would go to the pub to *'wash them down with a couple of pints of beer.'*

Respondent 1/B/20/F

A British woman aged fifty five at the time of the interview which took place in her home in west London which she shared with her husband (respondent 1/B/19/M, and interviewed beforehand) and daughter from a previous marriage. Her current husband also had three daughters from a previous marriage who stayed most weekends. She was university educated and employed as a district nurse. The interview lasted forty minutes.

She concurred with much of what her husband had said and reinforced how they adhered to a cooking and shopping rota…also a meat rota, and explained:

> *The way we decide what meat we buy, we go in strict rotation…chicken, pork, lamb… sometimes the chicken becomes a bit of duck, very rarely beef because of mad cows disease but if we ever got that it would only be a weekend when we haven't got any kids. Sometimes we replace the chicken with a guinea fowl but basically it is always the three main meats.*

A hot family meal was prepared every evening and she cooked *'sort of cuisine from all over the world… it is very cosmopolitan'*. While she considered eating good food to be highly pleasurable she did not like having to cook regularly although thought home cooked food tasted better. She felt pressured by time and explained that on finishing work she first had food shopping to do and so:

> *I try to do things very quickly. I try to think ready, steady, cook in my mind, you know…I'm going to get this meal done in 20 minutes*

Pressure at work also meant that she took a sandwich to work which she ate at her desk. She lived a few years in Germany and France where she learnt a lot about food although she admitted to lacking confidence in relation to cooking, but would feel less nervous with a recipe book open in front of her. Cooking for friends she found *'stressful'* and so would rarely do it but when she did would tend to do *'easy things that are foolproof'* and one of her *'repertoire dishes'.* She discussed regional dishes like Cornish pasties, Scottish shortbread and porridge but considered food in Britain was;

> *…a low priority. We sit for hours in a pub where the French will sit for hours round a table, eating and drinking wine.*

British Respondents cont'd

(Cardiff)

Respondent 1/B/21/M

A British man, raised in Belfast and aged fifty six at the time of the interview which took place above his optician's practice where he worked as an optometrist, in Barry, near Cardiff. He lived nearby with his wife and child and he had a further three children from his first marriage who often passed by/lodged, with or without their boyfriends. He was interested in food, cooking and health (wife also a doctor) and his extended family were all vegetarian although not himself. The interview lasted forty minutes.

He 'loved' cooking, was confident and enjoyed spending time in his Aga fitted

> *kitchen-dining room and it is sort of the focus of the house and, you know, we'd often spend a couple of hours preparing a meal…and a glass of wine while we're doing it. And that is part of our enjoyment at home.*

He was also often rushed for time and explained how his extended family all operated to different time agendas. *'Fresh-frozen pasta'* and vegetarian sauces were a favourite perhaps with bottled antipasti or salad and Indian vegetarian foods such as curries and pouris were also often prepared, sometimes with the use of tinned or frozen vegetables. Shopping and cooking in the home was *'pretty joint really'*, and sometimes the whole family would get involved, each preparing a dish. Indian takeaways were a popular option over the weekend and they might eat out, usually in an 'ethnic' restaurant about once a month. His lunch at work was always a sandwich prepared at home.

He learnt cooking a little from his mother, a little from scouts, out of necessity from his first wife, a lot from his second wife and from *'loads of books, we are very bookish with our cooking.'* He considered that:

> *…different people in the same region cook quite differently. But, I don't suppose there is that much of a regional difference.*

He was concerned about the spread of fast food restaurants and *'pervasive American culture'* generally and doubted if Italy and France would be able to 'hold out' but also thought that as it spreads *'it creates a counter movement'* which will at least force the multi-nationals to *'emphasise healthy food'.*

Respondent 1/B/22/F

A British woman aged twenty eight at the time of the interview which took place at the University of Wales in Cardiff where she works as a secretary. She had left school at eighteen, was a diabetic and lived nearby with her husband and twenty month old child. Only thirty minutes were available for the interview.

She had little time for 'cooking from scratch' but enjoyed cooking quick meals and explained:

> *I do buy a lot of ready made meals. I suppose because I am working and my husband works away and I have a young son so it is convenience really, still healthy and fresh vegetables with that. On the weekend I do cook because I get more time but again if I can have an easy option I will… but I always cook a roast dinner on a Sunday.*

Her husband would occasionally cook *'Indian and Chinese foods'* and she also enjoyed cooking more elaborate meals once a month when her *'girlfriends'* came round. She learnt cooking mainly from her mother who she described a *'very good cook'* and a little from school, however she said she was not an *'adventurous cook'* but felt confident with everyday meals or with a recipe in front of her.

They treated themselves to *'an Indian the last Friday of the month'* and enjoyed *'going the whole hog'* in a restaurant but this was a rarer event. At work she tended go down to the canteen and *'mostly go for a jacket potato or maybe the odd fish and chips on a Friday'.*

She was not clear about regional differences in relation to food and thought:

> *...everyone is sort of much of a muchness, it depends if you are personally a good cook or not…if you enjoy it…down to individual preferences really.*

In the future she thought there would be more convenience foods because:

> *everything is such a fast pace of life nowadays and people with big mortgages and they are all working and they haven't the time to shop and buy all the ingredients to cook from scratch, I think people have changed. I think they will continue to.*

Respondent 1/B/23/M

A British man aged thirty eight at the time of the interview which took place in British Telecom offices in Cardiff where he worked as a manager. (He was also responsible for arranging three other interviews there with his colleagues). He had been to college and studied BTEC, was married with two children and lived just outside Cardiff. Only thirty minutes were available for the interview.

He explained he tried to share the cooking and shopping with his wife, although like his father had, he did exclusively cook the Sunday lunch which he enjoyed and got '*a sense of pride as well'.* Because of his and his wife's work, lifestyle and *'schedules'* they tended to cook a range of mainly *'convenience foods'* and *'oven ready meals'* which might be served with fresh vegetables. He had learnt his cooking largely from his wife and preferred

> *to stick to what I know, yeah, I'm not very good at it but I will give it a go.*

Saturday night was takeaway night and his preference was Chinese. They also ate out in restaurants around twice a month and these ranged from *'smart'* restaurants, to themed pubs and *'KFC or Pizza Hut'* depending on the occasion. At work he would either buy a sandwich to eat in his office or eat at the canteen. He noticed regional differences in relation to food, adding:

> *I see that on my travels. In Wigan for example I was just amazed how many people just eat pies…down the south, in the Torquay area it's more fish orientated…the Scottish I noticed don't go for Chinese type food, they're quite happy to have a plate of chips put in front of them and they are famous for their deep fried Mars bars. So I think there is a difference.*

He thought cooking '*is getting diluted with each generation'* and discussed how his grandparents grew and cooked most of their food, that his parents cooked most of their food while he tended only to re-heat ready made meals. He thought the future would be '*driven by the food manufacturers'* as life got *'far quicker'* and that *'people probably won't even sit down at the same table… people will eat everything on the go.'* He thought *'the likes of Jamie Oliver had encouraged cooking in the odd pockets but generally I think it is in decline'*.

Respondent 1/B/24/F

A British woman aged forty two at the time of the interview which took place in British Telecom offices in Cardiff where she worked in *'clerical/management'.* She had left school at sixteen, was married and lived in Newport near Cardiff with her husband and son. Her eldest son had recently left home. She was initially a little nervous, but she was passionate about food and the interview lasted thirty minutes.

She very much enjoyed cooking, was confident, found it *'fun'* and was *'very fussy'* about what she ate and cooking gave her the knowledge she wanted about what she ate. She added:

> *I've got the kitchen to myself, the door's shut, even the dog's are out, and I just spend hours in there cooking, I do a lot of puddings and desserts and cakes and …Sunday I just spend cooking because more often than not, we'll have family up, we have about 10-15 people up for dinner.*

She used a few tins of tuna, beans and tomatoes and frozen peas *'but apart from that everything's fresh.'* She had learnt to cook largely from her mother and nowadays referred to a collection of cookery books although '*like*[d] *making up things as well'.* She had access to meat from a friend who had a smallholding and she also grew a few *'veggies'* and did most of the cooking although her son cooked once a week as did her husband who is *'getting better….he's got five dishes he likes cooking and he's pretty good at them.'*

She would eat out in 'ethnic' restaurants about twice a month, enjoyed a fortnightly 'ethnic' takeaway and had never eaten in a fast food restaurant other than a '*Pizza Hut twice.'* At work she would usually buy a salad to eat at her desk and then go out for a walk. She discussed regional specialities such as Welsh cakes, cockles and lava bread but generally thought cooking was in decline and gave as an example her *'eldest son and his girlfriend who had just bought a house and everything with those is like ready meals'*. She considered others no longer had the time to cook although she found the time because she enjoyed it.

Respondent 1/B/25/M

A *'Welsh'* man aged forty nine at the time of the interview which took place in British Telecom offices in Cardiff where he was based as a telephone engineer. He was married and lived with his wife and two children in a town just outside Cardiff. He had studied an HNC in catering and had worked as a chef at BT for one year but had retrained as the work interfered with his sports activities. He still cooked for the rugby team and his wife worked as a school cook. He came from a rural Welsh background and appeared not to have the time or inclination to develop his answers but some interesting insights emerged. The interview lasted twenty five minutes.

He enjoyed cooking, had started at the age of eight and *'grew up winning prizes in local village fetes'*. He had learnt about cooking from his mother, although later at college, and as a child ate a lot of home grown vegetables, and he still grew a few. He continued to enjoy a varied diet, with high vegetable content and took salads to work for lunch. The family's preferences and other commitments were a clear influence on what was cooked, a task he shared with his wife although he explained '*she hates it'.* They might eat:

> *Pasta, roast dinners now maybe twice a week as my son likes those…my wife is not fond of roast dinners…we occasionally have casseroles, Friday nights we tend to go out…just my wife and I and the children, 14 and 16, stay home and we cook them tea…we don't eat as much together round the table, maybe three time a week.*

Apart from a few tinned vegetables and the odd pizza he used few convenience foods although considered in the future *'there will be more fast food and more ready prepared food that people will buy in'.* Currently, he batch cooked dishes like shepherds pie and froze them for the children to heat up when he and his wife were out. They enjoyed impromptu meals at home with friends and also takeaways and eating out in local ethnic restaurants. He thought people ate differently in Cardiff to the way people ate in the Vale of Glamorgan where he lived and considered a key influence on foods chosen was *'where you have moved from and how you were brought up really'*.

Respondent 1/B/26/M

A British man aged forty four at the time of the interview which took place in British Telecom offices in Cardiff from where he worked as an engineer. He lived just outside Cardiff with his wife and their child plus two step children. There appeared to be a total of nine children in the family from previous relationships although not all lived in the house. He completed his *'military education'* when he was twenty and spent fourteen years in the army where at times he cooked. His wife was employed as a school cook and also catered for certain events such as at the rugby club. He was from Manchester but had been living around Cardiff for the past five years. He was unprepared to develop answers about his childhood, appeared to have certain views in relation to *'the wife'* and the interview lasted twenty five minutes.

He had learnt to cook primarily from his mother and also in the field when in the army. He said he enjoyed cooking and that it posed *'no problem'* but explained his wife also liked cooking and that he cooked infrequently because:

> *My wife won't let me. She has the food ready for me when I get home. I sometimes cook on a Sunday and I'll prepare a Sunday lunch for her.*

He would also cook a big barbeque in the summer when '*we have lots of friends round'* and his wife would prepare the salads. He explained their use of convenience foods that were prepared, especially for the children who would have *'burgers, fish fingers, all those sorts of things… quick food like meatballs that will go with something…spaghetti with meat balls'*. The children also enjoyed *'McDonalds, that's always a treat and we join in…also KFCs, Pizza Huts and so on'*. Otherwise he mainly ate in restaurants only if he and his wife were already out or he might 'pick up' a takeaway, although these were never ethnic outlets …*'none of that stuff*'. When out at work he would normally have a roll or sandwich. As regards regional differences he commented *'it's not easy getting gravy on your chips down here. Up north, everything goes with your chips.'* He thought that in the future people would cook less due to changing and busier lifestyles, laziness and '*it's a microwave food and off you go'.*

Respondent 1/B/27/F

A *'Welsh'* woman aged fifty seven at the time of the interview which took place at the University of Wales in Cardiff where she works as a secretary. She had no formal qualifications and lived in Cardiff with her husband. Her children had left home but lived nearby. The interview lasted thirty minutes.

Like her father, her husband never cooked although *'he does make a nice cup of tea'.* In contrast, she cooked every evening and also a more traditional Sunday lunch although did not like cooking and explained:

> *At the end of the day, especially when it's been hectic and busy I like to get home, eat and that's it. I am not going to spend hours in the kitchen cooking.*

She was confident to cook the *'basics'* which she had picked up largely by *'trial and error'* and thought cooking was important as it was *'cheaper'* and *'you know what you are eating'*. This was also important as she wanted to lose weight and had become a *'bit of a health freak'* and only ate white meat, oven baked prepared fish and preferred steamed vegetables, salad and fruit. She would prepare red meat for her husband and he also liked sausages, pies, oven chips and other *'less healthy'* ready prepared foods.

Apart from at Christmas time, she preferred to go out to a carvery, usually for a Sunday lunch, with friends or family rather than cook at home and would also occasionally visit a carvery with her husband. She sometimes bought a Chinese takeaway, provided it contained no onions, had never visited fast food outlets and would normally take a chicken sandwich and fruit to work for lunch. She considered there little culinary variation in Britain and that '*different people*

like different things'. She thought in the future people would rely more on convenience foods and concluded:

> *Things have changed a lot since my mother's day. I don't cook like my mother, you know, so I think the world's changed. We will all live out of tins or takeaways (laughing).Things have changed*

Respondent 1/B/28/M

A British man aged thirty at the time of the interview which took place at the University of Wales in Cardiff where he worked as an administrator. He had studied 'Sports Science' at university and now lived in Cardiff with his girlfriend, brother and paying tenant. He grew up in the 'valleys' in Gwent, had Estonian grandparents and the interview lasted fifty minutes.

He did not find cooking boring or a chore and as a child had increasingly helped his parents and grandparents cook a meal and explained how his father

> *always used to cook the fancy meals, left the dishes to my mum and us kids, but he always excelled at doing for instance…lasagne, meals from different countries and he always did them really surprisingly well.*

His father remained his main source of cookery advice but he had also enjoyed cookery at school for a year and at university had studied a 'diet and nutrition' module. He enjoyed sport and outdoor activities and wanted to follow healthy dietary guidelines and was further encouraged in this by his Finnish girlfriend. He now did the majority of the domestic cooking because:

> *I get home about an hour before my girlfriend I just take it upon myself to get started on the meal… and I don't really look at it as a chore…I do get a bit bored with doing the frozen stuff – and I look forward to cooking something proper…but yes, I do the bulk of it.*

He explained that he was fairly confident and had '*about five kinds of nice meals I can do from scratch'* but complained about lack of time and added:

> *We get a bit lazy these days…it sounds a bit bad…I do try to cook something decent at least once a week…but generally… I do try to steer clear of instant meals, you know, the ones you put in the microwave...but I do the next laziest thing…like fish in breadcrumbs or ready cooked chicken bits that you just put in the oven for half and hour from frozen.*

He cooked for friends but found it too time consuming, ate out with his girlfriend about once a week and took a sandwich to work for lunch. If too tired to cook or to go out he might order a takeaway but tried to *'steer clear of fast food joints.*' He was alarmed by the increasing rates of obesity and blamed it on *'too much fast foods, fried foods – it seems to be a convenient way of life at the moment.'*

Respondent 1/B/29/F

A British woman aged forty three at the time of the interview which took place at the University of Wales in Cardiff where she worked as an administrator. She was university educated, single and lived in Cardiff. In 1999 she had non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and due to this and the poor health of her parents, had returned to live with them. Her mother had been born in Italy and her father in the Ukraine. She was quite anxious about many changes in her life and the subject of food appeared to illicit a lot of happy and sad thoughts but she wanted to continue and the interview lasted fifty minutes.

She learnt to cook primarily from her mother and responsibility for the family evening meal now fell upon her although at weekends '*we all end up cooking together'.* However*,* tiredness from work and complex family dietary requirements, including her and her mother being overweight meant she would often rely upon foods such as lamb, beef, turkey or vegetarian burgers often from 'Iceland', *'good quality sausages',* breaded fish and the like. Her parents grew vegetables and fruits and these also featured in the family's diet. She also prepared pasta with different sauces, chilli, curries, risottos and little cakes. She occasionally ate out with friends and had in the past only rarely visited fast food outlets but recently had been tempted by McDonalds advertising salads. As regards culinary regional differences she identified some Welsh specialities and 'things that people used to gather, like oysters in West Wales' but considered such diets were for

> *poorer peoples…to bulk people up to do heavy work like the Yorkshire thing, or Cornish pasty thing, when you say culinary…it's too posh. it's not so refined.*

She thought Cardiff was now so metropolitan and people preferred *'Thai or whatever'* and that with dual career families, les experience of cooking, later marriages, divorce, smaller families and selfishness that cooking in the home would continue to decline.

Appendix 13: Development of draft interview (Phase 2)

Phase 2 Development of Draft Interview Schedule

Approaches to cooking

1. **I'm doing some research in to current cooking habits and diets and as you are a working person who has contact with individuals/families, I wonder if we could start by you telling me a little about your experience of what sort of foods make up peoples diets/what people are eating nowadays?**
   - Who?
   - What? Range and type-
   - Fresh/convenience/ready prepared?
   - 'healthy/unhealthy'
   - Cooked at home/eaten out/delivered etc
   - Patterns of eating, meal times/family meals, time spent eating/snacking?

2. **Are you able to/ can you tell me a little about the cooking that goes on in the home nowadays?**
   - What?
     - Type- Fresh/convenience/ready prepared?
     - regular meals or experimentation,
     - General approach of individual to cooking-quantity v health, family meals,
   - Who cooks in the home
     - household type, ethnicity, family members, age/life stage, gender,
   - When do they cook.
     - Daily, weekends, special occasions/treats, for self/friends or family
   - How do they cook?
     - Types of cooking, skills, mechanistic/creative, repertoire/from experience, follow recipes, instructions on packet,
   - How do they do their food shopping?
     - daily/weekly, local shops, markets, supermarkets, delivery, internet

Social aspects and cultural significance of cooking

3. **Do you have the impression that people enjoy cooking and/or eating together?**
   - **everyday-** Why do they cook? Necessity, convenience, healthier, cheaper, daily chore to provide food etc,
   - **occasional** -a leisure activity, weekends, entertainment/special occasions/ celebrations,.
   - an important social event in people's lives? a focus of family life/a chance to talk etc
   - socialising around food –cooking for others, family/guests/ friends, dinner parties
   - aesthetic concerns, elaborate/stylised, fashion etc
   - savouring food, pleasure orientated/relaxed… with alcohol/wine
   - and what of eating out/in restaurants together

or greater casualisation of cooking and eating habits, 'ping' cuisine, individualised, watching TV, eating alone/off lap etc

4. **Some people have said that food and eating together is an important part of the socialisation process and helps confirm cultural identity and belonging.**
   From your experience, do you feel that food and eating together plays a significant role in people's lives (and is culturally important to them)?
   What are people's beliefs, attitudes, feelings, values to meals/food…as part of a shared culture, domesticity, have pride in their cooking/food and its sharing.

5. **Do you notice a shared food culture or 'tradition of cooking and food' that continues to influence people's choice of food/cooking?**
   In your experience what might make up a typical British/French or ethnic specific meal. Regional dishes? Best and worst aspects? What factors contribute to continuity in relation to food practices eg skills, confidence, acceptability, etc? What cooking methods? Do people have the confidence/inclination/ knowledge/contacts/terroir/info and time to cook traditional recipes

6. **Do you consider that such traditions remain or are they being undermined?**
   explore role of fast foods/convenience foods/restaurant culture/school meals,
   supermarket culture/global food supply,
   lack of time/work
   the media, advertising, dietary advise
   multi-culturalism/ethnic minorities, travel

<u>Cooking Skills and Education</u>

7. **Do you think people's cooking skills are changing?**
   less skilled, more skilled, about the same, different skills, views on change. Do people have the skills/confidence to prepare (nourishing and affordable) meals? If not, why is this, how

8. **In your experience, how have people learnt to cook?**
   school, parents, friends, cook books and media etc, experientially, where do they turn to now to gain knowledge/information about cooking/diet-books and the media, classes, celeb chefs, friends What of the passing on of skills/traditional recipes/methods of food prep

9. **What do you consider are the skills required to be able to prepare a meal?**
   practical cooking skills, techniques, cooking methods, tacit skills…judgement/planning/timing/design etc, ability to do several jobs at once as well as cooking.

<u>Transition in culinary skills?</u>

10. Research indicates that people are cooking less in Britain/France nowadays than in the past…to what extent do you agree and what factors might be driving any such change/sustaining cooking traditions?

Explore Micro Influences
significance of 'domestic' technology, quick and easy alternative solutions, access to foods/equipment, space/facilities, choice of leisure activities/family schedules, working patterns and changing gender roles, changing family structures, perceived lack of time, apathy, increased affluence, travel and experience of other, specific diets of others in household, ability/skills- knowledge-education, other leisure activities/family schedules price,
concern about diet and health, healthy food habits, balanced diet, variety, moderation, eating diets modified to be healthier?
What of quality issues, freshness, natural/organic foods plus dieting/control of food intake

Explore Macro Influences
External (macro) influences/policies…media and advertising, retailing, food industry, increasing technology, transport infrastructure and distribution systems, availability, economic globalisation and the MNC, commercialisation of eating, globalistion of culture and multi-culturalism, *'terroir'* and regionalism, an increasingly American styled food service sector, food and health policy/state ambivalence in relation to cooking skills

Do you consider that today's food industry and supermarkets act to encourage or discourage cooking in the home?

Do you think fast food establishments such as McDonalds will continue to grow? Why is this? What might limit the growth of such establishments…and convenience foods

Do you think people worry about current food scares/confidence in food supply (as opposed to savouring foods, socialising around food, enjoying of foods) etc has an influence on people's attitude/confidence to cook? ethical issues/animal cruelty, GMOs?

So what is going on in the home with regards to eating and cooking? how are people accessing their food…approaches to cooking? time spent preparing food/eating, meal times, snacking, money spent eating

Impact of change, role of state and the individual, policy implications.

11. Are you concerned about current cooking and eating habits among the public?

explore positive/negative impacts
malnutrition, diet related diseases, obesity, 'fast food culture',
loss of control, autonomy/dependency re diet
loss of eating together/sociability/cultural life/traditions
or eating with others outside the home etc

freeing women/provider from the responsibility/chore of cooking/domesticity. Cooking skills no longer needed/time now available to do other things

or different skills,a more creative/simple/less ethnocentric response to broader/global supply of foodstuffs … ethnic influences etc.

impact on rural/local economy, agriculture, landscape, environment, transport systems, loss of connection with food source, concentration of power/MNCs

12. Finally, do you consider the government (education /health authorities) should do more to promote cooking?...and healthy eating. If so, what do you think could/should be done and by whom?

already sufficiently engaged/too much info/not a role for the (nanny) state, a personal responsibility
not sufficiently engaged/needs to do more

school meals/food in schools, ban junk food advertising, compulsory cooking ed in schools, local/community initiatives, role of FSA, labelling, public/health advise, etc
If you were responsible for public policy on cooking, what is the one thing you would want to immediately introduce?

Appendix 14: Interview schedule (Phase 2 - English)

Phase 2 Final Interview Schedule

1. **Can you tell me about the work of your organisation? … And what is your interest in cooking and food?**
   explore: responsibilities/ aims/ policy areas/funding/initiatives

2. **My research in Britain and France indicates that people are cooking in the home less than in the past and that eating patterns are changing in both countries. Do you think this is so? Does it matter?**

   explore meaning of cooking, a transition, good/bad
   how are people cooking/not cooking in the home today
   use of convenience foods, quick and easy, less skilled?
   assembling meals/ snacking + display of cooking skills
   explore everyday versus weekend/hobby cooks, chore v leisure
   gender involvement/ generational differences
   what is 'traditional' and how appropriate today?

   What is your response to findings that suggest people do not have the necessary skills to cook from 'scratch'?

   explore which skills used in the home and how changed, less or more skilled, mix of skills, different skills,
   practical skills, techniques, cooking methods, dexterity
   tacit skills, judgement/planning/timing/design etc, multi-tasking, nutritional knowledge
   attitudes, confidence, pride, relaxed, enjoyment, providing for others, duty, environmental, health/ nutrition,

   What skills and attitudes do you consider the most important for people to be able to deliver an adequate diet?

   Do you consider the French are more skilled in the kitchen than the British?

   How significant is regional cuisine/*terroir*?

   Britain – weaker food culture thus more amenable to new ideas, creative response v culinary chaos, fragmentation & specialisation
   France – Resistant stronger food culture, 'flying the flag', more traditional, but changing?

   Some respondents commented positively on the increasing variety and availability of exotic ingredients, 'ethnic cuisines', cookery books, celebrity chefs etc. What is your response to such influences?
   explore promotion of interest/encourages regular cooking or leisure/occasional activity, use of recipe books, deskilling or enskilling, gastro-pornography
   equipment and kitchen gadgets, 'boys and their toys',
   Paradox of interest v worry/anxiety around food and diet

Do you think there has been a decline in eating together round a table and is this significant?
Why…explore greater casualisation/ informalisation/ individualisation of cooking and eating habits, flexibility, simpler/'ping' cuisine
watching TV, eating alone/off lap etc…significant?

What of alternatives to cooking in the home?
role and significance of restaurants/fast food, take-aways/traiteur

3. What other factors do you consider might be driving any such change?

Explore Micro Influences, e.g.

time; working and leisure patterns, family schedules, apathy
gender roles and family structures, women at work, attitudes to 'domesticity', two-career/single households, divorce
skills/knowledge, how learning to cook/how effective? cooking skills/traditions and generational transfer?
resources, space, equipment (micro/freezer)
budgetary constraints: is it a class/income issue?
preferences of individuals within household, specific diets
but concerns re; health and quality issues, cooking as means to control/monitor food intake to be healthier, fresh, balanced, natural/organic foods etc, a paradox

Explore Macro Influences e.g.

food and retail industry, access/ range/convenience foods**,**
media and advertising, portrayal of food and cooking
fast food industry takeaways/restaurants
globalisation, of food, culture and people
food and health policy in relation to cooking skills, schools
technology, transport, availability, kitchen machinery

Are the trends stoppable? Alterable? Inevitable?

4. How important is it today for people to be able to cook? Does it matter if they cook less?

for whom, gender, age etc
explore necessity/chore/family provisioning v pleasure orientated
Does it promote a healthier diet, discourage diet related illness, etc
explore issues e.g. control diet, dependency, increases choice, cost
My French respondents often stressed the importance of the social side of eating and that food formed part of their cultural identity. Do you think that is also the case in Britain or a particularly French characteristic?

social/enjoyment - cooking for others, family/guests/ friends, dinner parties, 'eating out', savouring food, /relaxed… or a chore

cultural identity a basic human ritual, moral and emotional significance, socialisation of children, a social norm, focus of family life and social relations/societal cohesion, reinforces 'good' behaviour/discourages deviant behaviour**,** 'rootedness and connectedness', memories…or nightmares, enslaving women etc

Is cooking in the home ultimately sustainable?
Chirac - 'Americanisation' of youth's food culture,
Britain's fast food culture

5. **What do you consider should be the policy priorities in relation to cooking?**

To your knowledge, which authorities have an interest in cooking?

Government?

education: promotion of cooking skills…where/how/which/to whom/by whom/funding?
visiting chefs/experts, food clubs
schools and meals/vending/sponsorship, 'holistic'?
health coherent health and food policy, FSA and 5 a day etc

Industry?

food industry, control of food supply, eg selective taxation/fat tax/shift in subsidies, food labelling, traffic light system, redirect farming policy/organic/local/bio-diversity, control of advertising, etc.
Hospitality/restaurant industry

Civil society?

local food projects, social clubs, local food cultures, farmers markets etc
cultural as part of cultural identity/'semaine du gout', enjoyment and taste, promote slow food not fast food,

Do you think it is necessary to retain or rebuild cooking skills?

Who should be responsible. Is it likely? a priority? for whom?

Appendix 15: Interview schedule (Phase 2 – French)

Phase 2 Final Interview Schedule in French

1. **Parlez-moi s'il vous plait, des buts et objectifs de votre organisation.... ...Pourquoi vous interessez-vous a la cuisine et l'alimentation?**

   Can you tell me about the work of your organisation?
   ... And what is your interest in cooking and food?

   responsabilites/ buts/ objectifs/ domaines politiques/ financement

   explore: responsibilities/ aims/ policy areas/funding/initiatives

2. **Mes travaux de recherche en Angleterre et en France indiquent que les gens cuisinent moins que les generations precedents, et que les habitudes et facons de manger se transforment dans un pays ainsi que l'autre. Est-ce que vous etes d'accord ...et croyez-vous qu'il est important?**

   My research in Britain and France indicates that people are cooking in the home less than in the past and that eating patterns are changing in both countries.
   Do you think this is so? Does it matter?

   qu'est ce que ca veut dire, la cuisine – une transition/ bonne chose/ mauvais chose
   comment cuisinent-ils les gens a domicile?
   differences des generations – differences entre les hommes/femmes
   utilisation des plat/repas prepares / moins de pratiques/ faciles/ rapides
   grignotage
   la cuisine comme passe-temps/loisirs – v – travail quotidien
   qu'est ce que ca veut dire 'traditionel'?

   explore meaning of cooking, a transition, good/bad
   how are people cooking/not cooking in the home today
   use of convenience foods, quick and easy, less skilled?
   assembling meals/ snacking + display of cooking skills
   explore every day versus weekend/hobby cooks, chore v leisure
   gender involvement/ generational differences
   what is 'traditional' and how appropriate today?

   Les resultats des travaux de recherche indiquent que la population n'a plus de pratiques a cuisiner de table rase; comment repondriez-vous?

   What is your response to findings that suggest people do not have the necessary skills to cook from 'scratch'?

   melange de pratiques
   connaissance nutritionelle
   le planning des repas
   attitudes, confiance, fierte

explore which skills used in the home and how changed, *less or more skilled, mix of skills, different skills,*
practical skills, *techniques, cooking methods, dexterity*
tacit skills*, judgement/planning/timing/design etc, multi-tasking, nutritional knowledge*
attitudes*, confidence, pride, relaxed, enjoyment, providing for others, duty, environmental, health/ nutrition,*

Quelles pratiques et attitudes pensez-vous sont les plus important pour faire les repas equilibres?

What skills and attitudes do you consider the most important for people to be able to deliver an adequate diet?

A votre avis, est-ce que les francais sont-ils generalement plus doue a l'egard des pratiques culinaires que les anglais.

Do you consider the French are more skilled in the kitchen than the British?

Quel est l'importance de la cuisine regionale et du terroir?

How significant is regional cuisine/terroir?

GB: - culture culinaire moins robust, donc, plus amenable aux nouvelles idees, fragmentation, specialisation
France – plus de resistance aux influences externales, culture culinaires plus robuste, plus traditional, mais en train de se transformer.

Britain *– weaker food culture thus more amenable to new ideas, creative response v culinary chaos, fragmentation & specialisation*
France *– Resistant stronger food culture, 'flying the flag', more traditional, but changing?*

Quelques repondants ont apercu comme positif la variete et la disponibilite d'alimentation 'exotiques', cuisines ethniques, livres de cuisine, les cuisiniers qui passé au tele, etc – comment repondriez-vous a ces reactions/sensibilities ?

Some respondents commented positively on the increasing variety and availability of exotic ingredients, 'ethnic cuisines', cookery books, celebrity chefs etc. What is your response to such influences?

explore promotion of interest/encourages regular cooking or leisure/occasional activity, use of recipe books, deskilling or enskilling, gastro-pornography
equipment and kitchen gadgets, 'boys and their toys',
Paradox of interest v worry/anxiety around food and diet

A votre avis, est-ce que la population mange-t-elle de moins en moins ensemble a table
– et est-ce que vous croyez que c'est important?

Do you think there has been a decline in eating together round a table and is this significant?

habitudes individuels a l'egard de la preparation et la consummation de la nourriture/plus decontracte?

Why…explore greater casualisation/ informalisation/ individualisation of cooking and eating habits, flexibility, simpler/'ping' cuisine

Manger en train de regarder la tele/seul?

watching TV, eating alone/off lap etc…significant?

Que pensez-vous des alternatifs a la cuisine a domicile?

- restaurants, fast food, take-aways, traiteur

What of alternatives to cooking in the home?
role and significance of restaurants/fast food, take-aways/traiteur

3. Selon vous, quels sont les autres determinants de ce changement?

What other factors do you consider might be driving any such change?

Les influences micro:

- temps
- la famille/ le role des hommes et des femmes
- connaisances culinaire
- resources, equipement
- limites financiers
- les gouts des autres personnes dans la foyer

Les influences macro

- l'industrie alimentaire et les hypermarches
- la media et la publicite
- le ‚fast food'/take-away
- le mondialisation, alimentaire, culturelle, le migration
- technologie, transport, disponibilite, equipment electromenager

Explore Micro Influences, e.g.

time; working and leisure patterns, family schedules, apathy
gender roles and family structures, women at work, attitudes to 'domesticity', two-career/single households, divorce
skills/knowledge, how learning to cook/how effective? cooking skills/traditions and generational transfer?
resources, space, equipment (micro/freezer)

budgetary constraints: is it a class/income issue?
preferences of individuals within household, specific diets
but concerns re; health and quality issues, cooking as means to control/monitor food intake to be healthier, fresh, balanced, natural/organic foods etc, a paradox

Explore Macro Influences e.g.

food and retail industry, access/ range/convenience foods**,**
media and advertising, portrayal of food and cooking
fast food industry takeaways/restaurants
globalisation, of food, culture and people
food and health policy in relation to cooking skills, schools
technology, transport, availability, kitchen machinery

Ces tendances sont-ils ineluctable, inevitable

Are the trends stoppable? Alterable? Inevitable?

4. **Jusqu'a quel mesure, les pratiques culinaires sont-ils necessaire actuellement? Est-ce que vous croyez que une diminution des activites culinaires est grave?**

How important is it today for people to be able to cook? Does it matter if they cook less?

important a qui? – hommes/femmes –age

Encourage une nutritionelle sante – moins d'obesite
maladies nutritionelles
Dependances, choix plus grand -
controle des aliments

for whom, gender, age etc
explore necessity/chore/family provisioning v pleasure orientated
Does it promote a healthier diet, discourage diet related illness, etc
explore issues e.g. control diet, dependency, increases choice, cost

Les francais que j'ai questionne ont souvent souligne l'importance sociale du repas, et le role central que la nourriture/alimentation joue dans leur identite culturelle. Croyez-vous que c'est une attitude particulierement francaise?

My French respondents often stressed the importance of the social side of eating and that food formed part of their cultural identity. Do you think that is also the case in Britain or a particularly French characteristic?

convivialite a table
identite culturel – socialization des enfants;

social/enjoyment *- cooking for others, family/guests/ friends, dinner parties, 'eating out', savouring food, /relaxed… or a chore*

cultural identity *a basic human ritual, moral and emotional significance, socialisation of children, a social norm, focus of family life and social relations/societal cohesion, reinforces 'good' behaviour/discourages deviant behaviour**, 'rootedness and connectedness', memories…or nightmares, enslaving women etc***

La cuisine a domicile – peut-elle durer pour toujours?

Is cooking in the home ultimately sustainable?

Chirac - 'Americanisation' of youth's food culture,
Britain's fast food culture

5. A votre avis, quels sont les priorites politiques a l'egard de la cuisine?

What do you consider should be the policy priorities in relation to cooking?

La promotion de la cuisine – c'est la responsablite de qui?

To your knowledge, which authorities have an interest in cooking?

Le gouvernement/ ministre de la sante - HCSP/education
Collectif – la politique nutritionelle dans les ecoles
Industrie/Commerce – controle de la provision des aliments/et la publicite
Culturel/semaine du gout etc
les project decentralises/ locales

Government?
education: *promotion of cooking skills…where/how/which/to whom/by whom/funding?*
visiting chefs/experts, food clubs
schools *and meals/vending/sponsorship, 'holistic'?*
health *coherent health and food policy, FSA and 5 a day etc*

Industry?
food industry, *control of food supply, eg selective taxation/fat tax/shift in subsidies, food labelling, traffic light system, redirect farming policy/organic/local/bio-diversity, control of advertising, etc.*
Hospitality/restaurant industry

Civil society?
local food projects*, social clubs, local food cultures, farmers markets etc*
cultural *as part of cultural identity/'semaine du gout', enjoyment and taste, promote slow food not fast food,*

Do you think it is necessary to retain or rebuild cooking skills?
Who should be responsible/ Is it likely?
a priority? for whom?

Appendix 16: Letter of introduction & request for interview (Phase 2 – English)

Phase 2 - Letter of Introduction & Interview Request
English

Dear .....,

I am a senior lecturer within the School of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure, alongside Professor David Foskett at Thames Valley University. I am simultaneously carrying out a research project within the Department of Food Policy at City University, London. My research supervisors, Professor Tim Lang and Dr Martin Caraher at City University, suggested I contact you to request an interview.

My research is concerned with the supposed decline in cooking skills among the British population and aims to examine the extent and rate of change, the factors driving such change and the policy implications. In particular it is comparing changes within Britain to those of another country, France. I have chosen France as it offers a unique opportunity for a comparative analysis with its much publicised pride in a strong and regionalised food culture. The research is examining whether changes in culinary skills are happening in both societies and if so, why. The research goes on to examine whether this is due to national peculiarities or broader and more common trends?

To date I have carried out a number of face-to-face interviews in both France and Britain. I now wish to interview a select group of individuals on both sides of the Channel who have some specialist knowledge within this policy area. I have a set of core questions that examine the situation and would be most grateful if I could arrange an interview with you. The interviews do not need to be long and will normally take about 30 minutes. If it is more convenient, we could do the interview on the telephone.

I would be extremely grateful if you agree to be interviewed and please do not hesitate to contact me if you need more clarification or information. As my teaching has now finished, I am available throughout July whenever is best for you, although I will not be available between 18th to 20th July as I will be conducting some interviews in France. If July is not convenient to you, perhaps we might meet after I return from my summer holidays on 22nd August. Should you not be available yourself, but are aware of someone else who may be willing to help, I would be grateful if you would either forward my request to them or inform me of their contact details. For your information I attach a Consent Form which I will collect from you if and when we meet for the interview.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Gatley

Thames Valley University
School of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure
St. Mary's Road
Ealing
London W5 5RF
UK

Tel: +44 020 8231 2239
Email: andy.gatley@tvu.ac.uk

Appendix 17: Interview request letter (Phase 2 – French)

Phase 2 - Interview Request Letter French

Cher .....,

Permettez moi de me présenter: je suis en train de faire un doctorat (PhD) à 'City University' avec Professor Tim Lang et Dr. Martin Caraher sur le sujet des habitudes culinaires/alimentaires domiciles. Notamment, je fais une comparaison entre l'importance et les déterminants de change d'habitudes en France et en Angleterre. Veuillez trouver ci-joint une 'letter d'introduction' pour vous informer davantage de mes recherches.

Jusqu'ici j'ai réalisé plusieurs interviews profonds avec une sélection de gens anisi en Angleterre qu'en France qui m'ont bati une histoire des habitudes alimentaires. Maintenant j'ai besoin de questionner des experts qui ont une connaissance spécialiste dans cette champ.

Apres avoir réalisé l'interview avec Mme …. chez INPES et M ….chez URCAM, ils ont recommandé votre connaissance dans le champ des sociologies d'alimentation à mon attention. Devant ces recommendations et votre bibliographie impressionante et bien connue, je vous serais très reconnaissant de m'accorder l'opportunité de vous interviewer. Normalement, l'interview ne dure pas plus de 45 minutes, mais je serais également reconnaissant de profiter aussi de l'occasion de discuter davantage les thèmes générales de mes recherches avec vous.

Si vous êtes disponible à me parler je serais très content de vous interviewer à Paris à toute heure ou également en tout lieu qui vous est convenable. Si vous n'êtes pas disponible vous-même de me parler, et vous pouvez proposer quelqu'un d'autre qui serait à meme de m'assister, je vous saurai gré de me donner leurs détails de contact ou de lui faire parvenir cette demande.

Veuillez trouver ci-joint aussi une lettre de consentément que je prendrai à l'occasion de l'interview. N'hésitez pas de me contacter si vous avez besoin de plus d'information.

Dans l'attente de votre réponse.

Cordialement

Andy Gatley

Thames Valley University
School of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure
St. Mary's Road
Ealing
London W5 5RF
UK
Tel: +44 020 8231 2239
Email: andy.gatley@tvu.ac.uk

Appendix 18: Letter of introduction (Phase 2 – French)

Phase 2 – Letter of Introduction

City University London

Lettre d'introduction

Détails personnels

Je travaille comme professeur dans le 'School of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure' à Thames Valley University (Londres) et comme partie de mon travail, je suis en train de faire un doctorat (PhD) à 'City University' sous la surveillance de Professor Tim Lang et Dr. Martin Caraher.

Le contexte generale de mes recherches

La thèse de mes recherches est les habitudes culinaires/alimentaires domiciles et la proposition qu'ils sont en train de diminuer et qu'il y a une mutation importante des aliments consommés. Cet phénomène pourrait apporter les conséquences significatives par rapport a la santé, l'économie et la société. Notamment, je fais un comparaison entre l'importance et les déterminants de changement d'habitudes en France et en Angleterre. Je m'intéresse aussi aux acteurs, structures et organizations impliquées dans le champ de la politique nutritionnelle.

Les entretiens

Jusqu'ici j'ai réalisé plusieurs entretiens ouverts avec une sélection de gens anisi en Angleterre qu'en France qui m'ont donné une histoire des habitudes alimentaires. Actuellement j'ai besoin de questionner des experts qui ont une connaissance spécialiste dans cet champ. Normalement, l'entretien ne dure pas plus de 45 minutes.

Si vous avez besoin de vous renseigner davantage, n'hésitez pas de me contacter.

Andy Gatley

Thames Valley University
School of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure
St. Mary's Road
Ealing
London W5 5RF
UK

Tel: +44 020 8231 2239
Email: andy.gatley@tvu.ac.uk

Appendix 19: Informed consent form (Phase 2 – English)

Informed Consent Form for Project Participants

Project Title: Transitions in culinary cultures: A comparative study of France and Britain

PhD Researcher: **Andy Gatley, Dept Health Management & Food Policy, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB, UK**.

PhD in Food Policy

I agree to take part in the above City University research project. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Introductory Letter, which I may keep for my records. I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing to:

- be interviewed by the researcher
- allow the researcher to take notes during the interview
- allow the interview to be audiotaped for the purposes of factual accuracy

Data Protection

This information will be held and processed for the following purpose(s):

- I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party. No identifiable personal data will be published. The identifiable data will not be shared with any other organisation.
- I agree to City University recording and processing this information about me. I understand that this information will be used only for the purpose(s) set out in this statement and my consent is conditional on the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Withdrawal from study

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

Name:.....(please print)

Signature: .....Date: .....

Appendix 20: Informed consent form (Phase 2 – French)

City University London

Informed Consent Form for Project Participants

Project Title: Transitions dans les cultures culinaires : Un etude comparative entre la France et la Grande Bretagne
(Transitions in culinary cultures: A comparative study of France and Britain)

PhD Researcher: **Andy Gatley, Dept Health Management & Food Policy, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB, UK**.

PhD in Food Policy

Je consens à participer aux recherches exécutées par 'City University' mentionnées ci-dessus. Je comprends le raison des travaux des recherches et j'ai lu la lettre d'introduction, que j'ai le droit de garder. Je suis conscient que ma participation signifie mon consentément à :

- être interviewé par l'auteur des recherches
- permettre à l'auteur des recherches d' écrire des notes pendant l'interview
- permettre l'enregistrement de l'intervew pour assurer la précision des faits et des détails

Protection Légale des Données (Data Protection)

Cette information sera gardée et exploitée pour atteindre les objectifs suivants:

- Toute information est fournie à titre confidentiel, et aucun détail qui pourrait identifier un individuel particulier ne sera divulguée dans des travaux de recherches ni à une tierce personne. Aucune donnée personnelle identifiable ne sera publiée. Les données identifiables ne se partageront pas avec d'autres organisations.
- Je consens à l'enregistrement et à l'exploitation de cette information personnelle par City University. Je comprends que cette information ne sera utilisée que pour atteindre les objectifs ci-dessus, et je consens à condition que City University se soumette aux demandes du 'Data Protection Act 1998'.

Retirer des travaux de recherches

Ma participation est volontaire, et par conséquent, j'ai le droit de me retirer d'une part ou meme de tous les travaux, et de me retirer des travaux à tout moment sans sanction ni désavantage.

Nom……(en majuscules svp)

Signature……Date……

Appendix 21: Coding & profile of respondents interviewed (Phase 2)

Phase 2: Coding & Brief Profile of Respondents Interviewed

Key to Coding of Interviewees:

- The first number refers to the phase of the research, either Phase 1 or Phase 2
- The next letter refers to where the person works and lives, either France or Britain
- The next number is the personal identifier and closely corresponds to the order in which respondents were interviewed.
- Thus 2/F/30 refers to a Phase 2 interview with a person living and working in France & whose personal identifier number is 30.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Code of interviewee	**Country of Residence**	**Role and area of expertise**	**Interview Location**
2/F/30	France	• A senior scientific officer and national health promotion professional working for a central government agency • Particular focus is nutrition and has a scientific and publishing background. • Worked on national health surveys (nutrition) in France. • Involved with using surveys to develop national strategies and has worked on turning strategies into action.	London, Britain
2/F/31	France	• Director of a private organisation funded by the state for the regional regulation of health care, health promotion and prevention. . • Past president of government's national organisation promoting health care and originator of national health surveys. • Coordinates & evaluates local agencies & their implementation of national policies. • Concerned with all areas of health including nutrition.	Central/ eastern, France

2/F/32	France	• Project manager for the regional implementation of national nutritional policy. • Employed by a private organisation funded by the state for the regional regulation of health care, health promotion and prevention (as 2/F/31 above). • A nutritionist with research and publishing background and had collaborated on projects with 2/F/30.	Central/ eastern, France
2/B/33	Britain	• Head and professor of a leading catering school with significant industry and educational experience. • Received an OBE & numerous other awards from lead organisations and sits on various guiding committees including those that advise government on hospitality education. • Instigated a national programme to promote cookery skills among young teenagers and other charitable work • Consultant, researcher and best selling cookery & catering book writer	London, Britain
2/B/34	Britain	• UK corporate affairs director of a large international company operating in 98 countries, employing 1/2million people and with £13 billion revenue. • Core business is contracting services such as food and beverage facilities management, security, concierge and transport to clients • Company helps fund a leading initiative to promote cookery skills among young teenagers and funds other charitable work linked to cooking and food. • A major provider of school meals in the UK, involved with some cookery teaching schemes and sits on the board of the School Food Trust.	London, Britain
2/B/35	Britain	• Director of an academy with royal patronage concerned with raising standards & awareness of food, cooking and service. • Key objective is the education and training of young people and the provision of career opportunities for young chefs. • Runs a national charity concerned with teaching children about food, where it comes from and how to taste and cook it. • Has been awarded an Honorary Professorship at a London University.	London, Britain

2/F/36	France	• A civil servant employed in the Ministry of Health, responsible for the continuing implementation of a national programme of nutritional health. • Member of a national committee on public health and is deeply involved with and published widely in the field of nutrition and public health. • Consulted for numerous international studies involved with nutrition and health promotion.	Paris, France
2/F/37	France	• Director of an institute whose aim is to develop training in taste as well as the tasting (degustation) of food and wine for the public and commercial interests. • The founder of the institute which collaborated with former Minister for Culture and established courses in 'training in taste' for schools and the national *'Semaine du Gout'* (Week of taste) • The organisation is now divided in two with the institute continuing to pioneer research and education associated with 'taste' and a private company which manages professional and commercial activities, particularly in relation to the wine and food industry • The institute develops and runs children's workshops in taste at a national level in schools.	Western France
2/F/38	France	• Director of a long established academy in France with a similar role to that of respondent 2/B/35 and as such is concerned with raising standards & awareness of French food, cooking and service. • Also concerned with the promotion of the craft of professional cookery &the provision of a 'network' of contacts for the advancement of chef's careers • Has a particular focus on promoting French quality food products and French chefs internationally.	Paris, France
2/F/39	France	• A sociologist of food and director of two national research agencies. • Serves on government committees of numerous boards including AFSSA and PNNS • Internationally renowned researcher and writer of books and academic papers in both France and abroad. • Undertaken collaborative and comparative international research in food studies.	Paris, France
2/F/40	France	• Professor and Director of Research Centre in university in SW France • Also has a variety of roles in many key research agencies, institutions and government departments (e.g. DESS, CRITHA, CERS, ERIT, CNRS) • A significant contributor to privately funded research (e.g. OCHA and CIDIL) • Widely published in the field of the Sociology of Food	Toulouse, France

2/B/41	Britain	• A professional French chef, restaurateur and small business owner who has worked in Britain since the late 1960s • Starred in at least 2 TV series, a regular broadcaster on food, and written more than 9 'bestsellers' • Has been awarded, Michelin stars, an OBE, Meilleur Ouvrier de France en patisserie, Chevallier de l'ordre des arts et des lettres, Chevallier de la legion d'honeur and Honorary Doctorate in Culinary Arts from Johnson and Wales University in New York • Increasingly works as a food and wine consultant for a large Cruise line company, British Airways and chairs a prestigious hotel consortium.	Near London, Britain
2/B/42	Britain	• Works within community health and food and currently employed as Food and Health Development Manager of a School Food and Health team at a regional PCT • Involved in supporting the 'Better food in schools' initiative via trying to meet new school food & nutritional standards from the SFT and the DfESs as well meet the healthy eating strand of the 'Healthy School Scheme'. • Co-ordinates a regional Food Network and organises it's meetings with the GOSE etc. • Has recently worked as a Regional 5 a day coordinator	Sussex, Britain
2/B/43	Britain	• A university Professor and deputy VC with research interests in children's learning, particularly in relation to their dietary habits, food preferences and health issues. • Heads up a Food & Activity Research Unit which has received a CWT award • Recent work in social marketing & modelling has led to the development of an interactive programme aimed at improving the diet of schoolchildren • The programme has received considerable recognition and adoption	Wales, Britain
2/B/44	Britain	• Works for an agency advising government on issues related to sustainability and consumption • Also worked within a leading national consumer group on matters related to food • A long term food campaigner, policy advisor and held a leading role within a significant NGO • co-editor of a food campaigning magazine, broadcaster, author and consultant on books, reports and TV programmes on children and food	London, Britain

2/B/45	Britain	• A business woman, worker for charity, consultant to major food service company and holds a leading position within the structures recently established by government to improve school meals and the health of schoolchildren • Has worked as a proprietor of a Michelin starred restaurant & prestigious food service company • Founder of an international school of food & wine • A newspaper columnist, TV cook and broadcaster and highly successful writer of cookbooks and also novels.	London, Britain
2/B/46	Britain	• An associate professor of human nutrition at a university in the Midlands • has spent much time working in France and her particular research interests have been comparative studies between France and Britain in the field of influences on food choice, meal patterns, cooking practices, obesity & health education. • Has undertaken considerable collaborative research with institutions in France and Britain and is widely published.	Midlands, Britain
2/F/47	France	• German born & currently general manager of a 5 * hotel in Paris • Has 30 years international hotel industry experience, mainly as GM and mainly in France for a multi-national hotel company that owns, manages, leases or franchises hotels and resorts, through various subsidiaries around the world. • The company is headquartered in the UK and is listed at No. 25 in the Top Global Consumer Goods and Services Companies by Datamonitor (the company for which respondent 2/B/34 works is listed at No. 3)	Paris, France
2/F/48	France	• A professional British chef, restaurateur and small business owner who has worked in France from about 2000 • Runs own small restaurant in SW France in the summer and works in Alps during winter as freelance chef doing private catering in luxury chalets • British trained including 5 years at London club under ACdF chef & has worked on the QE2, at Mossiman's Michelin starred club & as head chef for a 'City' restaurant	South-west France