

University of Strathclyde
Department of Management

**THE OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITY
AND CULTURE OF CHEFS
IN UNITED KINGDOM (UK)
HAUTE CUISINE RESTAURANTS**

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John Cooper, Glasgow
May, 2012

Abstract

This study seeks to conceptualise how the occupational identity and culture of chefs is constructed and maintained through both work and social interaction. In addition, this study may also generate findings of relevance for human resource management (HRM) in the hospitality industry in relation to the enduring practical issues of training and the recruitment and retention of chefs, which have long been recognised as managerial challenges within the hospitality industry. Indeed, hospitality managers have attempted in vain to resolve this staffing crisis by changing management and recruitment practices, but seem to overlook the complex cultural issues that underpin the work and identity of chefs. Therefore, this study may indirectly help to get to grips with these HRM issues, by providing a better understanding of the occupational identity and culture of chefs. On a more generic level, this study aims to generate empirical data that informs contemporary debates about the role of work in identity formation and the structure of occupational identities in our contemporary society. This study is thus an attempt to assess, in light of the experiences of chefs, the untested argument that contemporary work holds little meaning for today's workers. The research was planned in two main stages, an initial stage using unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews as preparation for entering the culture, and a subsequent stage of ethnography (overt participant observation) and reflective interviews. The first stage was used to investigate the chef's self-concept and explore how chefs construct their own reality on the basis of a personal framework of beliefs, attitudes and values. In-depth interviews were conducted throughout Great Britain and Ireland with fifty-four Michelin-starred chefs. The second stage was used to penetrate the 'back region' (Goffman, 1959) of the chefs' world in order to go beyond what the chefs say about themselves (in the face-to-face interviews) and explore the shared system of meanings that help to perpetuate a sense of cohesion, identity and belonging that defines 'being a chef'. Ethnographic studies were carried out in four different Michelin-starred kitchens, with participant observation conducted in each kitchen over a period of thirty days on average. Drawing upon the fieldwork, fresh insights into the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen 'ideology', symbols, rituals, rites and myths) which underpin the creation and maintenance of the occupational identity and culture of chefs are revealed *in the chefs' own words*.

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Glossary of Terms

CHEF DE CUISINE (HEAD CHEF) OR EXECUTIVE CHEF

Descriptions of the role of the *chef de cuisine* often involve reference to his/her dual role of artist/craftsman and executive/manager. As Fuller (1981: 22) explains: ‘The *chef de cuisine* is often not only something of an artist and certainly a craftsman but an executive with managerial responsibilities...’. A useful synopsis of the *chef de cuisine*’s profile is also provided by de Boni and Sharles (1939: 93) in the following:

It is the chef de cuisine who is in charge, and who is responsible for the welfare of this important department, and he [*sic*] must know his business in every branch down to the smallest detail. Here he must be an autocrat, and all his staff must feel the weight of his authority. He must enforce strict discipline, and exact from every subordinate the full measure of his or her duty, which must be carried out with zeal, quickness, and accuracy.

Owing to the complexity of the operation they manage, the wide range of skills required of them and the skills and art they must foster, the *chef de cuisine* has traditionally enjoyed a unique standing (Fuller, 1981; The Culinary Institute of America [CIA], 2002).

CHEF DE PARTIE

The *chef de partie* is a working cook and as well as being a skilled craftsmen may be regarded as the supervisor of a clearly defined section within the kitchen. As well as having sectional responsibilities, the *chef de partie* of the more important sections (such as the sauce) may have the standing and duties of a *sous chef* and are usually considered as among the leaders of the brigade. In accordance with the *partie* system, the *chefs de partie* traditionally rank as follows in the kitchen hierarchy: *Chef saucier* (sauce cook), *chef garde manger* (larder cook), *chef pâtissier* (pastry cook), *chef poissonier* (fish cook) and *chef entremetier* (vegetable cook) (Fuller, 1981; CIA, 2002).

COMMIS

Depending on the *partie* concerned, the sectional chef will be assisted by one or more trained cooks who have yet to achieve full chef status. These assistants or *commis* should have completed their apprenticeship or training and will gain experience on all the *parties* prior to receiving full *partie* responsibilities (Fuller, 1981; CIA, 2002).

GASTRONOMY

‘The practice or art of choosing, cooking, and eating good food’ (Pearsall, 2001: 586).

HAUTE CUISINE

‘High-quality cooking following the style of traditional French cuisine’ (Pearsall, 2001: 652).

MAITRE D’

‘The head waiter of a restaurant’ (Pearsall, 2001: 858).

MISE EN PLACE

‘The preparation of dishes and ingredients before the beginning of service’ (Pearsall, 2001: 910).

NOUVELLE CUISINE

‘A modern style of cookery that avoids rich foods and emphasises the freshness of the ingredients and the presentation of the dishes’ (Pearsall, 2001: 974).

(THE) *PARTIE* SYSTEM

The essence of the *partie* system is the division of work into sections, each section or *partie* being supervised by a *chef de partie* who is a craft specialist. All the *parties* come under the command of the *chef de cuisine* assisted by one or more *sous* chefs. The team of cooks and their assistants under the *partie* system is commonly known as the kitchen ‘brigade’ (Fuller, 1981; CIA, 2002).

(THE) *PASSE*

Passe or ‘the *passe*’, in a restaurant, traditionally a counter or area separating kitchen and ‘front of house’ where dishes are expedited and made ready for delivery to diners are placed by the kitchen for collection by wait staff (Wikipedia, 2011a).

SOUS-CHEF

The *sous* chef is the senior assistant of the *chef de cuisine* and in large organisations will have no sectional or *partie* responsibilities. The *sous* chef assists the section chefs as necessary and assists the *chef de cuisine* in supervising the preparation of food and overseeing its service at the hotplate servery (the *passe*). In large establishments there may be more than one *sous* chef, whereas in smaller kitchen operations one of the principal *chefs de partie*, such as the sauce cook, may act as *sous* chef (Fuller, 1981; CIA, 2002). As Fuller (1981: 52-3) explains, the *sous chef* ‘is desirably something of a disciplinarian, particularly during the arduous work conducted at the fast tempo of the kitchen, so needs firmness as well as an understanding of people and the tasks they must perform’.

STAGE / STAGIAIRE

Staging is when a cook or chef works briefly, for free, in another chef’s kitchen to learn and be exposed to new techniques and cuisines. A *stage* normally is used to see how a new chef or cook can adapt to the current environment in the kitchen. When a

future chef is seeking an internship, often the *stage* is the next step after the interview (Wikipedia, 2011b).

1. Introduction

THE OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITY AND CULTURE OF CHEFS IN UNITED KINGDOM (UK) HAUTE CUISINE RESTAURANTS

I want to tell you about the dark recesses of the restaurant underbelly – a subculture whose centuries-old militaristic hierarchy and ethos of ‘rum, buggery and the lash’ make for a mix of unwavering order and nerve-shattering chaos – because I find it all quite comfortable, like a nice warm bath. I can move around easily in this life. I speak the language.

(Bourdain, 2000: 3)

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

This research falls into the field of hospitality studies and focuses on chefs and their kitchen ‘*brigades*’¹, a world which has traditionally remained secluded, until the emergence of the recent phenomenon of celebrity chefs and their ‘open kitchens’, revealing the previously secret ‘backstage’ (Goffman, 1959) of professional cooking. Indeed, a popular interest in chefs has grown considerably for the past two decades, as illustrated in increasing media coverage of Michelin-starred and celebrity chefs and the flourishing trend for biographies (White, 1990, 2006; Ladenis, 1997; Bourdain, 2000; Hennessy, 2000; Ramsay, 2006, 2007a; Simpson, 2006; Newkey-Burden, 2009) and other written accounts of both high-profile chefs and kitchen life (Ruhlman, 1997, 2001, 2006; Bramble, 1998; Mullan, 1998; Bourdain, 2001, 2006, 2010; Parkinson and Green, 2001; Dornenburg and Page, 2003; Kelly, 2003; Wright, 2005; Buford, 2006; Chelminski, 2006).

Notwithstanding, remarkably little methodical analysis has been carried out about the work of chefs (Wood, 1997) and, in particular, the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths) which underpin the creation and

¹ For the purposes of this study a (head) *chef* is defined as a cook in a professional kitchen who leads other members of the kitchen ‘*brigade*’ who are also referred to as *commis* chefs, *chefs de partie*, *sous-chefs*, etc. in accordance with the *partie* system (Saunders, 1981a).

Fuller (1981: 46) states that ‘the essence of the *partie* system is the division of work into sections, each section or *partie* being controlled by a *chef de partie*...’, whilst ‘the team of cooks and their assistants under the *partie* system is commonly called the “Brigade”’.

maintenance of the occupational identity and culture of chefs. A notable exception, however, can be found in the work of Fine (1987a, 1990, 1992, 1996a, 1996b) which demonstrates how chefs and cooks in the United States (US) see their status within categories of self-concept and perceptual images held within society. Yet, unlike this research, Fine does not focus on the high-end of professional cooking, where, in his words, ‘a more self-conscious aesthetic dynamic occurs’ (Fine, 1996b: 16).

What is more, a particularly noticeable trend in the hospitality literature has been researchers’ tendency to investigate the hotel and catering workforce as a whole, which has therefore resulted in a lack of consideration being given to the particularities of specific occupational groups, such as chefs. Thus, Fine (1996a: 1) notes that ‘for all their potential allure, restaurants have rarely been studied sociologically’, although Fine’s remark applies more to chefs than to waiting staff to whom sociologists have paid a lot more attention (for example, Donovan, 1920; Hutter, 1970; Marshall, 1986; Paules, 1991), which is possibly due to researchers gaining relatively easier access to the ‘front’ of house ‘region’ as opposed to the ‘backstage’ kitchen (Goffman, 1959). Similarly, Wood (1997: 12) suggests that the vast majority of sociological studies (Mars, 1973; Bowey, 1976; Butler and Snizek, 1976; Howe, 1977; Butler and Skipper, 1981; Mars and Nicod, 1981, 1984) have been of food (and drink) service staff where ‘the experience of food service staff and their relationships with other workers (notably chefs and cooks) have been generalised to the workforce as a whole’.

In summary, the above discussion has highlighted that, although the case of chefs has sometimes been identified as unique (notably in terms of the image of the cooking profession and corresponding motivations to enter the field), researchers have tended to consider the hospitality workforce as a whole, often portraying them as marginal and deviant, and highlighting the fusion between work and leisure. The next section will now focus more specifically on studies which have taken chefs as their sole objects of study, in order to provide a brief overview of the ‘chef’ literature that will serve as a synopsis of the review of the ‘chef’ literature (see Chapter 5) where all the aforementioned studies will be reviewed in more depth, following a chronological order, although the focus of analysis will mainly be the cultural aspects of the occupation, so as to derive insights about the identity and culture of chefs.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE 'CHEF' ACADEMIC LITERATURE

As the above discussion shows, the hotel and catering industry, and specifically that of the restaurant, has been investigated sociologically (albeit sparingly) but sociologists have tended to focus mainly on interaction among staff in the workforce as a whole, rather than chefs in particular.

The earliest systematic investigation of restaurant workers was William Foote Whyte's (1948, 1949) action-research study of restaurant and kitchen behaviour in a large Chicago restaurant, which is firmly rooted in the human relations tradition. Nevertheless, as already highlighted by Wood (1997), remarkably little methodical analysis of the work of chefs has been carried out to this day, although a few UK studies include incidental comment (CIR, 1971; Bowey, 1976; Saunders, 1981a, 1981b) and a few US studies provide a little more evidence (Guyette, 1981; Peterson and Birg, 1988; Ferguson and Zukin, 1998). In the UK context, only the now dated research of Chivers (1972, 1973) is dedicated entirely to the occupation of chefs and cooks, although Chivers's quantitative study predominantly focuses on occupational choice and expectations, and corresponding class consciousness, and thus does not directly deal with chefs' and cooks' occupational culture and identity.

In the US context, a notable exception can be found in the work of Fine (1985, 1987a, 1987b, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1995; 1996a, 1996b), most of which are based on fieldwork carried out in the 1980's in four Minnesota restaurants (all in one city). Through participant observation, Fine systematically analyses the work of chefs and cooks from a sociological perspective and depicts how chefs use occupational rhetorics to describe themselves as quasi-professional, quasi-artist, businessman or manual workers. Yet, neither Chivers (1972, 1973) nor Fine (1985, 1987a, 1987b, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1995; 1996a, 1996b) is concerned with chefs and cooks working in *haute cuisine* restaurants, and both their findings are now significantly dated.

More recently, a few UK studies have focused their attention on the culture of chefs, among which are discussion papers on kitchen violence (Johns and Menzel, 1999) and on the effects of chef occupational culture on hotel-organisation culture (Cameron *et al.*, 1999). Similarly, Pratten's (2003a, 2003b) papers on the retention and

training of chefs and the qualities that make ‘a great chef’, respectively, are mainly conceptual and based on limited primary data.

Rooted in empirical research is Cameron’s (2001) qualitative study in which he uses Mary Douglas’s (1978) grid-group analysis to reveal behavioural insights into the occupational identity of executive chefs in 4-star UK hotels and the allegiance they give to their occupation when faced with a programme of radical change initiated by management. Building upon these themes, Cameron’s (2004) unpublished PhD thesis relates both the commitment and cultural concept of occupation and organisation to a self-percept of chefs working for 4- and 5-star UK hotels (see Chapter 4).

With regards to more specific kitchen-related issues, a few authors have investigated the persisting lack of female chefs in professional kitchens, from which we can identify three different perspectives, that of the sociologist (Fine, 1987b), the trade ‘insider’ (Cooper, 1998) and the feminist-historian (Banner, 1973; Swinbank, 2002). In addition, some insightful conceptual work has emerged on the effects of *nouvelle cuisine* on chef identity and culture (Wood, 1991; Rao *et al.*, 2003, 2005) and on the recent trend for television and celebrity chefs (Fattorini, 1994; Gillespie, 1994; Wood, 2000; Ashley *et al.*, 2004).

Last but not least, a few European authors have focused their attention on the *haute cuisine* sector and Michelin-starred chefs in particular, albeit from a management perspective. For example, while Balazs’s (2001, 2002) main focus is the leadership skills of French three-Michelin-starred chefs, Johnson *et al.* (2005) are interested in the management styles and motivation of two and three-Michelin-starred chefs in four European countries (Belgium, France, Switzerland and the UK) which they analyse in light of the operation and profitability of the selected establishments. Likewise, Surlemont *et al.*’s (2005) study details the revenue models of similarly graded Michelin-starred restaurants, whilst Surlemont and Johnson (2005) address the role of the Michelin-star rating system in preserving standards and chefs’ creativity for the benefit of customers.

It is clear from this brief overview of the ‘chef’ literature that, although the body of knowledge about chefs has grown in recent years, the identity and culture of this occupational group has remained little investigated (with the exception of the present authors own recent work, *Culture, Identity, and Belonging in the “Culinary Underbelly”*

(see Palmer *et al.*, 2010)), especially in relation to the *haute cuisine* sector and Michelin-starred chefs in particular. Besides, it is interesting to note that, as early as 1988, this sector of catering (i.e. *haute cuisine*) was identified by Gabriel as worthy of ‘a study all to itself’ (1988: 12). This study seeks to address this research gap and to provide empirical data by examining the occupational identity and culture of chefs in UK haute cuisine restaurants. In particular, the research investigates the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths) that help to perpetuate a sense of cohesion, identity and belonging that defines ‘being a chef’.

RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The research aim is to examine the occupational identity and culture of chefs in UK haute cuisine restaurants. In support of this aim, the research objectives are as follows:

1. To explore the role of work in identity formation with regard to chefs, and examine their self-concept and occupational identity.
2. To examine how the occupational identity and culture of chefs is created and maintained through social structures and processes, such as the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths.
3. To investigate whether issues related to the social class, gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity of chefs influence, or are influenced by, the culture and identity of the occupational group.
4. To consider the implications of the occupational identity and culture of chefs for HRM issues, such as the recruitment, retention and training of chefs.

RESEARCH SCOPE

It is acknowledged that the research focus on haute cuisine restaurants will constrain the scope and generalisability of the study. ‘Haute cuisine’ is defined as ‘artful and elaborate cuisine’ (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2006), but also refers to the high-end of professional cooking, whilst being generally associated with critical acclamation, as embodied in the institution of the ‘Michelin Guide’ and its star rating

system (Surlemont and Johnson, 2005). Although ‘haute cuisine’ first implied a particular style of French cooking, the term is nowadays used in reference to gastronomic excellence, regardless of nationality (London Restaurants Guide, 2006) but still evokes a particular style of kitchen hierarchy, derived from the *partie* system (Wikipedia, 2006). Although a marginal and elite segment of the restaurant industry, ‘with less than 0.5 per cent in volume’, the haute cuisine sector plays a key role in ‘trend setting, image building and in setting standards for the industry as a whole’, as Surlemont and Johnson (2005: 578) pointedly remark.

OVERVIEW

The study opens with an examination of the body of literature about the concept of ‘identity’ and the role of work in identity formation and occupational culture. Attention then moves on to existing studies of the hospitality and catering industry in general, and the world of chefs in particular. This leads into a consideration of the methodology and methods employed for the purposes of this research. Drawing upon the fieldwork, fresh insights into the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths) which underpin the creation and maintenance of the occupational identity and culture of chefs are revealed *in the chefs’ own words*. From this point on, the research findings are discussed while comparing and contrasting the research findings with the findings of the existing body of work, before making concluding statements about the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

2. The Concept of ‘Identity’

This study focuses on the role of work in the formation of chef identity, through an exploration of the social processes which take place within the chef workplace and contribute to the creation and maintenance of chef identity. The underlying aim of the research thus calls for a review of the body of literature on the concept of identity and identity formation, starting with an exploration of the concept of ‘the self’ and ‘identity’ at the individual level (summarised in Appendix A), before examining theories of identity formation from the perspective of a group or collectivity, such as that of an occupation (summarised in Appendix B).

DEFINING ‘IDENTITY’ WITHIN SOCIAL SCIENCE

The concept of identity is complex and broad-ranging and has generated much debate from a variety of theoretical traditions, such as psychoanalysis, literary criticism and theory, postmodernism, and studies of sexuality, and lesbian and gay studies, to name but a few (Elliott, 2001). The research objectives of this study, however, do not call for a review of the complete spectrum of debate about identity, especially as the topic is clearly grounded within the fields of sociology and social anthropology.

Identity is an ambiguous and contested concept which has been used differently across various social science disciplines and therefore generated a variety of meanings, making any definition of the term a difficult task (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). Sökefeld (1999) retraces the shift that the usage of the term ‘identity’ has undergone within social sciences in the past few decades. As the Latin root of the term illustrates – *identitas*, from *idem*, ‘the same’ – the original meaning of ‘identity’ was ‘sameness’ and in psychology this meant ‘selfsameness’, that is, ‘a disposition of basic personality features acquired mostly during childhood and, once integrated, more or less fixed’ (Sökefeld, 1999: 417). Drawing upon Erik H. Erikson (1980), the awareness of having an identity thus meant being aware of one’s own continuity and sameness, whilst being aware that others recognised such sameness and continuity.

In social anthropology, however, the term ‘identity’ referred not only to selfsameness but also to an awareness of sharing certain characteristics within a group, such as

language or culture in the case of ethnic or cultural identity for example (Seymour-Smith, 1986). As Sökefeld (1999) remarks, these two perspectives were nonetheless complementary since the group to which a person belongs forms an integral part of the social environment in which and through which personal identity is created. Erikson (1980: 109) was the first to reconcile the two perspectives and formulate their interrelationship, by stating that the term ‘identity’ ‘connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself (selfsameness) and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential characteristics with others’.

Brubaker and Cooper (2000) also retrace the use of the term ‘identity’ in sociology and contend that sociologists with affiliation to the school of Symbolic Interactionism (see below) initially focused on ‘the self’ but came increasingly to speak of ‘identity’, through the influence of Anselm Strauss (1959), Erving Goffman (1963), and Peter Berger (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Berger *et al.*, 1973). In particular, Goffman (1963) was the first to conceptualise identity as consisting of three interrelated aspects – that of ‘personal’, ‘social’ and ‘ego’/‘felt’ identity – an assumption from which most sociological textbooks still draw to define ‘identity’ (Giddens, 2001; Fulcher and Scott, 2003; Haralambos and Holborn, 2004). As Williams (2001: 7) points out, Goffman’s adjectival categories are indeed ‘useful suggestions to encourage consideration of the range and scope of identity matters’. Thus, whilst ‘personal identity’ emphasises the uniqueness of an individual, through his/her biography, habits and attitudes for example, ‘social identity’ captures what we hold in common with other people, and refers to ‘clusters of personality characteristics and attributes that are linked to particular social roles, categories or groups’, such as marital status, religion, age, class, ethnic group, gender, and occupation (Fulcher and Scott, 2003: 125). In contrast, an individual’s ‘ego (or felt) identity’ is defined as ‘the subjective sense of his [*sic*] own situation and his continuity and character that an individual comes to obtain as a result of his various social experiences’ (Goffman, 1963: 129), which, in effect, also fits the concept of ‘self-concept’.

The term ‘identity’ has thus become an all-encompassing word, denoting both individuality and sameness, whilst implying a broad range of significant social and cultural differences (such as ethnicity, nationality, class, gender, occupation, race, and sexuality) to distinguish between individuals and social groups (Miller *et al.*, 1998).

Despite the range of contexts in which the term ‘identity’ has been used, some authors have attempted to synthesise the various social sciences definitions and contend that the notion of identity always involves two interdependent criteria of comparison: *similarity* and *difference* (Woodward 1997, 2004; Jenkins, 2004). In this sense, defining one’s identity involves making comparisons between people and therefore establishing similarities and differences between them (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004). It is this conception of identity that will be adopted as a working definition for the purposes of this study, as the remainder of this chapter of the literature review will also make clear.

Nevertheless, it is clear throughout the literature that problems over the use of the term still persist (Hall and du Gay, 1996; Brubaker and Cooper, 2000; Williams, 2001; Jamieson, 2002; Jenkins, 2004). Some writers are indeed wary of contemporary writing on identity where the term has been used to imply the fixed or stable quality of a person or group (Burkitt, 1991). To such writers, processes of identification (Jenkins, 2000, 2004) and reflexivity (Giddens, 1991) should be emphasised, instead of searching for the meaning of a ‘fixed’ identity that simply is. At the opposite end of the spectrum, more recent postmodern versions of identity (e.g. Bauman, 1992; Hall and du Gay, 1996) have stressed the fluidity, fragmentation, and context sensitivity that characterise people’s identities, thus obscuring the notion of a fundamental and durable sense of identity (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000).

In light of these comments, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue that, as a concept, ‘identity’ has generated various, and sometimes contradictory, definitions within social science and thus risks being stretched to the point of meaninglessness. For Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 9), it brings a great deal of confusion to describe under the same rubric of ‘identity’, all the different aspects of what people do to construct, and present a sense of who they are. Instead, they suggest disaggregating the term ‘identity’ into a number of processes and conceptual tools, such as the ‘categorisation’ and ‘identification’ of self and others, the building of ‘self-understanding’ and the construction of feelings of ‘groupness’ or belonging with others. In her review of Brubaker and Cooper’s (2000) work, however, Jamieson (2002) argues that the authors overstate the shortcomings of current theorising of identity (including postmodern theories) which often endeavour to specify a number of interrelated

processes, whilst acknowledging some sense of continuity of self. These criticisms notwithstanding, Brubaker and Cooper's (2000) disaggregation of the term 'identity' is useful and will assist the structure of this chapter on identity, where a clear distinction is made between identity construction at the individual level and the process of collective/group identification.

Last but not least, it is important to note that although many authors across sociology, social psychology and anthropology have concerned themselves with the concept of identity and identity formation, the latter have seldom acknowledged or drawn from each other's work. In his book *Social Identity*, Jenkins (2004) recognises this pitfall and posits the usefulness of integrating the theoretical foundations of each of these three social science disciplines for a wider understanding of the process of identity formation. To this effect, Jenkins has provided an insightful, modern-day and trans-disciplinary synthesis of the literature on identity, which has informed the structure and logical flow of this chapter.

IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Often, a discussion of identity begins with an exploration of the 'self', although the two terms should not be seen as 'coextensive, since there are forms of identity which are not based on the self, namely, forms of collective identity, such as nationalist identities' (Elliott, 2001: 5). Rather than using the two terms interchangeably, the self is best understood as 'an individual's reflexive sense of her or his own particular identity, constituted *vis-à-vis* others in terms of similarity and difference, without which she or he wouldn't know who they are and hence wouldn't be able to act' (Jenkins, 2004: 27). Thus the meanings of the word 'self' parallels the underlying characteristics of 'identity' as discussed above, whilst allowing a clear distinction between the individual and the collective.

Questions about the nature of the self have interested philosophers and religious thinkers for centuries. Yet, it was not until the twentieth century that the concept of the self started to become a significant focus in the development of the new discipline of psychology and psychoanalysis, which subsequently attracted the attention of

sociologists and social psychologists in the 1920's and 1930's, and led to the establishment of the sub-discipline of 'Symbolic Interactionism' (Casey, 1995).

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN THE WORK OF SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISTS

Whilst Western thinking had traditionally viewed the self as a fixed entity constituting the essential core of one's being, and developed independently of society (Burkitt, 1991), theorists with affiliation to Symbolic Interactionism, notably Charles Horton Cooley (1902), George Herbert Mead (1934) and Erving Goffman (1959; 1961), were among the first thinkers to develop theories of selfhood that posit the social construction of the self, although as Casey (1995) points out, Karl Marx [1818-1883], Emile Durkheim [1858-1917] and Sigmund Freud [1856-1939] had all already argued, in various ways, that the self is historically and culturally specific and shaped by institutional processes.

For Cooley (1902: 136), the self is 'that which is designated in common speech by the pronouns of the first person singular, "I", "me", "mine" and "myself"'. He then developed the notion of the 'looking-glass self', reasoning that one's self-concept is significantly influenced by what the individual believes others think of him/her. In this sense, the 'looking glass' reflects the imagined evaluations of others about the individual. According to Cooley (1902: 159), the development of an individual's self-concept follows three steps: 'the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgement of that appearance; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification'. It follows that the self arises out of social interaction between an individual and his/her various primary groups, and 'is formed by a trial-and-error learning process by which values, attitudes, roles and identities are learned' (Burns, 1979: 57).

Mead (1934) expanded on both William James's (1890 [1890]) 'social self' and Cooley's (1902) 'looking-glass self', from which he produced a more comprehensive theory of self-development. Like Cooley, Mead (1934) argues that social interaction produces the self, not the other way around. In Mead's (1934: 199) terms:

The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there at birth but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in

the given individual as a result of his relation to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process.

For Mead, the self emerges as a result of the individual's concern about how others react to him/her. In order to behave appropriately in society, the individual learns to perceive and interpret the world as others do. Mead calls these others, the 'generalised other', which comes to embody the organised attitudes and values of the whole community. The 'generalised other' that the individual acquires from early childhood becomes a source of internal regulation that guides the individual's behaviour in the absence of external forces (Burns, 1979; Casey, 1995).

For this to happen, however, the individual must be able to take the role of the 'generalised other', that is, to assume the attitudes and values of the community towards his/her own behaviour and linguistic acts (Casey, 1995). This is how, according to Mead, one becomes conscious of oneself 'as an object or individual, and thus develops a self or personality' (Mead, 1934: 154). In other words, to possess a 'self' necessarily implies the ability to put oneself in the place of others, to act as others act and to view one's actions, emotions and beliefs from the perspective of 'significant others', that is, as others would view and interpret the actions of the self. Mead (1934) contends that this process of self-objectification is reliant on language and humans' ability to use symbols, for it is by sharing significant symbols and meanings with other members of a community that the individual is able to integrate the attitudes of others towards himself/herself into the 'generalised other' (hence the name of the school: '*Symbolic Interactionism*'). As a result, a person's sense of who he/she is will incorporate the values of the social group to which he/she belongs.

Mead's (1934) theory is further characterised by the crucial distinction he made between the 'I' and the 'me' in conceptualising the self. The 'me', as Mead uses the term, is the socialised self, made up of the internalised attitudes of the 'generalised other'; whereas the 'I' is spontaneous, undisciplined, inner, and creative, and stands for a person's subjective response to the attitudes of others. Self-awareness is achieved when the self becomes able to distinguish between the 'me' and the 'I' and therefore a level of reflective distance from the demands of society is attained (Elliott, 2001). Mead's (1934) distinction between the 'me' and the 'I' introduces a level of spontaneity

to each social encounter, whereby the individual is able to respond to social relations in a unique fashion. As Elliott (2001) highlights, this conceptual distinction allows Mead (1934) to avoid the charge that his theory of the self is deterministic; or in other words, that the self merely reflects the internalisation of societal values and attitudes.

As Cooley (1902) had done before him, Mead therefore came to the conclusion that the self is inseparable from society and thoroughly created in the process of human interaction. Yet, several academicians have pointed out that Mead's theory possesses several weaknesses, which limits its usefulness as a general theoretical framework for the study of the self. One major criticism is that Mead's self is too rationalistic, too conscious and too cognitive, at the expense of the emotional and unconscious aspects of self and human life (Adler and Adler, 1980; Elliott, 2001; Jenkins, 2004). Other authors have argued that, by focusing exclusively on micro-sociological concepts, Mead's theory ignores the influence of greater social organisations and social structure on the individual, and therefore fails to consider the impact of social conflict on the establishment of self-identity (Adler and Adler, 1980; Burkitt, 1991). Mead indeed sees society as essentially consensual, making little allowance for issues of power and political domination, or variations in common knowledge, in his concept of the 'generalised other' (Elliott, 2001; Jenkins, 2004).

Although these are clearly valid criticisms, another important shortcoming in Mead's theory is the characterisation of selfhood as a system of different entities, with the 'I' and the 'me' interacting in an 'inner conversation'. Dividing the self into 'bits' loses sight of the fact that most human beings do not experience themselves as a plurality of entities, but rather seem to live their lives more-or-less as unitary selves (Jenkins, 2004). As Burkitt (1991; 1994) argues, the embodiment of selfhood is clearly the most important source of this consistency, as experienced by ourselves and others. Embodiment is indeed an important concept, referring to the individual's physical presence in the world and the fact that mind and body are indissociable from individuals' sense of selfhood (Burkitt, 1991).

What is more, as Jenkins (2004: 45) pointedly remarks, assigning a plurality of entities to the self also makes it difficult to envisage selfhood as constructed within an inter-subjective and external context. Jenkins (2004) notes that the tight pairing that Mead theorised between the 'I' and the 'me' makes conceptual separation of the

social context and the person analytically useful, but fails to fully account for the processes through which selfhood is created, maintained and changed. To avoid the aforementioned weakness of Mead's theory, Jenkins proposes to start with a unitary image of selfhood that stands for the individual's embodied point of view, emerging within an inter-subjective human world. For Jenkins, the self is best conceived as the ongoing and simultaneous synthesis of internal self definitions (the unique individuality of Mead's 'I') and external definitions of the self taken in from the outside (the attitudes of significant others in Mead's 'me'). Jenkins's (2004: 50) model of selfhood therefore emphasises the self as being both individual and intrinsically interactional:

It is the individual's reflexive sense of her [*sic*] own particular identity, constituted *vis-à-vis* others in terms of similarity and difference. ... That particular identity, in this model, is always a to-ing and fro-ing of how she sees herself and how others see her. ... This is the internal-external dialectic of individual identification.

The usefulness of Jenkins's model, for this research topic in particular, also resides in its applicability to both selfhood (i.e. individual identity) and collective identity. Indeed, Jenkins argues that the development of identity at the collective level can be described by processes analogous to those defined by Mead's individual-level identity theory. Collective identities – such as organisational or occupational identities for example – are therefore similarly subjected to this dialectic of internal-external identification, whereby the interplay of similarity and difference plays a critical role (see Hatch and Schultz, 2002 for an application of Mead's theory to organisational identity formation). Drawing upon Mead's (1934) theory, it can be argued that chefs' conceptions of self identity is likely to be influenced both by their occupational peer group, who constitute 'significant others', and by the wider audience of the 'generalised other'.

For Burkitt (1994: 8), post-structuralist ideas – among which Foucault's (1980) and Derrida's (1978) – are problematic insofar as they lead 'to an over-concentration on discourse at the expense of understanding humans as embodied social beings'. The position adopted for this research is close to that of Burkitt (1994: 8) for whom the self is not merely a creation of discourse but also 'a product of social relations and embodied actions within those relations'. As Burkitt argues, there is always a social context in

which language and discourses play a part, and for this reason, certain perspectives in sociology (such as Symbolic Interactionism and the insights of Pierre Bourdieu, 1990) can be seen as an advance over post-structuralist ideas, since they acknowledge the importance of social relations and practices in the process of identity formation.

To support his argumentation on embodiment, Burkitt (1994) draws upon what Pierre Bourdieu (1990) calls the 'social habitus' to describe the bodily dispositions shared by members of a social class or group which they have acquired due to their being confronted with similar codes of conduct and patterns of upbringing. In other words, by 'social habitus', Bourdieu means 'the bodily dispositions that our social relations and practices have instilled in us, and which tend to reproduce themselves when the body is called into action in various social contexts' (Burkitt, 1994: 21). Individuals therefore unreflectively reproduce patterns of action in every new social situation, in compliance with the social practices of the group to which they are a part.

Yet, as Burkitt explains, the actions of social actors are not rigidly determined, since individuals are not conscious of the learning and control that have been instilled in their bodily dispositions. In practice, individuals also tend to experience themselves as an agentic force in each novel situation, which, in effect, is very close to Mead's (1934) conceptualisation of the self as the 'I'; while the individual's bodily dispositions could be assimilated to Mead's 'me' (Burkitt, 1994). Burkitt thus provides us with an insightful re-evaluation of Mead's (1934) theory, whereby the 'I' and the 'me' should not be understood as separate substances or mechanisms, as critics have assumed, but rather as metaphors for the way selves experience social life in practice. Most importantly, Burkitt's thesis emphasises the limits of post-structuralist ideas by reminding us that identity is first and foremost rooted in social experience and the membership of social groups, an insight which will inform our understanding of chef identity construction.

IDENTITY AS IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT IN THE WORK OF ERVING GOFFMAN

The work of Goffman (1959) rejuvenated thought on the production of self in Symbolic Interactionism. Goffman's work was interested in the many ways individuals present themselves to others, and how they influence each other in face-to-face interaction. His perspective is dramaturgical, insofar as he analyses day-to-day interaction through the metaphor of the theatre, looking at the ways in which people

play roles and manage the impressions they present to each other in different settings. In his book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman (1959) argues that the self consists in an awareness of the multiplicity of roles that are performed in various situated contexts. Indeed, for Goffman, society presents us with a series of roles, which are patterns of behaviour, routines and responses, like parts in a play. Individuals, like actors, are performing an act to strengthen their impression of competence when they are performing a legitimate role such as that of teacher, doctor or chef for example.

During such performances, individuals present an image of themselves (of self) for acceptance by others. Accordingly, much emphasis is placed on managing the impressions that individuals give off to others about themselves, and communicating to others the expected characteristics and activities of the social role, so as to convince the audience of the appropriateness of the activities and their consistency with the individual's role. A social identity is subsequently ascribed to individuals by others, on the basis of such performances, provided they have acted in accordance with the expectations of the social role. This process is what Goffman refers to as 'dramatic realisation' and is largely influenced by the rules of 'impression management' (Goffman, 1959: 208). In the words of Goffman (1959: 245): 'The self, then ... is a dramatic effect arising diffusely from a scene that is presented, and the characteristic issue, the crucial concern, is whether it will be credited or discredited'.

Like Mead and other Symbolic Interactionists, Goffman thus rejects conventional assumptions that equate selfhood with inner character or fixed personality. Yet, Goffman goes further than Symbolic Interactionists and posits that the self is a social construction that emerges out of the realisation of skilled social performance. What is more, this task of identity construction is, according to Goffman, the underlying principle of social organisation, for it facilitates social processes wherein each knows who the others are performing (Burns, 1979).

The major distinction between Goffman's theory of self and that of Symbolic Interactionism, however, is Goffman's concern for the active aspect of the self whereby the individual is viewed as *subject* rather than *object* (Manis and Meltzer, 1972). For Goffman, the individual is a creative and reflective agent, capable of viewing his/her own behaviour, but also of directing his/her behaviour in the strategic manipulation of impressions, in order to shape self-identity. The individual both draws

from, and transcends, specific norms in everyday interaction, as he/she decides on how to carry out these roles and how to stage role performances (Elliott, 2001). Goffman's theory is therefore also at odds with role identity theory (Parsons, 1951; Parsons and Bales, 1956; Merton, 1957, 1968), since Goffman considers role-playing as a creative process, and not as a process through which individuals merely replay what they have learned during socialisation (Fulcher and Scott, 2003). In acknowledging individuals' freedom of improvisation, Goffman is able to account for the complexity of how multiple roles relate and overlap with one another, something which, as Calhoun (1994) points out, role theorists failed to do.

Goffman's theory is indeed suggestive of the multiplicity of identities that an individual can embrace at any one time, as he/she identifies with a myriad of social roles, thus shifting from one social identity to another depending on context. Drawing upon this aspect of Goffman's theory, others authors such as Strauss (1959) and Berger and Luckmann (1966) have similarly recognised how humans sometimes consciously or unconsciously present different faces to others (Jamieson, 2002). According to Jamieson (2002), the body of knowledge derived from Goffman (1959) and his followers has made clear that 'identity' need not be experienced as a constantly defining characteristic of the self – although, as Berger and Luckmann (1966) have shown, some identities can be experienced as more primary than others – since an individual's identity can encompass facets of the self that are only in play in some social contexts and not others.

Despite the longevity and influential nature of the main concepts advanced by Goffman, his theory of the self has been subjected to serious criticisms on numerous grounds. In addition to being criticised for disregarding the rules of conventional methodology, as illustrated in his preference for the essayist writing style and his collection of minimal fieldwork data (Scott and Marshall, 2005), Goffman is accused of presenting us with an amoral universe whereby individuals are cynical individualists, manipulating impressions and staging representations of the self in the pursuit of their own interests (Gouldner, 1970; MacIntyre, 1985; Manning 1992).

Whilst acknowledging the aforementioned weaknesses, Goffman's work is relevant to the topic of this study in several important aspects. First of all, the usefulness of Goffman's theory lies in the applicability of role performance to the social context of

occupational groups. As Kirpal (2004) pointedly suggests, acting in conformity with the expectations of an occupational group provides the individual with significant benefits, such as recognition and acceptance by other group members. These processes of social acknowledgment then act as external guidance that helps the individual to build up certain dimensions of identity that can be shared with others. Therefore, in performing the role of chef, belonging is therefore established by communicating the characteristics, values and attitudes associated with 'being a chef' to the rest of the group.

Another highly relevant aspect of Goffman's work is the role of teamwork in the process of identity formation. Goffman indeed stresses the role of other actors in setting up the stage for one's and others' performances, and claims that the presentation of the self implicitly invites complementary performances from others and support for one's pretensions to one's role (Casey, 1995). Still using the same dramaturgical metaphor, Goffman (1959: 79) argues that the team members working together must 'cooperate' in performance to achieve the desired goals. Each team member assumes a front that is perceived to help enhance the group's performance. The individual actor feels a strong pressure to conform to the desired front in the presence of an audience, to maintain the team credibility during performance.

Goffman (1959: 107) also describes the division between team performance and audience in terms of 'region'. The demarcation of the interactional framework between 'front' and 'back' regions is, according to Goffman, critical for individuals to present an acceptable and consistent self-image. Unlike the front region where the performers are required to bracket out all aspects of identity which are inappropriate to the staged encounter, the back region is what is not visible for the audience and where the performers can be free of the anxieties of self-presentation. Backstage, 'the impression fostered by the presentation is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course', indicating a more truthful type of performance (Goffman, 1959: 112). What is more, it is in the back region that the performer benefits from the support of the team for assistance, whilst also being able to enjoy short breaks to relax and be truly himself/herself. In hotels and restaurants, in particular, such distinction between front and back regions is perfectly well defined and fixed. As Mars and Nicod (1984: 102) remark:

Most hotels have clearly defined areas, often located close to the customers but cut off from their view by a partition or guarded passageway. It is in this refuge that the waiter can relax; he can do things in private that he is forbidden to do in public. ... It is here that illusion created for the customers is openly shattered, and the waiter can be a full person.

Drawing upon Goffman's dramaturgical lexicon, a professional kitchen can thus be said to be akin to a theatre where actors (chefs) perform their various tasks in the backstage where they can benefit from the support of their team mates, and collectively endeavour to present a consistent image of what being a chef means.

Finally, Goffman's (1959) theory draws attention the fact that, for an individual to fully acquire an identity, the self-image they present during social interaction must be accepted and reaffirmed by others; a process that recalls Jenkins's (2004: 71) 'dialectic of internal-external identification', as described earlier. In other words, not only do we identify ourselves in the internal-external dialectic between self-image and public image, but we identify others and are identified by them in turn.

'INSTITUTIONS' AS SOURCES OF IDENTIFICATION IN THE WORK OF BERGER AND LUCKMANN

Drawing upon the sub-discipline of Symbolic Interactionism, and the work of Mead (1934) in particular, sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) contributed to the development of 'Social Constructionism', from which insights about the nature of both individual and collective identification can be drawn (Jenkins 2004). Berger and Luckmann share with Mead the belief that the person (and by extension, the self) is a thoroughly social and socially contingent phenomenon (Burr 2003). Yet Berger and Luckmann's (1966) theory is also rooted in the phenomenological ideas of Schütz (Schütz and Luckmann, 1973), for they examine 'what people "know" as "reality" in their everyday non- or pre-theoretical lives' (Berger and Luckmann, 1966: 15).

In their book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966: 78) Berger and Luckmann argue that all social phenomena are created and sustained by human action and interaction. Yet, unlike Mead (1934) according to whom individuals have autonomy in imagining themselves, Berger and Luckmann (1966) also emphasise the societal

constraints on individuals' creative agency. The authors indeed argue that whilst individuals constantly construct the social world, they cannot just mould the social world as they wish, considering that the world they enter at birth has already been constructed by their predecessors. The social world experienced by individuals thus seems pre-given and fixed and assumes the status of an objective reality for individuals and for future generations. In other words, Berger and Luckmann conceive the person as being both *agentic*, actively constructing the social world and their own identity, and *constrained* by pre-existing ways of doing things and frameworks of meaning (such as language, customs, systems of ideas, and institutions) that predate his/her own life (Jamieson, 2002; Burr, 2003).

Berger and Luckmann (1966) see three fundamental processes as responsible for turning subjective meanings created by human beings into objective facts: externalisation, objectivation and internalisation. *Externalisation* stands for the process through which individuals, thanks to language, use symbols to attach subjective meanings to objects, and turn them into signs, therefore making accessible (or 'externalising') their personal experience to other people (Burr, 2003). *Objectivation* is thus the process through which the original expression of human subjectivity is used by others in a different context. Berger and Luckmann (1966) discuss objectivation in terms of the dual process of habituation and institutionalisation. *Habituation* refers to the way in which individuals develop consistent responses for confronting recurrent situations (Freeman, 1980). When a number of people begin to share the same habituated pattern of activity, whilst being conscious they are doing it, and communicating to each other in the same terms about what they are doing; that is, according to Berger and Luckmann (1966), the beginning of *institutionalisation* (Jenkins, 2004). Since institutions are sustained through social consensus, the individuals deviating from the institutionalised routine are likely to face the sanction of others.

Finally, *internalisation* refers to the process by which the objective world is incorporated into people's consciousness during socialisation, notably during childhood. It is therefore through internalisation that institutions acquire their apparent logic and axiomatic status for human beings (Freeman, 1980). Yet institutions do require *legitimation* in order to be presented successfully to each new generation; and this is why, as Berger and Luckmann (1966: 79) claim, 'the same story, so to speak, must be

told to all the children'. As they argue, legitimation arises out of the production and reproduction of 'symbolic universes' which 'encompass the institutional order in a symbolic totality' (Berger and Luckmann, 1966: 113), by integrating the range of inter-subjective meanings shared by individuals about the nature of the world and the place of people within it. As Jenkins (2004: 136) synthesises, these symbolic universes can be thought of as the collective points of view and common knowledge held by a collectivity about itself and its place in the world, and therefore standing for 'the unifying umbrella under which the discrepant diversity of everyday life can come together'.

Although Berger and Luckmann's (1966) theory of institutionalisation is a little simplistic since it ignores contextual identities and assumes homogeneity and social consensus, it nevertheless helps further our understanding of identity formation by acknowledging the limits to individuals' creative agency. In light of Jenkins's (2004: 140) insights, it can be concluded from Berger and Luckmann's (1966) account that all individual and collective identities (including occupational identities) are, by definition, institutionalised as the 'way things are done', whilst institutions constitute sources and sites of collective identification for individuals to draw from in the constitution of their identity. Berger and Luckmann's (1966) theory would therefore suggest that, to become a chef and forge oneself a chef identity, for example, the individual is compelled to draw from the existing meanings and ways of doing things that have informed and characterised the occupation of chef for many generations.

THE PROCESS OF COLLECTIVE IDENTIFICATION

This chapter now turns to the concept of identity formation in the context of collectivities, and seeks to examine how belonging to a group or community shapes individuals' sense of 'who they are'. Relevant literature from the disciplines of sociology and social anthropology is reviewed in an attempt to thoroughly examine the process through which individuals come to identify themselves with a group or a community.

SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF 'SOCIAL CATEGORISATION' AND 'GROUP MEMBERSHIP'

As Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 7, emphasis added) remark, the term 'collective identity' has come to signify, especially in the literature on social movements, gender,

ethnicity and nationalism, ‘a fundamental and consequential sameness among members of a *group or a category*’. As the above quote suggests, it is generally taken for granted in the social sciences to distinguish between a category and a group, whilst referring to a collectivity (Merton, 1968; Pearson, 2001; Jenkins, 2004). Thus, drawing upon Karl Marx’s distinction between ‘a class *for itself*’ and ‘a class *in itself*’, Jenkins (2004: 80) itemises the dichotomous definition of the term ‘collectivity’, as either referring to a plurality of individuals who see themselves as similar and feel a sense of belonging with each other (a *group* of people identifying themselves as such), or to a plurality of individuals who are only recognised by external observers as belonging together, due to their sharing common behaviour and circumstances (a *category* defined by others).

In everyday social life, individuals identify and categorise others, just as they identify and categorise themselves; and whilst the two processes of internal identification and external identification interplay, they do not necessarily converge (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). Indeed, a group that was recognised only by its members would have limited presence in the world, hence the key role of categorisation by others in the reality of any and every group (Jenkins, 2000, 2004). The construction of a category of individuals (or ‘label’), however, need not mean that those attributed with membership experience themselves as a meaningful social entity, unless the created categories have been authoritatively imposed onto individuals within ‘discourses of power’ (Foucault, 1980) or are highly consequential in terms of individuals’ sense of themselves (Jamieson, 2002). As Jenkins (2000, 2004) strongly emphasises, it is clear from the above arguments that collective identities must always be understood as generated simultaneously by group identification and categorisation, although these processes have seldom been explicitly acknowledged in the social science literature.

IDENTITY FORMATION THROUGH BOUNDARY MAINTENANCE IN THE WORK OF FREDRICK BARTH

It has been argued that Barth’s (1969) ethnological insights on ethnic identity formation are useful to assist the theoretical formulation of the notion of collective/group identity and understand inter-group relations in general (Cohen, 1982, 1985, 1986; Jenkins, 2004). Indeed, although Barth’s original framework (1969) addresses ethnic

identification, it is also applicable to other forms of collective identification, as one of Barth's (1983) later studies on everyday life in Sohar (Oman) empirically demonstrated.

In the introduction to his seminal book, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Culture Difference* (1969), Barth (1969: 10-11) refutes general anthropological assumptions which view ethnic groups as 'biologically self-perpetuating' and constituted on the basis of essential cultural values and characteristics shared by all group members. According to Barth, ethnic groups and the differences between them have been taken for granted in anthropological writings, therefore leading to a failure to acknowledge the processes through which ethnic groups develop and continue to exist generation after generation. Instead of taking identity differences for granted and looking at how these affect social interaction, Barth adopts a reverse approach and seeks to understand how ethnic differences arise out of social interaction (Jenkins, 2004). As Barth maintains, ethnic groups are not formed on the basis of a shared culture (contrary to earlier anthropological assumptions), but rather on the basis of cultural differences with other groups, in the course of inter-ethnic relations. In other words, the construction of an ethnic identity is a continuous social process occurring inside a community in relation to others, and does *not* occur 'naturally' amongst members of a group sharing cultural characteristics.

Barth further argues that these ethnic identities defined through inter-group relations are best highlighted through the establishment of 'boundaries', which are not necessarily territorial but can be psychological in nature. For Barth, boundaries are to be found in interaction between individuals who identify themselves collectively in different ways, and thus can occur anywhere or in any context. Their purpose is to establish the internal criteria of membership that helps distinguish insiders (fellow members) from outsiders (members of another group), but also to define the relations of the group members themselves. Ethnic boundaries are therefore a useful concept to draw an imaginary demarcation line and highlight the relations between groups. Yet, the use of the term 'boundary' requires caution, as Barth (2000) himself reiterated in his later work. Barth's theory has indeed been criticised over the use of the 'boundary' metaphor since the latter tends to evoke images of definiteness and territorial frontiers, which 'has allowed many other anthropologists to draw on his work while persisting in

the reifying view of the ethnic group as corporate and perduring which he intended to demolish' (Jenkins, 2004: 102).

In summary, Barth's theory posits that, to consolidate their own internal patterns of identity, group members need to be confronted with differences in the course of social interaction. The process of group identification is sustained by shared features (such as culture, common knowledge or common behaviour) which differentiate the group from other groups. Yet Barth stresses that these features are not defining characteristics of the group members, but emerge out of the constant negotiation and renegotiation of a group's identity established at the boundary in relation with other groups – hence the on-going and alterable nature of ethnic (or group) identity. Applied to the occupational identity of chefs, Barth's theory would suggest that chefs' sense of identity is negotiated at and across the boundary with other groups in the 'outside world', where (cultural) differences between chefs and non-chefs become more apparent. There is indeed evidence in the literature to suggest that this is the case, as illustrated in George Orwell's (2003 [1933]) autobiographical novel, *Down and Out in Paris and London*, which highlights how chefs become aware of being a distinctive group during their social interaction with waiters. Interestingly, this was subsequently confirmed by Mars and Nicod's (1984) in their ethnographic study of hotel waiters.

Despite the relevance of Barth's theory for understanding the process of group identity formation, one could argue, along with Jenkins (2004), that one important shortcoming is the lack of emphasis placed by Barth on the role of similarity in collective identification. Although it makes sense to stress the social organisation of difference, Jenkins (2004: 108) argues that the process of ethnic (or group) identity formation presupposes that members have some criteria in common, which can be recognised by the members themselves (group identification) and/or recognised by others (categorisation).

One author who seemingly helped remedy this particular problem in Barth's theory is Anthony P. Cohen (1982, 1985, 1986), whose model of communal identity and other collective identities places more emphasis on the 'cultural stuff' (Barth, 1969: 15), that is, the common knowledge, behaviour or values within the boundary, whilst still acknowledging the permeability and flexibility of boundaries (Jenkins 2004).

Cohen's (1982, 1985, 1986) theory explores the ways in which individuals become aware of belonging to a 'community', which is understood as any particular set of relationships and interaction that forms a collectivity. Cohen (1985: 12) argues that 'community' implies both the notion of similarity and that of difference, insofar as members of a group have something in common with each other, whilst the thing they have in common distinguishes them from the members of other possible groups. Drawing upon Barth's concept of boundaries, Cohen claims that individuals derive a sense of community from the awareness that things are done differently elsewhere and the associated sense of threat that this generates. Unlike Barth, however, Cohen does not conceptualise 'community' (or 'ethnicity' in Barth's case) as a structural, material or practical construct that exists in "the doing" of social behaviour' (Cohen 1985: 98), as Jenkins (2004) highlights. Rather, Cohen (1985: 98) explores the concept of community as an essentially cultural and symbolic phenomenon: 'Culture – the community as experienced by its members – ... inheres, rather, in 'the thinking' about it. It is in this sense that we can speak of the community as a symbolic, rather than a structural, construct'.

Community membership depends upon the symbolic construction of a front of similarity that all members can embrace and from which they derive a sense of belonging and identity. In the words of Cohen (1985: 118): 'People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity'. The similarity of communal membership is thus imagined but still real and meaningful for its members, an idea which echoes William I. Thomas's (1951: 81) well-known theorem: 'If men [*sic*] define situations as real they are real in their consequences'. The sense of belonging that members share is made possible through the creation of symbols (flags, dressing codes, etc.) that come to embody the community to its members and to others outside the community. What matters is thus not that people have things in common with other community members (such as beliefs, or cultural values); but that the symbols which they share allow them to believe that they do form a community.

Cohen (1986) further argues that community membership does not imply a consensus of values or conformity in behaviour. It is indeed acknowledged throughout Cohen's writings that the 'community' can mean different things to different community members, whilst the latter can attach very different meanings to the symbols of community. As Jenkins (2004) points out, this is made possible thanks to the nature of symbols whose meanings are often implicit and taken-for-granted. Behind the front of homogeneity, community members can thus say, do or think very different things indeed: 'what is actually held in common is not very substantial, being *form* rather than content. Content differs widely among members' (Cohen 1985: 20, italics in original). The symbolic construction of community therefore helps community members present a consistent face to the outside world, whilst allowing them to preserve harmonious relationships, notwithstanding each member's idiosyncratic differences.

Despite the epistemological issues associated with Cohen's framework with regards to his emphasis on community as a mental construct, his theory helps further our understanding of the more generic process of collective identification (Jenkins, 2004). Indeed, Cohen (1985: 97) himself acknowledges that the concept of community is not limited to individuals residing in geographical proximity, whilst other authors such as Salaman (1986: 76) and Howell (2002) have maintained that Cohen's model is applicable to a range of other collectivities, including occupational groups. It is also important to note that Cohen (2002) later criticised his own work and in particular the very notion that group boundaries are negotiable. In doing so, Cohen (2002) is also, in effect, rejecting the work of Barth, and arguing that collective identity is more authentic and solid than he and Barth (1969) had previously implied. Yet, these self-criticisms should not detract from the fact that Cohen's earlier theory is a helpful conceptualisation of the process of collective identification with practical implications for this study. Indeed, it could be argued that the sense of identity and oneness vis-à-vis other members which characterises an occupational group (such as that of chefs) derives from its members collectively constructing and embracing a front of similarity through shared symbols, regardless of whether they actually have anything in common. What these symbols actually are, is what this research intends to find out.

Finally it is important to note from the writings of both Barth (1969) and Cohen (1982, 1985, 1986) that more than a set of theoretical propositions, identity is above all a lived reality for the individual concerned (Palmer, 1998). Accordingly, this study is concerned with the *experience* of identity and the ways in which the markers of identity (such as symbols, rituals etc.) communicate the basis upon which belonging and identity is conferred. This link will be further investigated later on, whilst reviewing the literature on occupational cultures.

THE ROLE OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, CLASS AND ETHNICITY IN THE FORMATION OF IDENTITY

As the previous sections have made clear, a wide range of seminal authors within sociology, social anthropology and social psychology have contributed to theoretical formulations on both individual and collective identity construction, whilst bringing significant insights of relevance to the process of chef identity formation (see Appendix A and Appendix B for a summary). The aim of this final section on identity is to highlight the role of social categories (such as social class, gender, sexuality and race/ethnicity) in the formation of identity, since the latter will be interwoven with the occupational identity of chefs. Yet, this section does not pretend to provide a comprehensive review of this body of literature, but instead aims to briefly outline the main debates, and relate them to the literature on chefs.

To Williams (2001: 50), this body of literature is concerned with ‘[t]he ascription ... of common properties that distinguish the character of particular social groups or social categories defined by social, historical or geographical location’. These social categories are indeed often regarded as involved in the primary ordering of social identities. As Byrne (2003: 450) pointedly remarks:

One often perceives a person as a woman [or a man], then as belonging to a particular ethnic group or social class. In this instance, her/his gendered, raced, classed, social identities structure others’ interactions with her/him and consequently are significant for the composition of self-identity.

Jenkins (2004) argues that primary identities such as gender and personhood (i.e. a sense of selfhood and humanness) are established during infancy and childhood and therefore are more stable than any other identities acquired later in life, such as occupational identities, but also leisure and consumption-related identities, and a sense of nationhood (Fulcher and Scott, 2003). Drawing upon research in psychology (Damon and Hart, 1988) and anthropology (Poole, 1994), Jenkins (2004) argues that these identities are primary because children have limited capacities to question or resist these identities, which in addition are particularly consequential for them. What is more, these primary identities are internalised during the most foundational learning period, whilst children learn to master language, which as suggested by Mead (1934) and later by discursive psychologists and conversation analysts such as Antaki and Widdicombe (1998), is particularly central to the process of identity formation.

Jenkins (2004: 61) further argues that although gender is first and foremost an individual identity, 'at the centre of the embodied point of view of selfhood', gender is also a form of collective identity, considering that all human societies have been, and still are, mostly organised in gender terms. As Cerulo (1997) highlights, Social Constructionist works concerned with gender identity, in particular, demonstrate how a gender identity is constantly created and renegotiated through social interactions and linguistic acts, but most specifically through social rituals, symbols and practices which transform biological differences into social facts (see Chodorow, 1978; Irigaray, 1985; MacKinnon, 1989; Cerulo, 1997). Following Foucault's (1980) theory, many postmodern works (hooks, 1984; Butler, 1990; Collins, 1991) also stress the importance of gender and sexuality in the formation of identities, but highlight the role of discourses in objectifying gender differences and sustaining power inequalities, whilst calling for greater consideration of other social categories to be understood in conjunction with gender, such as ethnicity and class for example.

While ethnicity has also been identified by sociologists and psychologists (Milner, 1983; Van Ausdale and Feagin, 2001) as a fundamental source of individual primary identification, particularly for children, there is also evidence to suggest, notably in the work of Barth (1969) and Jenkins (1994), that ethnicity is negotiable and situational; and therefore subject to changes as circumstances require. This leads Jenkins (2004) to argue

that unlike gender, ethnicity is not necessarily a primary form of identification, although it may potentially become so, depending on local circumstances and individual history.

Whilst individuals and groups do use categorical identifications (such as class, gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity) in the constitution of their identities, Calhoun (1994: 28) has pointed out that individuals and groups are not simply made to associate with these 'objective' social positions, but rather deliberately choose to make use of these categories (Williams, 2001). Some postmodern authors (Hall, 1992; Bauman, 1996) adopt a more extreme view and contend that there has been a general movement away from relatively stable identities, based upon social factors such as class and gender, towards more fragmented identities, as individuals have more freedom in choosing how they want to identify themselves. Yet, whilst the flexibility of identities needs to be acknowledged, Bradley (1996) is right to remind us that structured social inequalities still remain important in contemporary societies. Bradley (1996) contends that class, gender, race/ethnicity and age are the most important types of inequality and sources of identity, and variously affect individuals' sense of identity, depending on the social circumstances of the time, and the degree to which individuals are affected by the consequences of these inequalities (sexism, racism, ageism etc.). Accordingly, for Bradley, people have fractured and multiple identities which are still very much rooted in membership of social groups.

While this study is primarily concerned with the occupational identity of (elite) chefs and their brigades, the latter are likely to possess multiple social identities based on social class, gender, sexuality or race/ethnicity, which may interact with one another in a dynamic way, and therefore influence the culture and identity of chefs. Despite growing journalistic evidence highlighting that a professional kitchen is still a predominantly male preserve (Coeyman, 1997; Gaskell, 1997; Salkever, 2000; Narayan, 2001; Rayner, 2004) and a white man's world where ethnic minorities are sidelined or excluded (Perlik, 2001), there is a surprising paucity of academic studies on gender and ethnic segregation in the realm of professional cooking. Whilst it is possible to derive *some* interesting insights about the influence of gender on chefs' identity from the work of a few sociologists (Fine, 1987a) and (feminist) historians (Banner, 1973; Goody, 1982; Mennell, 1996; Swinbank, 2002), the impact of social class and ethnicity on the process of chef identity formation has not yet been addressed

systematically (perhaps, with the exception of the now dated work of Chivers [1972, 1973] concerning the proletarianisation of chefs/cooks) (see Chapter 5). The collection of primary data as part of this study may thus provide the opportunity to shed light on these issues, albeit with particular emphasis on the *haute cuisine* sector.

CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

Although each sociological theory has been summarised and applied to the realm of chefs in Appendix A and Appendix B, the conclusive comments derived from this chapter of the literature review are reiterated as follows:

- The identity of chefs and their brigades is, first and foremost, rooted in social interaction and derived from the social practices of their occupational group (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Bourdieu, 1990; Burkitt, 1994).
- The occupational identity of chefs and their brigades is formed through the dialectic of internal-external identification, as conceptualised by Jenkins (2004). Their identity is therefore influenced both by their occupational peer group (the ‘significant others’) and by the views and attitudes of others towards them in the ‘outside world’ (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Goffman, 1959; Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1972; Saunders, 1981a).
- Yet, chefs are also compelled to build a sense of identity by drawing from the existing meanings and ways of doing things that have informed and characterised the occupation of chef for many generations (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). An analysis of the way the chef has been portrayed in both literature and the media will therefore inform our discussion of chefs’ occupational identity, prior to first-hand investigation (see Chapter 5).
- The collective identity of chefs is formed in relation to what they are not, that is in relation to the non-chef community (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). In Barth’s (1969) terms, chefs’ sense of identity is negotiated in the course of social interaction with

other groups in the ‘outside world’ (i.e. at the boundary) where cultural differences are particularly noticeable.

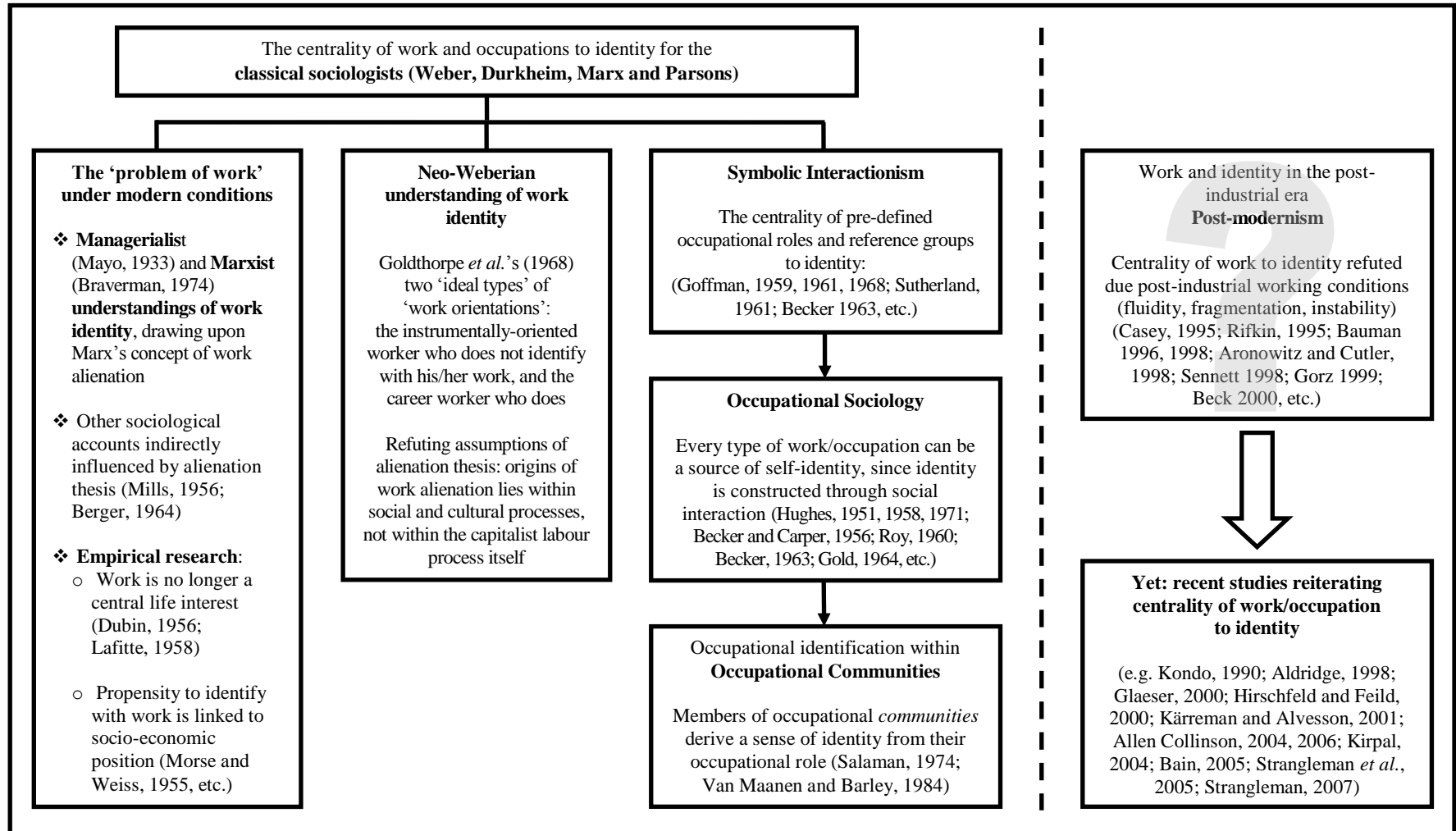
- Drawing upon Cohen’s (1982, 1985, 1986) work, chefs must not only feel different from other groups, but they must also derive a sense of belonging and similarity with their peers. Following Cohen, this sense of togetherness is derived as chefs collectively construct and embrace a front of similarity through shared symbols, regardless of each individual’s idiosyncrasies. Hence the need to empirically determine what chefs believe they share in common with each other.
- Since the sharing of cultural traits cannot in itself trigger a sense of identity among occupational members, identity is therefore best conceived as a lived reality for chefs, whereby cultural traits (symbols, rituals, myths etc.) become mere symbols/ markers of identity which communicate what ‘being a chef’ means (Barth, 1969; Cohen, 1982, 1985, 1986; Palmer, 1998).
- Finally, chefs’ multiple social identities, based on social class, gender, sexuality or race/ethnicity, are also likely to influence the occupational identity of chefs and their brigades, and need to be taken into consideration during the collection and analysis of the primary findings.

3. The Role of Work in Identity Formation

Although it would be possible to continue at great length with a generic discussion of identity, our concern is with the realm of work and most specifically with the *occupational identity* of chefs and their brigades. In addition to the analytical categories of gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality and age frequently used in academic definitions of individual identity, it seems legitimate to include a person's work/occupation as a significant contributor to identity, especially in light of the centrality of work to people's lives in industrialised societies. As Saunders (1981a: 128) has argued, 'the question "Who am I?" is increasingly seen by many social interpreters in an occupational sense'. An examination of the relationship between work roles and identity is thus seen as a *sine qua non* to the study of identity formation.

Accordingly, this section of the literature review aims to explore the way social thinkers and sociologists concerned with the workplace have looked at the role of work in identity formation. As du Gay (1996: 9, emphasis added) indicates, the relationship between an individual's personal identity and the paid work they perform has been 'a source of regular, *if almost always implicit*, concern to nearly all those engaged in theorising about modern work organisation and behaviour'. Figure 3.1 will thus serve as a conceptual map guiding the reader through the structure of this section, and outlining the different school perspectives on work identity and their various influences. Before critically analysing the different theoretical approaches, it is interesting to reflect on the shifting meaning of work throughout the ages and the role of Protestantism in positing the centrality of work to identity. A consideration of the work of classical sociologists is also a prerequisite, since the latter considerably influenced all subsequent thinking on work and the work-identity relationship.

Figure 3.1: Competing theoretical approaches to work identity (formation)



THE SHIFTING MEANING OF WORK THROUGHOUT THE AGES

In today's industrialised societies, work is generally regarded as a principal source of individuals' self-fulfilment, and a key factor in the establishment of their standard of living and their status as citizens (Bain, 2005). As Berger (1964: 211) notes: 'Work is one of the fundamental human categories. Man is the animal that fashioned tools and built a world. ... To be human and to work appear as inextricably intertwined notions'. Nevertheless, despite the apparent centrality of work in humans' lives, the question of the meaning of work is primarily a cultural problem (Riesman, 1954), as illustrated in the very different and contradictory approaches to work that have been adopted by society throughout the ages (see Tilgher, 1930; Arendt, 1958; Thompson, 1963; Heilbroner, 1985; Joyce, 1987; Pahl, 1988). Whilst work was regarded as a curse and an activity of the slaves throughout Greek and Roman times (Arendt, 1958), the Hebrews had a view of work as unpleasant drudgery which could nevertheless help individuals expiate sin and regain spiritual dignity (Tilgher, 1930).

In the early Judeo-Christian tradition, work was considered to be a potential source of pleasure and happiness, linking human beings to the fertility and productivity of nature (Arendt, 1958). In parallel, it is also notable that the Bible sees work as punishment for sin (linked to the fall of man from paradise), although Casey (1995) notes that it is not work itself with which man was punished but harsh labour. As Casey (1995: 27) argues, 'the ambivalence about work as being both the source of life and as punishment for sin continued in thinking about work for many centuries and continues to be evident in contemporary experience and thought'. As C. Wright Mills (1956: 218-9) pointedly suggests, all subsequent philosophies of work can be broadly divided into two great categories: first, the various forms of *Protestantism* (and their secular derivatives) which saw work as an exalting necessity and as a means to salvation or to some external reward and led to the establishment of the *work ethic* in modern times; and second, the *Renaissance* view which saw work (and particularly work associated with technical craftsmanship) as intrinsically meaningful, creative, and satisfying in its own right.

Protestantism, however, is often considered the most powerful influence on contemporary meanings of work, having played an important role in producing a contemporary work ethic and encouraging a more positive attitude towards work. Max

Weber (1958 [1930]), in particular, shows how, through the influence of Protestantism, the medieval concept of religious vocation was transformed during modern times into the secular concept of work as a vocation, or a ‘calling’, which requires individuals to dedicate themselves utterly and passionately to their work. As Weber convincingly argues, the Protestant ethic brought a new force and legitimacy to the pursuit of economic interests and ‘the spirit of capitalism’, by encouraging hard work as a virtue and a duty in its own right, and therefore producing the disciplined workers required for the expansion of capitalist processes (Casey, 1995; Watson, 2003).

THE WORK OF CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGISTS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON TODAY’S ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT WORK AND OCCUPATIONS

Most importantly for this study, the Protestant work ethic that grew in strength with the advent of modern industrial capitalism stresses the importance of work to the identity and sense of worth of the individual (Watson, 2003). Work was thereafter seen as providing individuals with a definite profile or identity and as having some meaning for the individuals personally. As Berger (1964: 215, italics in original) puts it: ‘...for most of history men have *been* what they *did*’. Whilst there is evidence that identities within Western society have traditionally been determined by the work that people do, a similar pattern seems to prevail in our contemporary society, whereby a person’s occupation is still regarded as the clearest indicator of who that person is. As Beck (1992) points out:

Nowhere perhaps, is the meaning of wage labour for people’s lives in the industrial world so clear as in the situations where two strangers meet and ask each other ‘what are you?’ They do not answer with their hobby ... or with their religious identity ... or with reference to ideals of beauty ... but with all the certainty in the world with their occupation. ... The occupation serves as a mutual identification pattern, with the help of which we can assess personal needs and abilities as well as economic and social position.

Anthropologist Geertz (1973: 385) similarly comments on the way society tend to assess the personal qualities of an individual on the grounds of his/her occupation, to the extent that we:

see people through a screen of occupational categories – as not just practising this vocation or that, but as almost physically infused with the quality of being a postman, teamster, policemen, or salesman. Social function serves as a symbolic vehicle through which personal identity is perceived; men [*sic*] are what they do.

It is also interesting to note, along with Casey (1995: 22) that, since the 1950's, the body of sociological literature concerned with occupations, and by extension with occupational communities, professions and organisations² has continued to put significant emphasis on 'the importance, and stability, of occupation and occupational groups in social structure and character' (see Hughes, 1951; Caplow, 1954; Becker and Strauss, 1956; Becker and Carper, 1956; Merton *et al.*, 1957; Becker, 1963; Carper, 1970; Pavalko, 1971; Freidson, 1973; Salaman, 1974; Dunkerley, 1975; Hall, 1975; Bledstein, 1976; Dubin, 1976; Kanter, 1977, 1983; Van Maanen and Schein, 1979; Van Maanen and Barley, 1984; Pahl, 1988; Erikson and Vallas, 1990; Kohn, 1990; Coffey and Atkinson, 1994; Aldridge, 1998; Abbas and McLean, 2001; Allen Collinson, 2004, 2006; Kirpal, 2004; Bain, 2005). This deeply-embedded assumption is, according to Casey (1995), a legacy of the foundational work of Max Weber (1946 [1919], 1971 [1908]), Émile Durkheim (1933 [1893]), Karl Marx (1964 [1844], 1977 [1867]) and other classical social thinkers and sociologists (Sorokin, 1927; Pareto, 1935 [1916]; Mills 1956; Parsons, 1964; Le Play, 1982 [1855]), from which all subsequent sociological theories on work, occupations and professions developed. Although differing in important ways, these seminal thinkers fundamentally shaped the dominant modern academic and social discourse on work in capitalist societies, and led to occupations being regarded as a primary element in the social organisation of work and as a key factor of socialisation, social cohesion and personal identity formation in modern societies.

² The body of literature on occupations and occupational communities is reviewed in more detail below.

As Casey (1995) points out, people used to identify each other mainly by their social relationships (as wife, husband, son and servant for example) in pre-industrial societies, although, according to Joyce (1987), it was already commonplace in the Middle Ages to recognise people by what they did and to name them accordingly (as cooper, weaver, tailor, etc.). Nevertheless, the social identification of people primarily with their place in the economic sphere, and in relation to their occupation, came to prevail more typically in modern industrial societies, as the division of labour and the notion of 'vocation' became the norm in the organisation of work (Casey, 1995). Indeed, as the writings of Weber (1946, 1971) show, the advent of industrial capitalism and corresponding processes of rationalisation meant that work and workers were placed in a much more defined structural location, which ultimately led to occupations being regarded as an indicator of role and social status in modern societies.

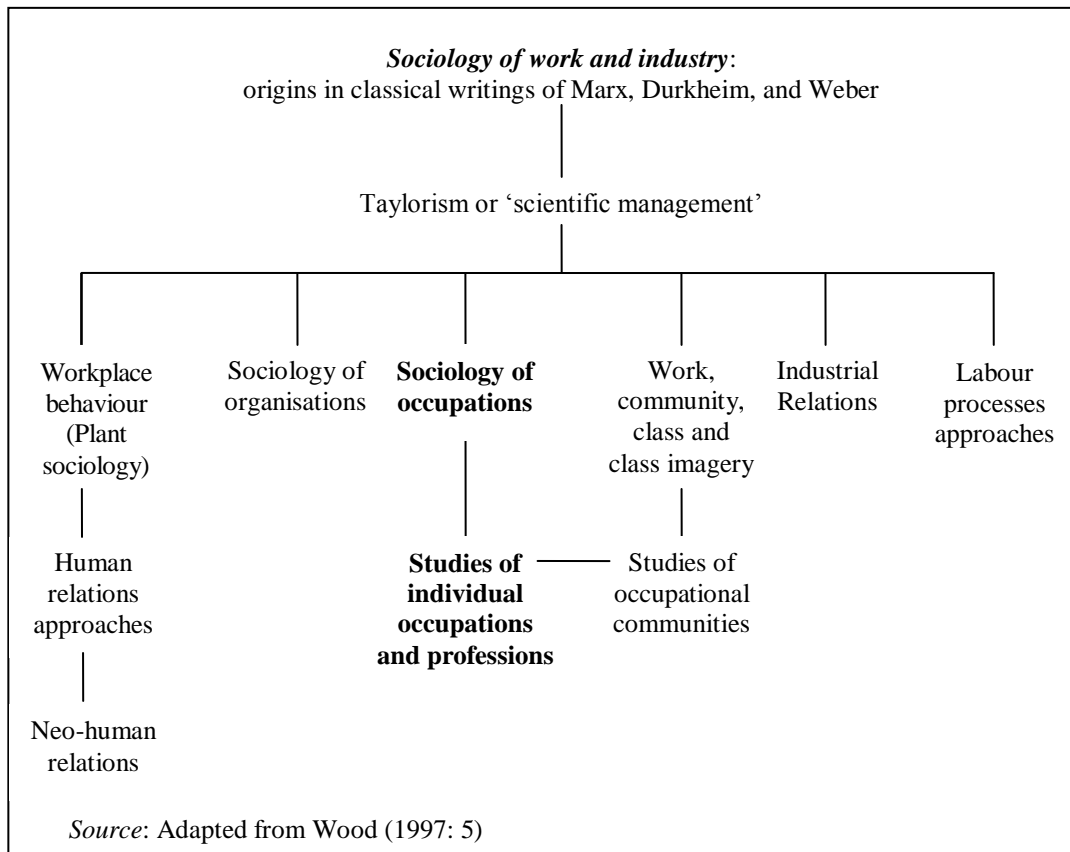
As Casey (1995) suggests, it was the foundational theories of Weber (1946, 1971) and Durkheim (1933) that underpinned those developed in the 1950s by Talcott Parsons, for whom 'by far the most prominent structure of modern Western society is that organised around the work people do' (Parsons 1964: 325). For Parsons, and his followers in the contemporary literature, 'this shift of emphasis away from the Marxist problematic of class and the capitalist enterprise of profit and exploitation, directed attention to the structure of occupational stratifications and roles within the system of industrial society' (Casey, 1995: 22), and led to the well-ingrained assumption that the work people do shapes their social identity.

THE SYMBOLIC CONSTRUCTION OF OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE WORK OF OCCUPATIONAL SOCIOLOGISTS

As Rose (1975) remarks, the sociology of occupations originated in the work of the Symbolic Interactionists in the early 1940's and culminated in the foundational work of Everett C. Hughes (1951, 1958). It is important to note, along with Wood (1997), that the sociology of occupations has been accorded little attention in many introductory texts on the sociology of work (but for Watson, 2003; Salaman, 1986), whilst the strand has frequently been dismissed on account of its over-emphasis on 'the subjective consequences of work for the individual, its meaning to him [*sic*], [and] its

effect on his attitudes and relationships in other social contexts’ (Rose, 1975: 18). This is particularly problematic given that the sociology of occupations is the only strand in the sociology of work where a clear and *explicit* formulation of the connections between work and identity can be found. For illustration purposes, Figure 3.2 shows where occupational sociology is located within the sociology of work and industry.

Figure 3.2: The different theoretical strands in the sociology of work and industry



Generally speaking, all occupational sociologists with affiliation to Symbolic Interactionism (Roy, 1960; Becker, 1963; Gold, 1964; Hughes, 1971) are united in the belief that every type of work and occupation – no matter how restrictive or ‘lowly’ such as factory jobs– can provide a sense of identity to those involved in it, for all forms of social interaction involve the symbolic construction of identity (du Gay, 1996). For example, Roy (1960), in his classic participant observation study of shopfloor life, highlights how patterns of informal interaction (such as horseplay and joking) play a significant role in the formation of a work-based culture and identity among workers which became an important source of job satisfaction. Interestingly, later ethnographic shop-floor studies with no particular affiliation to Symbolic

Interactionism (Beynon 1973; Nichols and Beynon 1977; Burawoy 1979; Cavendish 1982) also confirmed these findings, by showing how identity formation remains an active process achieved even in the context of monotonous and low-skill employment.

As a direct continuation of the work of the classical sociologists, the 'sociology of occupations' recognises that occupations are central social institutions (Casey, 1995; Watson, 2003). Everett C. Hughes (1951, 1958), in particular, takes the study of occupations as his starting point for learning about society, and theorising the link between work and identity. Hughes's work indeed suggests a strong connection between how individuals work (in their occupations) and who they perceive themselves to be, to the extent that '...a man's work is one of the more important parts of his social identity, of his self' (Hughes, 1951: 314). Hughes's view that work constitutes a core part of individuals' sense of identity is based on the premise that work is one of the central ways in which individuals evaluate themselves and are evaluated by others. In this sense, individuals' identity (and sense of self-worth) is interwoven with the occupational system.

OCCUPATIONAL IDENTIFICATION WITHIN OCCUPATIONAL COMMUNITIES

Unlike the sociology of occupations, studies of occupational communities (see Cottrell, 1940; Dennis *et al.*, 1956; Tunstall, 1962; Beynon, 1973) avoid generalising the applicability of the process of work identity formation to all types of work, but instead focus on the circumstances under which specific occupational groups function as a basis of association and identification for their members. Although the scope of these studies was first restricted to individuals living in a common geographical location and working in the same industry, Salaman (1971a, 1971b, 1974, 1986), and later Van Maanen and Barley (1984), extended the concept of occupational community to encompass the occupation as a whole. The concept of 'occupational community' had, however, already been disassociated from its connotations of geographical proximity in the work of Lipset *et al.* (1956), to characterise the interlinked work and non-work of printers, and in that of Goode (1957) who suggested that professions also constitute communities. Similarly, Gerstl (1961: 38) had already used the phrase 'occupational community' to reflect the 'pervasiveness of occupational identification and the

convergence of informal friendship patterns and colleague relationships' that characterise high status occupations.

Yet, Salaman (1971a, 1971b, 1974) was the first to conceptualise the notion of occupational community and clearly identify the factors that turn some occupations into occupational communities. Drawing on both a comprehensive literature review on occupations and his own empirical research (Salaman, 1971b, 1974), Salaman (1986: 73) defines occupational communities as

...social groupings ... within which members establish at least an element of their total identities, share a work-based morality (what things are and should be, who is a hero, who a villain; which contain shared myths and knowledge) and interrelate more intensely and meaningfully than they do with outsiders.

According to Salaman, occupational communities are, first and foremost, characterised by the fact that their members derive some sense of personal identity, of self-image, from their work. In other words, their self-image is centred on their occupational role to the extent that they see themselves as persons of particular sorts, with specific abilities, knowledge, personality characteristics. In addition to Salaman's (1971b, 1974) own empirical findings, the propensity of members of occupational communities to identify with their occupational role was empirically verified by Becker's (1963) study on jazz musicians, Blauner's (1964) study on printers and Sykes's (1969a, 1969b) study on navvies.

Furthermore, Salaman (1974) contends that members of occupational communities not only see themselves in terms of their occupational roles, but also value this self-image which becomes their overriding source of identification. In other words, their occupational identity thus becomes more central to their self-image than any other social identities. An example of this is Becker's (1963) study which highlights that jazz-men see themselves in terms of their occupational role and that this self-image overshadows earlier identities which may have once been highly valued (e.g. a Jewish identity).

Salaman (1974) goes on to suggest that the second defining feature of occupational communities lies in the fact that members of occupational communities share a world of values about what their work is and how it should be done, as illustrated in

Janowitz's (1960) study on soldiers. To Salaman (1974), the incorporation of an occupational role into one's self-image is directly related to the use of the occupational community as a reference group, from which members derive their shared values and definitions. In this sense, it can be argued that the development of a shared workplace culture is closely linked to the process of work identity formation³. Lastly, Salaman (1974) maintains that members of occupational communities associate with, and make friends of, other members of their occupation in preference to having friends who are outsiders, whilst carrying work activities and interests into their non work lives; a characteristic also highlighted in the work of Lipset *et al.* (1956) and Parker (1964).

Salaman (1974, 1986) also investigates the circumstances under which certain occupations develop the aforementioned characteristics and identifies three factors: firstly, workers' subjective involvement in tasks which are concerned with skill, responsibility, danger or excitement (see also Marcus, 1960; Gerstl, 1961; and Blauner, 1964); secondly, some degree of marginality which makes relationships with outsiders undesirable or difficult (see also Lipset *et al.*, 1956; Janowitz, 1960; Becker, 1963); and thirdly, the 'inclusiveness' of the work setting which tends to create boundaries around those who work together (see also Goode, 1957; Janowitz, 1960). Like Salaman (1974), Goffman (1961) and Kanter (1977) also consider the inclusiveness of the work to be a major determinant of occupational communities, that is, when the work organisation is pervasive and sets norms for activities outside work; when the organisation directly controls activities outside work like sleeping, eating and recreation; or when the job sets limits over non-work activities influencing friendship patterns, non-work norms and values (Lee-Ross, 2004).

It is interesting to note that Salaman's (1974) conceptualisation of occupational communities is confirmed by Van Maanen and Barley (1984: 294-5) whose comprehensive literature review on the subject leads them to more or less restate Salaman's (1974) defining criteria, including members' propensity to derive a sense of identity from their work:

Our definition of an occupational community contains four elements. Each is separate analytically but interconnected empirically. By occupational community,

³ The connections between occupational cultures and work identities will be examined in more detail in the next section of this literature review.

we mean a group of people who consider themselves to be engaged in the same sort of work; who identify (more or less positively) with their work; who share a set of values, norms, and perspectives that apply to, but extend beyond, work related matters; and whose social relationships meld the realms of work and leisure.

The concept of occupational community may therefore be applicable to the occupation of chefs and their brigades, although this requires first-hand investigation. It may indeed be interesting to analyse the collected data in light of Salaman's (1974, 1986) and Van Maanen and Barley's (1984) defining criteria, even though occupational communities have ceased to be current objects of investigation for sociologists (but for Strangleman [2001] who studied occupational networks in post-industrial mining communities and Lee-Ross [2004] who studied the extent to which hotel employees form an occupational community irrespective of where their hotel is geographically positioned). In 1986, Salaman (1986: 75) himself already commented on this phenomenon which he linked to the tendency in sociology to research what is regarded as surprisingly present or surprisingly absent:

The recent but late enthusiasm for community studies reflected sociologists' surprise at, and concern for, a vanishing form of work/community connection. In the 1980s we no longer regard the absence of such a phenomenon as requiring explanation. This tells us something about us, and a lot about the times we live in.

WORK AND IDENTITY FORMATION IN THE POST-INDUSTRIAL ERA

More recently, sociologists' concerns for the loss of meaning and identification with work have been reiterated by numerous post-modern thinkers such as Rifkin (1995), Bauman (1996, 1998), Gorz (1999), Sennett (1998) and Beck (2000). Generally speaking, these authors contend that the world of work in our post-industrial western societies has been, for the past two or three decades, increasingly characterised by fluidity, fragmentation and instability, thus jeopardising the ability of individuals to construct and maintain a sense of identity through work. Following Elliott (2001:

131), postmodernism, which informs our discussion of identity in this section, can be defined as ‘a new social condition in which corporate capitalism and consumer lifestyles are dominant, ... and the grand objectives of the Enlightenment (including Truth, Justice, Reason and Equality) dissolve or become irrelevant in a world shaped by mass popular culture’. In this context, academic writing is said to emphasise the decline of absolute truths and the fragmentation of all cultural forms, including that of identity (Scott and Marshall, 2005).

To Bauman (1996), for example, the formation of identity in modern societies was very much like a pilgrimage whereby people’s lives were geared towards achieving their desired identity through their occupations. Postmodernity, however, undermines pilgrimage as a life strategy, by creating job uncertainty. Accordingly, no solid, lasting identities can be derived from work.

Yet, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the post-modern debate is characterised by a real of lack of empirical research and often relies on abstract macro-theorisation (Strangleman *et al.*, 2005; Strangleman, 2007). What is more, generalisations about the loss of identification with work are far from convincing in the face of the continued importance of work that is still manifest amidst many occupational groups, such as journalists (Aldridge, 1998; Kärreman and Alvesson, 2001), policemen (Glaeser, 2000), part-time academic teachers (Abbas and McLean, 2001), contract researchers (Allen Collinson, 2004), nurses (Kirpal, 2004), artists (Bain, 2005) and research administrators (Allen Collinson, 2006). Even if one accepts that work may not be outstandingly important to many people, a critical exception is to be made with regards to some groups of workers who do not follow this pattern, as the body of literature on occupations and occupational communities demonstrates (Salaman, 1971a, 1971b, 1974, 1975, 1986; Van Maanen and Barley, 1984).

Yet, as Aldridge (1998: 110) pointedly remarks, very little academic attention has been paid in recent years to occupational groups and occupational communities, either theoretically or through ethnographic studies, which, according to Aldridge, can be accounted for by a number of factors, including:

the preoccupation with sweeping systemic concerns like a deindustrialisation and globalisation; the sheer lack of research funds to get among the workers; the

collapse of highly skilled and organised sectors of “traditional” male employment which provided rich material – for instance mining, deep-sea fishing, even the car industry (Beynon, 1973; Goldthorpe *et al.*, 1968; Dennis *et al.*, 1956; Tunstall, 1969); perhaps also a glum assumption among academics that strong work identities have vanished along with the life-long career.

Nevertheless, it seems legitimate to reaffirm that the transformation of work under post-modern conditions has not yet eliminated the central place that work holds in most people’s lives. As Casey (1995) remarks, work still significantly shapes everyday life experience for most people in our contemporary post-industrial societies, whilst modern meanings of work remain operative in the midst of changing practices of work. Hirschfeld and Feild (2000: 797), for example, demonstrate a connection between people’s work centrality and their attachment to values associated with the Protestant work ethic, which leads them to suggest that ‘work centrality is almost certainly associated with a person’s value system and self-identity’.

In her literature review on work identity, Bain (2005) argues that the notion that work plays a vital role in shaping people’s lives and identities is also reinforced through Kondo’s (1990: 277) anthropological study of Japanese workers (including female part-time factory workers), for whom ‘[w]ork ... possessed theme and pattern; ... provided a means of participatory belonging ... and constituted a method of creative self-realisation’. Bain (2005) also draws upon Glaeser’s (2000) study of the Berlin police force, in which five different ways in which the self derives meaning from work are identified: that is, through the activities of the process of work; the end-products of work; the prestige of the social context within which work occurs; and the position that work is allocated relative to other pastimes.

Both examples upon which Bain (2005) draws constitute good illustrations of the ways in which individuals derive a sense of self not only from work but also from a shared workplace culture, as the body of literature on occupational communities had already made clear (Salaman, 1974, 1986; Van Maanen and Barley, 1984). It is therefore towards the role of culture in identity formation that the next chapter of the literature review now turns.

CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

As this chapter has highlighted, social thinkers have always, since the birth of sociology, shown some concern for the relationship between work and identity, albeit implicitly. Despite their heterogeneity, most theoretical approaches to work identity (i.e. Managerialist, Marxist, neo-Weberian, and Symbolic Interactionist) have also been shown to derive from the work of classical sociologists (such as Weber, Durkheim, Marx and Parsons), with the exception of the post-modern debate.

From the critique undertaken in Chapter 3, it follows that this study leans more towards the Symbolic Interactionist stance with regards to the work-identity relationship (see Figure 3.1). The chapter has indeed highlighted the weaknesses of both the alienation theory and the neo-Weberian conceptualisation, which fail, respectively, to acknowledge workers' subjective experiences and to place identity in social action. In contrast, the Symbolic Interactionist stance and its derivatives in occupational sociology posit the centrality of pre-defined occupational roles and reference groups to identity (Hughes, 1951, 1958, 1971; Becker and Carper, 1956; Goffman, 1959, 1961, 1968; Roy, 1960; Sutherland, 1961; Becker 1963; Salaman, 1974) and the interrelationship between the societal status conferred to a person's occupation and that person's self-image and sense of self-worth (Hughes, 1958; Gold, 1964; Saunders, 1981a).

In response to criticisms directed at occupational sociology, studies of occupational communities do not generalise the applicability of the process of work identity formation to all types of work, but instead focus on occupational identification within occupational *communities*, for which the defining criteria and determinants have been outlined in the work of Salaman (1974, 1986) and Van Maanen and Barley (1984). Whilst the study of chefs' occupational identity could benefit from an analysis of the occupation from the perspective of existing theories on occupational communities, the latter have ceased to be current objects of investigation for sociologists since the advent of the post-modern debate (see Casey, 1995; Rifkin, 1995; Bauman 1996, 1998; Aronowitz and Cutler, 1998; Sennett 1998; Gorz 1999; Beck 2000).

Yet, despite the undeniable changes that have marked the world of work in the post-industrial era (fluidity, fragmentation and instability), generalisations about the loss of

identification with work are found wanting in the face of the enduring significance of work, and shared workplace cultures in particular, for many occupational groups (see Kondo, 1990; Aldridge, 1998; Glaeser, 2000; Hirschfeld and Feild, 2000; Kärreman and Alvesson, 2001; Allen Collinson, 2004, 2006; Kirpal, 2004; Bain, 2005; Strangleman *et al.*, 2005; Strangleman, 2007). This study thus departs from the post-modern tradition (hence the question mark in the Postmodernism box in Figure 3.1) and posits that a person's work/occupation is still a significant contributor to identity in modern society.

4. Occupational Culture

THE LINK BETWEEN WORK IDENTITY FORMATION AND OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE

As highlighted in the previous chapters of the literature review, one of the main theoretical orientations of this study is the notion that occupation is an important factor in modern society in the formation of identity. In parallel to this concept, the other theoretical orientation which underpins this chapter of the literature review is the idea that individuals working in the same occupation develop distinctive occupational, *not* organisational, cultures (from which they derive common values and sets of behaviour) because of the amount of similarity in work and social settings (Gomez-Mejia, 1983; Paoline, 2003). Although occupational cultures are often acknowledged to form integral parts of organisational cultures, it is interesting to note, along with Hofstede *et al.* (1990) and Trice (1993), that occupational cultures have largely been overlooked by researchers and students of organisational cultures. Conversely, the body of literature on organisational cultures will not be reviewed here, for our concern lies exclusively with the ‘occupational view of work’ (Gomez-Mejia, 1983).⁴

It is also important at this stage to highlight how the two previous chapters of the literature review on identity fit with the concept of occupational cultures. Although the development of a shared workplace culture has often been linked to the process of work identity formation, as illustrated in the case of occupational communities (Salaman, 1974), Barth (1969: 15) is right to point out that the sharing of cultural features is not in itself sufficient for a group of individuals to develop a sense of identity: ‘Socially relevant factors alone become diagnostic for membership, not the overt “objective” differences’. As Barth (1969) and Anthony P. Cohen (1985) have suggested, once a group has negotiated its identity at the boundary with other groups, cultural traits may, however, become symbols of identity that help perpetuate a sense of belonging amongst the group members.

In this chapter of the literature review, our concern therefore lies with the cultural aspects of occupational groups (e.g. values, beliefs, norms, symbols, myths, rituals, etc.) that operate to construct and reinforce a sense of identity amongst occupational

⁴ Cameron *et al.* (1999) and Cameron (2001, 2004) have examined the extent to which organisational culture influences chefs’ occupational culture (see Chapter 5).

members. In this sense, this study is in line with the tradition of anthropologists who have focused on the cultural markers of identity in the realm of occupations, such as Spradley and Mann's (1975) study of cocktail waitresses, Van Maanen's (1974) study of patrolmen and Mars and Nicod's (1984) study of waiters. Thus, while Van Maanen (1974) examined the occupational milieu of the police and identified what makes patrolmen a distinct culture with a defined sense of identity, Mars and Nicod (1984: x) undertook similar research in a hospitality context with a specific focus on the occupational world of waiters, which they described as 'a world of rites and rituals, of status passages, of minutely divided hierarchies, of closely guarded and secret knowledge that can never be understood from the customers' side of the green baize door'.

In a similar vein, the underlying aim of this study is to identify the main cultural components of chefs' occupational culture that contribute to perpetuating what 'being a chef' means to the individual, such as the distinctive value and belief system and the cultural processes through which new recruits are introduced to the occupational frame of reference. The remainder of this chapter is therefore dedicated to a review of anthropological theories on culture and cultural forms, with particular focus on the way sociologists have applied these theories to the realm of occupational culture and occupational culture formation.

DEFINING THE 'CULTURE' CONCEPT

The literature points to the many overlapping and contradictory definitions that have emerged across various academic disciplines and the lack of overall consensus as to the precise meaning of the concept of culture (Spradley, 1972; Delaney, 2004). As British social theorist Raymond Williams (1983: 87) famously puts it:

Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. This is so partly because of its intricate historical development, in several European languages, but mainly because it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought.

The meaning of the concept of culture has become so contested in the literature that some anthropologists (Brightman, 1995; Kuper, 1999) have even suggested that the term should be dropped altogether. Yet, many theorists (Yanagisako, 1993 in Delaney, 2004; Brumann, 1999; Delaney 2004) are uncomfortable with this position and intuitively feel the need to retain the term despite its vagueness. As Yanagisako (1993, in Delaney 2004: 18) pointedly remarks, the concept of culture:

...is the conceptual and discursive space we reserve to struggle to refine our understandings of social differences and similarities. ... [It is] that elusive abstraction we find it impossible to agree upon but one that we find it equally impossible to live without.

In social anthropology, the very first definition of culture emerged out of the work of Edward Burnett Tylor (1871: 1) who defined culture as follows: 'Culture or civilisation, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'. As Eriksen (2004) remarks, the popularity of this definition among anthropologists may have stemmed from its wide and general character, although Tylor's (1871) definition actually remained unelaborated for decades during which a great variety of new definitions were offered. As early as the 1950s, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952: 2) were indeed able to cite and review over 160 definitions of the term and by way of synthesis conclude:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit of symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consisting of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may on the one hand be considered products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements for further action.

Thus, according to Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), the term 'culture' should not be used as Tylor (1871) uses it, to describe a set of traits, but rather should refer to a form

or pattern which is theoretically distinct from observed behaviour. Yet, Seymour-Smith (1986: 65) is right to point out that defining culture in this way ‘raises a series of problems about whether we are dealing with ideal types, with normative values or with statistical means when we speak of culture as an “abstraction” from observable series of events and behaviours’.

Another typical definition of ‘culture’ is that proposed by anthropologist Marvin Harris (1968: 16, emphasis added) who argues that ‘the culture concept comes down to *behaviour patterns* associated with particular groups of people, that is to “customs”, or to a people’s “way of life”’. Despite some usefulness, it has been noted that this definition fails to acknowledge the significant distinctions that exist between the outsider’s and the insider’s viewpoints, i.e. their different interpretations of these behaviour patterns and customs (Spradley, 1979). In order ‘to grasp the native’s point of view’ (Malinowski, 1922: 25), Spradley (1979: 5) argues that it is necessary to expand the definition of culture to ‘acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behaviour’, thus shifting the emphasis from observed behavioural traits to their actual *meanings* for the individuals concerned.

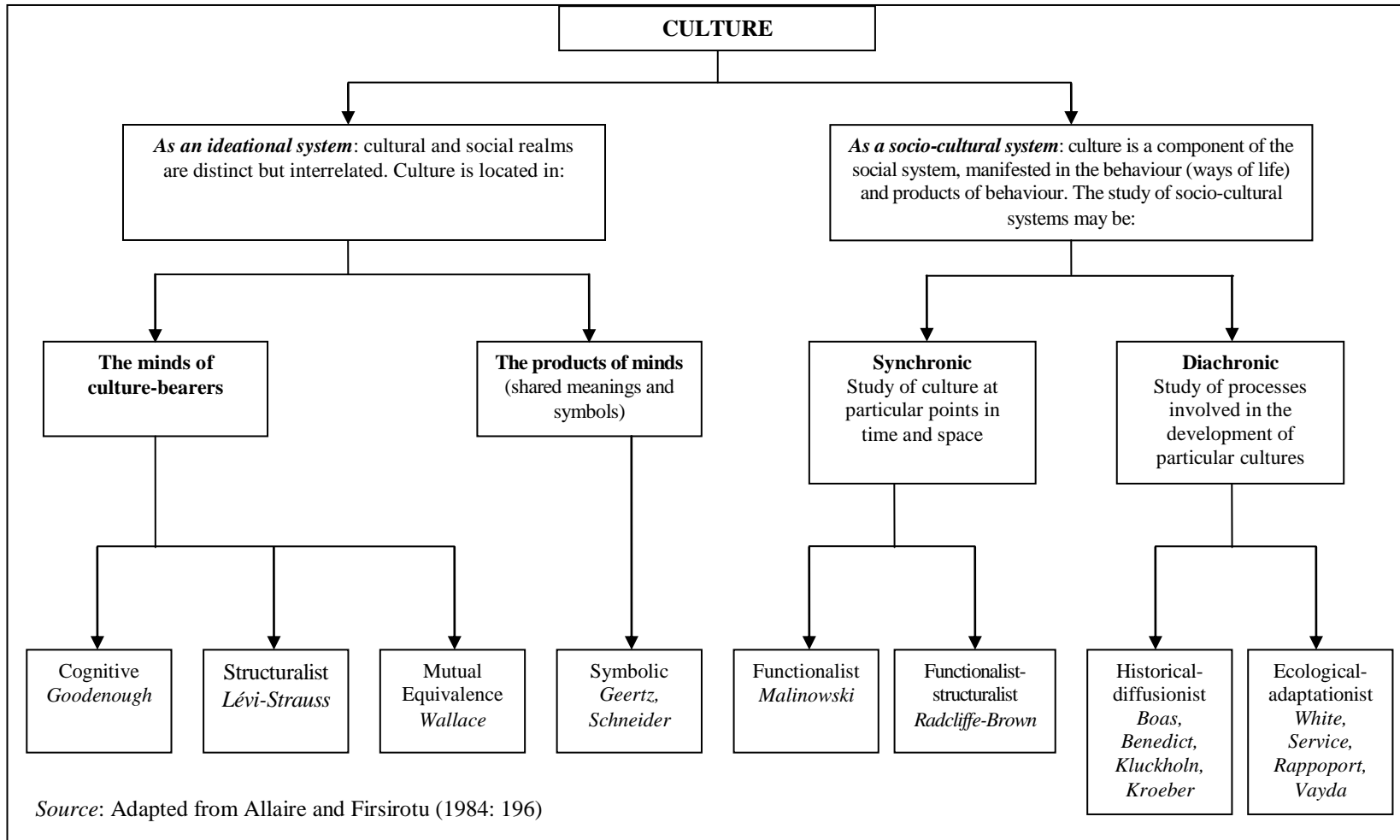
As Spradley (1979) further argues, this concept of culture, as a system of meaningful symbols, has much in common with Symbolic Interactionism, a sociological theory which seeks to explain human behaviour in terms of the meanings that people place upon it, and which they have derived out of social interaction (Blumer, 1969). Drawing upon the principles of Symbolic Interactionism, Spradley (1979) thus defines culture as a shared system of meanings which is acquired, sustained and defined in the context of social interaction, and is used to act as a guide for acting and interpreting everyday experiences. It follows from this definition that culture is best investigated through ethnography, in order to highlight the ways in which people view their world, define reality, and organise their behaviour according to shared meanings.

It is also evident that Spradley’s (1979) conceptualisation of culture is very close to that of the symbolic school of culture in anthropology, as proposed by Clifford Geertz (1973) and Benjamin Schneider (1975) who, broadly speaking, view culture as ‘an ordered system of shared and public symbols and meanings which give shape, direction, and particularity to human experience’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 221). Following Allaire and Firsirotu’s (1984) recommendations, the author chooses to

locate this study within the symbolic anthropological tradition and will therefore adopt Geertz's definition of culture, along with its conceptual assumptions and methods, to study the occupational culture of chefs and their brigades. Reviewing the literature on work and organisational culture, Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) indeed deplore writers' tendency to choose a convenient definition of culture in a random pick of texts from social/cultural anthropology, without consideration for the specific conceptual assumptions and ways of studying culture associated with each particular school of thought.

Drawing upon Keesing's (1974) typology of anthropological theories on culture, Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) devised a model highlighting the different cultural schools and their subdivision within two categories (see Figure 4.1). Like Keesing (1974), Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) thus describe culture as belonging to either the 'ideation system' (within the mind of culture-bearers) or to the 'socio-cultural system'. Following Allaire and Firsirotu (1984), Appendix C itemises each school of thought in more detail and shows how the concept of culture has been applied to the study of organisations, and by extension how it can be used in relation to occupational cultures.

Figure 4.1: A typology of the schools of thought on culture in cultural anthropology



An examination of the different definitions brings to the fore the inadequacy of Functionalism, Functionalist-Structuralism, Historical-Diffusionism, Ecological-Adaptionism, Mutual Equivalence, and Structuralism for the purposes of this research. Indeed, the aforementioned conceptualisations of culture would detract from the research aim and objectives by placing the emphasis on specific matters, such as the working of society, environmental and historical factors and (universal) cognitive processes. At first sight, Ward Goodenough's (1957: 167) cognitive definition of culture, however, seems applicable to the study of occupational cultures, for it relates culture to a system of knowledge, beliefs and standards that one has to share 'in order to behave in a manner acceptable to its members'. In this sense, knowledge of the occupational culture enables individuals to interpret the demands of the occupational group and to make sense of their ongoing interactions with other occupational members. Studies of occupational cultures have indeed shown the crucial role played by socialisation in inculcating the knowledge and beliefs of the group in newcomers, in order for them to behave like its co-workers and become accepted in the occupational culture (see Turner, 1971; Trice, 1993).

Yet, Geertz (1973) is right to point out that the cognitive view of Goodenough (1957) is reductionistic since culture does not exist solely 'in people's heads', but is expressed in the meanings and symbols shared by social actors during social interaction. Since this study adopts a semiotic stance on culture, a detailed examination of Geertz's work will therefore follow in the remainder of this chapter. Geertz (1973:5), in one of his most frequently quoted statements, neatly summarises his conception of culture as thus:

The concept of culture I espouse is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take a culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.

These cultural 'webs of significance' are thus made of beliefs, customs, attitudes and behaviour and constitute a field within which meaning is made and shared (Cohen, 1982). As Geertz (1973: 89) further argues, culture is 'an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their

knowledge about and their attitudes toward life'. In other words, groups and societies use symbols to express aspects of their culture and make sense of their world (Ortner, 1984). Symbols should thus be studied for what they can reveal about culture, for they constitute the 'raw materials for the interpretation of the ordered system of meaning in terms of which social interaction takes place' (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 199).

In *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Geertz (1973) also recommends a particular way of analysing culture based on the methods of literary critics. Like the analysis of a text, analysing a culture requires that details be continuously related to the totality and vice versa, and that its meanings for the individuals concerned be *interpreted* by the researcher. Another important concept associated with this process of interpretation is that of 'thick description' which stands for the contextual understanding of the meaning behind cultural traits or behaviour. Using the action of winking as an example, Geertz examines how the researcher must, to distinguish a wink from a twitch, move beyond the action to the particular social understanding of the winking as a gesture (i.e. the intention or state of mind of the winker), but also to how the audience interpret the meaning of the winking. While a 'thin description' would be the winking itself, a 'thick description' is the meaning behind it and what the winking actually stands for, for those involved.

From this it follows that, for Geertz, a culture should be understood from within, and that researchers should refrain from both resorting to "'etic" terms of comparison or explanation' (Eriksen, 2004: 76) and deriving general laws from their findings. Indeed, as Geertz (1973: 5) points out in the above quote, the analysis of culture is not an 'experimental science in search of law' but rather, 'an interpretive one in search of meaning'. By this he means that anthropological analysis of culture is no more than an interpretation of an interpretation, as the researcher interprets the culture's interpretation of the event that is taking place. In Geertz's (1973: 9) words: '...what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to'.

While Geertz's seminal text provides us with definite cultural assumptions and methods for studying culture, it is also worth highlighting the way writers in the organisational literature have applied Geertz' concept of culture to the study of organisations. As Smircich (1983: 353) remarks, organisational writers with affiliation

to the symbolic school generally contend that '[t]he social or organisational world exists only as a pattern of symbolic relationships and meanings sustained through the continued processes of human interaction'. For these organisational writers, the focus of attention is therefore on language, symbols, myths, stories and rituals, which are not taken as cultural artefacts *per se* but rather as generative processes that facilitate shared meanings and are, therefore, fundamental to the very existence of the organisation (Smircich, 1983). Applied to the realm of occupational cultures, the researcher with affiliation to the symbolic school is concerned with analysing 'how individuals interpret and understand their experience and how these interpretations and understandings relate to action' (Smircich, 1983: 351), as illustrated in Van Maanen's (1973, 1974, 1977) study of police academy graduates which focuses on the process through which newcomers learn the meaning system created and sustained by the occupational group.

CLARIFYING LEXICAL CONFUSIONS: OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE OR SUBCULTURE?

Before examining theories and examples of occupational cultures, it is necessary to clarify the terminology further, especially in relation to the use of the concept of 'subculture'. The terms 'occupational culture' and 'occupational subculture' indeed seem to be used interchangeably in the work literature. For example, while Van Maanen (1974) and Paoline (2003) speak of the 'occupational culture' of the police, other authors choose to refer to the 'police subculture' (Waddington, 1999; Cochran and Bromley, 2003). Although these authors fundamentally refer to the same phenomenon, such terminological imprecision may be accounted for by the fact that occupational cultures are often envisaged as *sub-cultures* within organisational culture, and therefore are commonly referred to as such in the organisational literature (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984; Trice, 1993; Hatch, 1997; Rothman, 1998; Cameron *et al.*, 1999). These terminology discords nevertheless add confusion to the debate, especially in light of the traditional use of the term 'subculture' in sociology.

As Dowd and Dowd (2003: 22) points out, most sociology textbooks cite occupations as possible subcultures, whereby 'subculture' is commonly defined as 'a group that is part of the dominant culture but which differs from it in some important respects', notably on account of its beliefs, values and/or behaviour patterns. A famous

occupational study commonly cited as an example of occupational subculture is that of jazz musicians (see Becker, 1951) whose

...rejection of commercialism in music and squares [non-jazz musicians] in social life was part of the casting aside of the total American culture by men who could enjoy privileged status but who were unable to achieve a satisfactory personal adjustment within it.

(Yinger, 1960: 634)

Yet, if every recognisable occupational subgroup in society is considered to constitute a 'subculture', then one cannot help but infer, along with Henslin (2001: 49), that 'U.S. society [or British society] contains tens of thousands of subcultures'. Similarly, Leuner (1999: 837) pointedly remarks that the concept risks becoming over-stretched to the point of meaninglessness: '...this over-extension of sub-culture can lead to its virtual redundancy as an analytical tool'. As Leuner (1999: 837) further argues, the concept of subculture is more useful when employed to refer to a sub-group's 'resistance to real or perceived subordination' or 'high levels of role or status ambiguity', such as ethnic minorities, the poor, academic underachievers, youths, delinquents and deviants, for example. Besides, while the concept of subculture can be traced back to the research of Frederic Thrasher (1963 [1927]) on delinquent gangs, it is interesting to note that the term 'subculture' has mostly been used in relation to the study of youths, such as punks, skinheads, mods and hippies (e.g. Clarke *et al.*, 1976; Hebdige, 1979; Cagle, 1989; McRobbie and Garber, 1997) and deviants (e.g. Sutherland, 1937; Cohen, 1956; Cloward and Ohlin, 1961; Cohen, 1972; Gelder and Thornton, 1997).

To avoid overstretching the concept of 'subculture', Dowd and Dowd (2003) have suggested refining and itemising the concept so as to accommodate different nuances of social assimilation within the dominant culture. Instead of the usual subculture/ counterculture dichotomy (whereby a *subculture* is elaborated through its opposition to *counterculture* which is seen as not merely different from society but as deliberately and/or actively rejecting the dominant culture), Dowd and Dowd (2003) propose to classify social groups along a continuum of assimilation and refer to three complementary concepts: i.e. 'subculture', 'social world', and 'idioculture'. According

to Dowd and Dowd (2003: 33), a 'subculture' should thus be understood as a social group existing 'at some distance from the cultural centre of society and ... characterised primarily by a limited degree of social interaction with those outside their group', which is best illustrated in the case of the ethnic group.

Following Anselm Strauss (1978, 1982) and other Symbolic Interactionists (Fine and Kleinmann, 1979), Dowd and Dowd (2003: 32) define 'social worlds' as distinctive ways of life, or 'universes of discourse', shared by group members who also largely participate in the common culture of the society and do not significantly challenge its values and beliefs. Although Strauss (1978, 1982) did not himself relate his concept of 'social world' to that of 'subculture', Dowd and Dowd (2003) suggest that the concept introduces an interesting and important nuance to the discussion as it separates subcultures from groups which merely develop a certain way of life around a specific activity, such as members of occupations, professions, organisations, and institutions. In this sense, one may find it useful to speak of the 'social world' of chefs and their brigades, instead of using the overstretched and contentious concept of 'subculture'.

Finally, Dowd and Dowd (2003: 33) advocate the use of Fine's (1979, 2006) concept of 'idioculture' to refer to 'a system of knowledge, beliefs, behaviours, and customs shared by members of an interacting group to which members can refer and employ as the basis of further interaction' (Fine, 1979: 734). Drawing upon the Symbolic Interactionist tradition, Fine contends that the concept can be used in relation to small face-to-face groups, such as families, but also work, friendship or sport groups, which over time develop their own specific ways of thinking and behaving. More recently, Fine (2006) has applied his concept of 'idioculture' to the realm of work and argued that a single occupation may incorporate alternative identities which workers construct according to their local work group cultures or idiocultures.

Applied to the research topic under investigation, the occupation of chefs and their brigades can be said to be composed of many idiocultures, as each kitchen develops its own group knowledge, practices, and beliefs. While one cannot deny the idiosyncrasy of each work group, this study intends to highlight common patterns within the occupation and in this sense, it could be argued that the particularities of the 'social world' of chefs and their brigades will be inferred from the ethnographic study of several kitchen work groups or idiocultures.

However important the above lexical distinctions are, there remains a lot of imprecision and contention around the use of the 'subculture' concept in sociology. To avoid the connotations of deviancy and marginality associated with the term 'subculture', this study will therefore continue the tradition of many urban anthropologists (such as Spradley 1970; Spradley and Mann, 1975; Van Maanen, 1974; Mars and Nicod, 1984; Glasser, 1988) and refers to the 'occupational culture' of chefs and their brigades.

DEFINING OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE

Although there is little consensus in the work literature on what constitutes a *culture*, occupational cultures are often understood as 'those systems that develop in physically and socially separate work settings' whereby 'members of ... [occupational] groups share a sense of common identity and perspective that transcends the place where they work' (Rothman, 1998: 44). Another common view of occupational culture is expressed by Salaman (1986: 75) in the following quote:

But whether they [occupational groups] live together or not spatially, they live together socially and culturally, they inhabit the same world of meaning and identity; share a language, a vocabulary of symbols, knowledge of the work world, a world of taken-for-granted and shared references, mythic figures, incidents, jokes – in short a culture.

It is interesting to note, along with Trice and Beyer (1984), that organisational and occupational researchers have tended to focus on single and discrete elements of culture, such as rituals, symbols and myths (e.g. Trice *et al.*, 1969; Chatov, 1973; Mitroff and Kilmann, 1976; Kamens, 1977; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Gephart, 1978; Peters, 1978; Pondy, 1978; Weick, 1979; Dandridge *et al.*, 1980; Beyer 1981; Pfeffer, 1981; Boland, 1982; Martin, 1982), thus leading to the violation of traditional anthropological conceptions of culture (e.g. Kluckhohn, 1942) which stress how cultural elements closely interact with one another. Trice and Beyer (1984) argue that this lack of integration can be attributed to the fact that researchers often fail to place

their chosen cultural concepts within some overall definition of occupational culture, therefore highlighting the need for better conceptualisation of the term.

Based on a comprehensive review of the field, Trice and Beyer (1984) conclude that an occupational culture is made of two interdependent components: (1) its substance or the networks of meanings contained in its *ideologies*, that is, the beliefs, values and norms of conduct that allow members of an occupation to make sense of the world in which they work; and (2) its *cultural forms* or the means by which an occupation conveys its ideologies to its members, such as rites, rituals, ceremonies, symbols, physical artefacts, stories and myths. In *Occupational Subcultures in the Workplace*, Trice (1993) revisits the above arguments in more depth and explains that whilst cultural forms are observable entities, ideologies are abstract and taken-for-granted ideas which help justify the ongoing behaviour of occupational members, and provide members with clear guidelines for action and social interaction.

To illustrate his argument, Trice (1993: 41) cites the ideology of prostitutes who believe that they serve important social functions by helping to deter rapes and save troubled-marriages and by providing comfort and sexual satisfaction (Bryan, 1966); and that of accountants who believe that they reduce ignorance and generate consensus in organisations by means of rational knowledge and fact (Montagna, 1971). Aside from beliefs, ideologies are often most clearly embodied in values which express 'what is valuable or worthless, respected or disdained, important or unimportant, commendable or deplorable' (Rothman, 1998: 53). Thus, while journalists value the search for newsworthy events, scientists seek to push back the frontiers of knowledge, and sportsmen/women advocate the confrontation of pain and injury under all circumstances (Rothman, 1998). Furthermore, as numerous examples of occupational studies also illustrate, Trice (1993) points out that occupational members can become very emotionally attached to their ideologies, therefore leading to the emergence of an ethnocentric ('we'-versus-'them') mentality and sometimes to social isolation through a process of self-segregation (as in the case of jazz musicians: see Becker, 1951; Merriam and Mack, 1960), as other groups with different beliefs are distrusted and disliked.

The two major functions of ideologies are, according to Trice (1993), embodied in Geertz's (1964, 1973) strain and interest theories. Whilst strain theory suggests that ideologies help alleviate the anxieties that inevitably arise within a given culture, the

interest theory emphasises the role of ideologies in advancing the economic and political interests of the group. Similarly, Trice (1993: 67) argues that ideologies function in occupational life ‘to reduce internal strains and anxieties, project emotional tensions on outsiders or scapegoats, legitimate behaviours that reduce tensions as having a “higher value”, promote occupational solidarity, and advance the economic and power interests of those in the occupation’. In contrast, the main function of cultural forms is to perpetuate the ideology and communicate it to its members, notably to newcomers through a process of socialisation, and to symbolise the ‘we-ness’ of the group, by defining the boundaries between insiders and outsiders. Trice’s (1993) conceptualisation offers a useful working model for analysing occupational cultures, as it precludes researchers from examining cultural forms in isolation from the group’s underlying beliefs and values. Following Trice (1993), the present research will strive to consider both the occupational ideology of chefs and its associated cultural forms. It is therefore towards the existing literature on cultural forms that this chapter of the literature review now turns.

THE CULTURAL FORMS OF OCCUPATIONAL CULTURES

Concerned with the lack of uniformity in labelling cultural forms in both anthropological and organisational literatures, Trice (1984 in Trice and Beyer, 1984) developed a set of definitions designed to capture the most frequently used meanings for each cultural form and avoid overlapping with definitions of other forms (see Table 4.1). Although not every occupational culture manifests all the cultural forms detailed in Appendix D, the list constitutes a convenient way of classifying the content of occupational cultures. In addition to these definitions, Appendix D outlines and illustrates the functions of these cultural forms within occupational life, drawing upon the comprehensive literature reviews of both Trice (1993) and Rothman (1998). Myths, symbols, rituals and rites will, however, be reviewed in more detail, and with reference to the anthropological literature, for they are more complex cultural forms whose meanings are still highly debated (see also Appendix E).

Table 4.1: Trice's (1984) definitions of frequently studied cultural forms

Rite	Relating elaborate, dramatic planned sets of activities that consolidate various forms of cultural expressions into one event, which is carried out through social interactions, usually for the benefit of an audience.
Ceremonial	A system of several rites connected with a single occasion or event.
Ritual	A standardised, detailed set of techniques and behaviours that manage anxieties, but seldom produce intended, technical consequences of practical importance.
Myth	A dramatic narrative of imagined events, usually used to explain origins or transformation of something. Also, an unquestioned belief about the practical benefits of certain techniques and behaviours that is not supported by demonstrated facts.
Saga	An historical narrative describing the unique accomplishments of a group and its leaders – usually in heroic terms.
Legend	A handed-down narrative of some wonderful event that is based in history but has been embellished with fictional details.
Story	A narrative based on true events – often a combination of truth and fiction.
Folktale	A completely fictional narrative.
Symbol	Any object, act, event, quality, or relation that serves as a vehicle for conveying meaning, usually by representing another thing.
Language	A particular form or manner in which members of a group use vocal sounds and written signs to convey meanings to each other.
Gesture	Movements of parts of the body used to express meanings.
Physical setting	Those things that surround people physically and provide them with immediate sensory stimuli as they carry out culturally expressive activities.
Artefacts	Material objects manufactured by people facilitate culturally expressive activities.

Source: Trice and Beyer (1984: 655)

MYTHS

Although myths have been endowed with specific meanings linked to structuralist thought (Lévi-Strauss, 1970, 1978; Barthes, 1973 [1957]), the definition of myth adopted for the purposes of this study is that of Trice (1984 in Trice and Beyer, 1984: 655) whose comprehensive literature review of the field led him to conclude that an occupational myth is ‘a dramatic narrative of imagined events, usually used to explain the origins or transformations of something’, and/or as ‘an unquestionable belief about the practical benefits of certain techniques and behaviours that is not supported by demonstrated facts’ (see also Trice, 1993). The research may highlight the existence of occupational myths that underpin the ideology of chefs and help perpetuate a sense of identity, by linking the occupation’s past with its present, and justifying occupational members’ values and attitudes.

SYMBOLS

Although occupational symbols can be studied in and of themselves (i.e. uniforms, titles, grooming, etc.), it is important to note, along with Trice (1993), that symbols actually pervade all aspects of social life and form an integral part of many cultural forms (see Appendix D). For example, as Victor W. Turner (1969) famously stated, symbols constitute the smallest unit of rituals. As highlighted earlier, some anthropologists with affiliation to the symbolic school of thought (Geertz, 1973; Cohen, 1993) go as far as suggesting that culture is in fact represented through symbols. Cohen (1993: 196) neatly summarises this view in the following manner: ‘Culture ... is the means by which we make meaning, and with which we make the world meaningful to ourselves, and ourselves meaningful to the world. Its vehicle is the symbol. Symbols are quite simply carriers of meaning’.

For the purposes of this research, the meaning and role of symbols will be understood in this sense, in accordance with our working definition of culture which also derives from the symbolic school of thought. Indeed, as highlighted earlier, Geertz (1973) contends that symbols are ‘vehicles of “culture”’ (Ortner, 1984: 129) and should be studied for what they convey about a particular culture. The study of occupational symbols will thus permeate the whole study of chef culture.

RITUALS

From the above discussion, it follows that, for Geertz (1973: 452), rituals are events in which many of the symbolic expressions of a culture manifest themselves, although, as he commented about the Balinese cockfight, rituals do not constitute the ‘master key’ that unlocks all of the meanings of a culture. Thus, according to Geertz, rituals constitute social displays and performances of symbols, as illustrated in the case of Balinese cockfighting which represents an enactment of certain features of Javanese ideology linked to manhood, status and hierarchy.

Although Geertz’s ideas underpin our understanding of culture, much can be gained from an examination of how other anthropologists and sociologists have conceptualised the meaning and functions of rituals in a society/social group.

Sociologists/anthropologists, such as Turner (1969), in a more direct Durkheimian tradition emphasise the capacity of rituals to reinforce collective sentiment and social integration and to communicate and instil shared values of great importance to a society or social group (Burns, 1999; Auslander, 2003). In accordance with this Durkheimian tradition of anthropologists, rituals will thus be understood as standardised and repetitive sets of behaviour that reinforce a sense of identity and belonging among members of a culture and reaffirm the boundaries between those who belong and those who do not, since rituals only have meanings to those who are familiar with the values of the social group (Okely, 1983; Palmer, 2003). This is also particularly well illustrated in Glasser's (1988: 4) ethnography of a soup kitchen whereby belonging is communicated by the daily rituals associated with particular roles: '...[guests and staff] enact the numerous rituals of daily soup kitchen life, including ... announcing the menu, serving the meal and socialising within the dining room. New guests are enculturated and learn proper soup kitchen behaviour...'. Similarly, it is the rituals associated with the communication and enactment of chef identity that will be of particular interest for this study.

RITES

For the purposes of this study, the definition of rites adopted is that of Trice (1984 in Trice and Beyer, 1984: 655) who, after reviewing the work of many anthropologists, concludes that rites are 'relating elaborate, dramatic planned sets of activities that consolidate various forms of cultural expressions into one event, which is carried out through social interactions, usually for the benefit of an audience' (see also Trice, 1993). Although several forms of rites have been identified in the realm of organisational cultures (see Table 4.2), the one theory which has stood the test of time and further research is that of the French anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep (1960 [1908]) who identified a specific type of rites, subsequently known as a *rite of passage*.

Table 4.2: A typology of rites by their manifest and latent expressive social consequences⁵

<i>Types of Rites</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Manifest, Expressive Social Consequences</i>	<i>Examples of Possible Latent, Expressive Consequences</i>
Rites of passage	Induction and basic training, U.S. Army	Facilitate transition of persons into social roles and statuses that are new for them	Minimise changes in ways people carry out social roles Re-establish equilibrium in ongoing social relations
Rites of degradation	Firing and replacing top executives	Dissolve social identities and their power	Publicly acknowledge that problems exist and discuss their details Defend group boundaries by redefining who belongs and who doesn't Reaffirm social importance and value of role involved
Rites of enhancement	Mary Kay seminars	Enhance social identities and their power	Spread good news about the organisation Provide public recognition of individuals for their accomplishments; motivate others to similar efforts Enable organisations to take some credit for individual accomplishments Emphasise social value of performance of social roles
Rites of renewal	Organisational development activities	Refurbish social structures and improve their functioning	Reassure members that something is being done about problems Disguise nature of problems Defer acknowledgement of problems Focus attention toward some problem and away from others Legitimate and reinforce existing systems of power and authority
Rites of conflict reduction	Collective bargaining	Reduce conflict and aggression	Deflect attention away from solving problems Compartmentalise conflict and its disruptive effects Legitimate and reinforce existing systems of power and authority
Rites of integration	Office Christmas party	Encourage and revive common feelings that bind members together and commit them to a social system	Permit venting of emotions and temporary loosening of various norms Reassert and reaffirm, by contrast, moral rightness of usual norms

Source: Trice and Beyer (1984: 657)

⁵ Following Leach (1968) for whom human action can serve both to do and say things, and Merton (1936) for whom purposive social action has both manifest and latent consequences, Trice and Beyer (1984) argue that rites also have *technical* consequences (either manifest or latent) and *expressive* consequences (also manifest or latent). Manifest expressive consequences thus point to the enhancement of the social identity of the participant among an audience; whilst latent expressive consequences refer to the enhancement of the prestige of the occupational role.

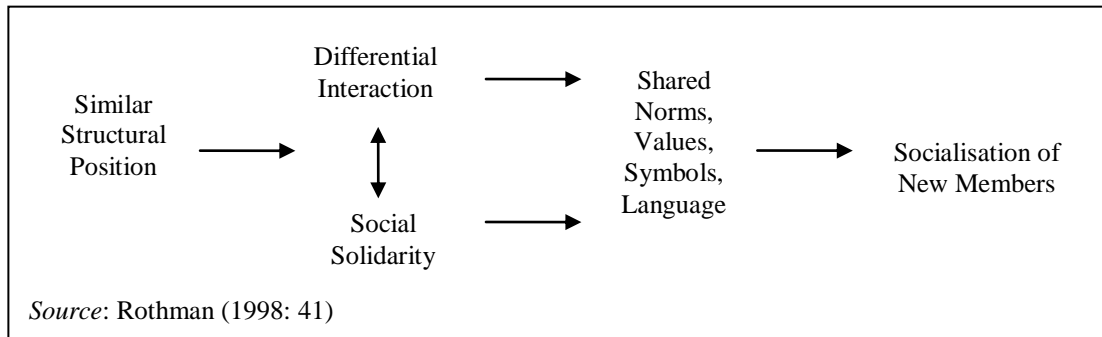
In the world of occupations, rites of passage serve many functions both for the individual and for the group. As the above examples illustrate (see also Appendix E), rites of passage constitute, for the individual, initiation and integration processes which re-assert the group's values, beliefs and norms, and help the individual develop a sense of collectiveness and occupational identity (Van Maanen, 1974). For senior occupational members as a whole, rites of passage help to reaffirm the group's values, and promote solidarity, which is all the more important in highly dangerous occupations (e.g. miners, dockers, fire-fighters, etc.) where a lack of bonding between occupational members could have devastating consequences (Rothman, 1998; Mayrhofer and Iellatchitch, 2005). Although many of the examples are taken from traditional and industrial occupations (see also Appendix E), rites of passage apply to a variety of work settings, including career progression in organisations (see Mayrhofer and Iellatchitch, 2005), and similar mechanisms are likely to be in place in the occupational culture of chefs and their brigades.

THEORIES OF OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE FORMATION

Having reviewed the literature on cultural forms (see also Appendix E), this chapter will now examine the way in which occupational writers have conceptualised the process of occupational culture formation, and the factors influencing the emergence and maintenance of an occupational culture. Drawing upon various examples of occupational cultures (e.g. rookie railroaders (Kemnitzer, 1973); ironworkers (Haas, 1977); miners (Vaught and Smith, 1980)), Rothman (1998 [1987]) applies Arnold's (1970) model of subculture formation (see Figure 4.2) and suggests that occupational cultures emerge through a similar process, as workers share physical and social conditions of work and necessarily interact with each other on a regular basis for large amounts of time. According to Rothman (1998), an occupational culture thus emerges, first and foremost, in response to a social environment. Secondly, an occupational culture is most likely to emerge as workers are confronted with similar problems and rewards, and develop a common set of experiences, therefore generating a feeling of solidarity and cohesion. As they work and interact together, workers accumulate shared knowledge, norms, values, and symbols, and devise rules for

dealing with common problems. Lastly, the model points to the key role played by socialisation in transmitting the occupational culture of the group to new members, through a diversity of methods ranging from formal and informal training, to encouragement, social pressure and sanctioning.

Figure 4.2: Rothman's (1998) model of occupational culture formation

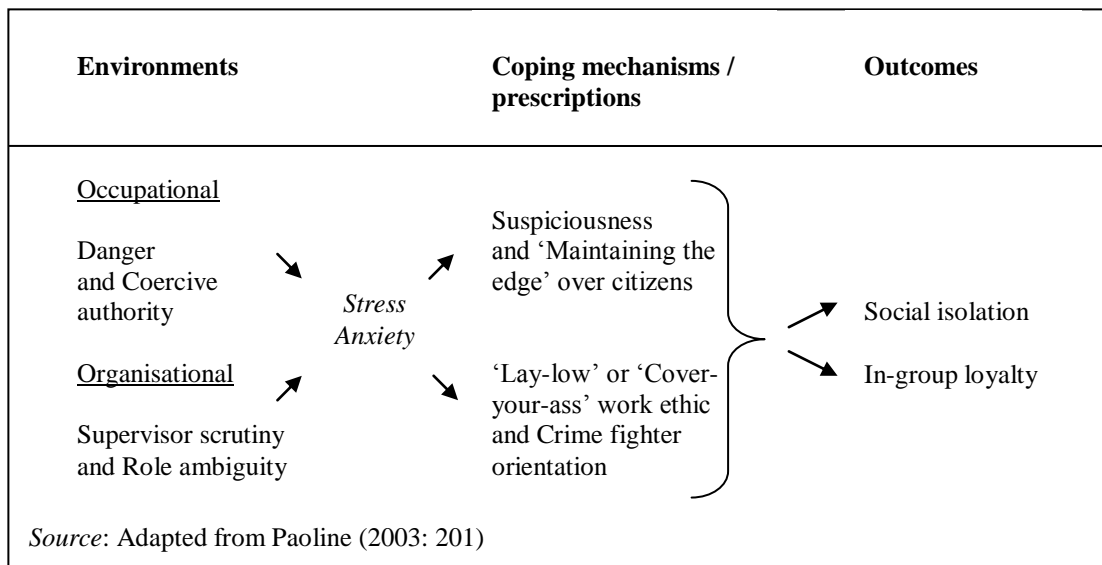


Despite the originality of Rothman's (1998) model in conceptualising the process of occupational culture formation, occupational writers have frequently conceived of occupational cultures as products of the various tasks and problems confronting members of a group in work situations. In examining the culture of medical students, Becker *et al.* (1961: 34) used the term 'group perspectives' to refer to the 'modes of thought and action developed by a group which faces the same problematic situations'. In time, these group perspectives appear to the group members as the only legitimate ways of thinking and acting in such situations, and form the basis for the occupational culture. Similarly, for Barry Turner (1971: 42), a work culture consists of workers' social definitions of various situations, which he terms 'collective biographies'. As Turner (1971) points out, the culture of the group is therefore not only made up of the perspectives on common problems but it also influences the nature of subsequent perspectives, as the group uses similar norms and values to deal with new problems and experiences.

Furthermore, as Paoline (2003) points out, occupational writers across all fields of study have tended to assert that as members are confronted with similar tasks and problems, they develop shared attitudes, practices, values, and norms for the resolution of such problems, which subsequently form the basis of the group's culture (see studies on the police (Van Maanen, 1973, 1974, 1977; Manning, 1995), social workers (Meyerson, 1991), miners (Vaught and Smith, 1980; Vaught and Wiehagen, 1991),

and construction workers (Riemer, 1979; Applebaum, 1981; Steiger and Form, 1991)). Drawing upon the numerous studies dedicated to police culture, Paoline (2003) develops a framework for conceptualising the police culture in terms of environments, coping mechanisms and outcomes. As illustrated in Figure 4.3, Paoline (2003) views police culture as an occupational phenomenon whereby officers collectively confront situations that arise in the environments of policing (i.e. danger, coercive authority, supervisor scrutiny etc.) and subsequent attitudes, values, and norms emerge as a response to those environments. As Paoline suggests, the work environments of policing shapes what the occupational culture *prescribes* to its members, that is, the ways of *coping* with the strains of the environments (such as being suspicious of citizens and adopting a ‘lay-low’ or ‘cover-your-ass’ work ethic) which, in turn, determine the *outcomes* of the culture or, in other words, the implications for the way in which the police relate to citizens and other occupational members (i.e. social isolation and in-group loyalty). Although based on the commonly held assumption that occupational cultures are the products of their social environment, Paoline’s model nevertheless constitutes an original attempt to conceptualise the stages involved in the formation of an occupational culture, and may indeed be applicable beyond the police context.

Figure 4.3: Occupational (police) culture model



Although attempts at conceptualising the process of occupational culture formation are rare in the literature, some authors (Salaman, 1974; Rothman, 1998) have endeavoured to formally theorise the environmental factors most likely to stimulate the emergence of occupational cultures and contribute to their survival over time. Drawing upon numerous examples of occupational cultures, Rothman (1998) contends that *interdependence*, *uncertainty* and *isolation* are the three key factors most likely to lead to the creation of an occupational culture. Thus, occupations in which the successful performance of individual members depends on the cooperation of the team emphasise the importance of predictability and reliability, to justify the need for strong group solidarity. Uncertainty in the form of high risk, danger or the inability to control the environment is also likely to assist the formation of occupational cultures (Rothman, 1998). Strong solidarity and conformity to group expectations become a *sine qua non* to ensure safety and successful performance, as illustrated in the work of trawler fishermen (Tunstall, 1962), the police (Van Maanen, 1974; Manning, 1995; Paoline, 2003), fire fighters (Hart, 1982; MacLean, 1992), military officers (Janowitz, 1960) and construction workers (Riemer, 1979; Applebaum, 1981; Steiger and Form, 1991). Occupational members deviating from group expectations are deemed unreliable and are subject to peer pressures and social isolation designed to make their life impossible and force them to resign (e.g. miners (Vaught and Smith, 1980) and dockers (Turnbull, 1992)).

Finally, work situations that isolate members from society enhance the importance of the occupational subgroup which can provide recognition, social support and status (Rothman, 1998). Isolation can be either *physical*, as in the case of railroaders (Kemnitzer, 1973; Salaman, 1974), or *symbolic*, if the work undertaken becomes a barrier to social interaction within society. In this instance, police patrolmen (Van Maanen, 1974), carnival workers (Bryant, 1972) and prostitutes (Bryan, 1966) have all been found to be separated from society on account of their tarnished images. It is interesting to note that the factors advanced by Rothman (1998) are very similar to what Salaman (1974, 1986) describes as the three circumstances under which occupations become occupational communities (see Chapter 3), that is, workers' subjective involvement in tasks which are concerned with *skill*, *responsibility*, *danger* or *excitement*; some degree of *marginality* which makes relationships with outsiders

undesirable or difficult; and the *inclusiveness* of the work setting which tends to create boundaries around those who work together. Not all occupational cultures are, of course, occupational communities in the sense that occupational members associate with and make friends with people in the same occupation to the exclusion of outsiders (Salaman, 1974: 21). Although many examples of occupational studies in the literature (see Trice, 1993) point to the relevance of these factors to stimulate the development of occupational cultures, it is important to point out that most occupational studies have focused on traditional, working-class, male-dominated and craft-oriented occupations (police, miners, construction workers, etc.), at the expense of more current work sectors such as service occupations (Fine, 1996a). As highlighted in the previous chapter, occupational cultures and occupational communities have ceased to be current sociological objects of investigation since the advent of the post-modern debate, hence the lack of data on post-industrial types of occupations (Aldridge, 1998).

Despite the manifest applicability of these factors, some authors (Mars, 1982; Mars and Nicod, 1984; Trice, 1993; Cameron *et al.*, 1999; Cameron, 2001) have argued that the process of occupational culture formation cannot be understood without reference to two interdependent perspectives: one that concerns *structural* dimensions, linked to internal organisation and rules, and the other that conceives of culture as a process of *group* formation. In other words, these authors are concerned with applying the work of social anthropologist Mary Douglas (1970, 1978, 1982) to the study of occupational cultures, in view of assessing and classifying all occupations according to the same essential dimensions (see also Appendix F).

CLASSIFYING OCCUPATIONAL CULTURES USING MARY DOUGLAS'S GRID-GROUP ANALYSIS

Mary Douglas's (1970, 1978, 1982) 'grid-group' analysis was initially proposed to examine the links that exist between culture and behaviour in different human societies, and provide a basis of comparison between societies, which, she argues, can all be compared according to two cultural dimensions: 'grid' and 'group'.

Combining the aforementioned group and grid dimensions, Mars (1982) and Trice (1993) argue that it is possible to conceive of a fourfold classification of occupations, with four *ideal types* of occupational cultures, as illustrated in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: A grid/group analysis of occupational cultures

GRID	<p><i>Strong or high</i> ↑</p>	<p>‘Donkeys’ Strong Grid; Weak Group</p> <p><i>Isolated subordination</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Weak consciousness of kind and low cohesiveness * Subject to constraining rules of management in organisations <p><u>Examples:</u> engineers, accountants, and personnel administrators</p>	<p>‘Wolves’ Strong Grid; Strong Group</p> <p><i>Tight work-groups / Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Prominent structural features such as ranking systems and interdependent and stratified roles * Work, residence and leisure overlap * Teamwork is vital for success and security * Group boundaries are strongly defined <p><u>Examples:</u> miners, longshoremen, aeroplane crews</p>
	<p><i>Weak or low</i></p>	<p>‘Hawks’ Weak Grid; Weak Group</p> <p><i>Individual entrepreneuriality</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Freedom to transact on one’s own terms * Individual flair and idiosyncrasies make for disproportionate returns * Drive for successful innovation <p><u>Examples:</u> entrepreneurial managers, businessmen, successful academics, salesmen, professionals and journalists</p>	<p>‘Vultures’ Strong Group; Weak Grid</p> <p><i>Loose work-groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Considerable autonomy and freedom to transact on one’s own terms * Need support of group for some purposes only but free to act individually and competitively most times <p><u>Examples:</u> lorry drivers, secondary schools, police departments, social welfare agencies</p>
		GROUP	<p><i>Strong or high</i> →</p>

Sources: Adapted from Mars (1982: 29) and Trice (1993: 43-5)

When applied to the occupation of chefs, Cameron (2001) has argued that chefs would be expected to fall under the ‘vulture’ category, with weak grid and strong group. Indeed, from both the hospitality literature and media representations of chefs (see Chapter 5), there is evidence to suggest that chefs, and elite chefs in particular, are primarily judged on merit, autonomy and individuality and are highly competitive with one another, whilst also demonstrating a high sense of belonging to the group, i.e. to their own brigades, but also to other chefs with whom they may form collaborative alliances (see also Gillespie, 1994). Indeed, the literature on chefs strongly emphasises

the ethos of teamwork, together with chefs' belief in their own uniqueness and the social isolation brought about by working unsociable hours (Commission on Industrial Relations [CIR], 1971; Bowey, 1976; Saunders, 1981a, 1981b). Taken together, these elements seemingly point to a strong group identity, in accordance with Mars's (1982) and Trice's (1993) criteria.

Yet, this interpretation seems to only partially account for the occupation and omits the chef's brigade. It may instead be argued that, taken as a whole, chefs and their brigades fall under the 'wolf' category, with strong grid and strong group. Many chefs' biographies (White, 1990, 2006; Bourdain, 2000; Hennessy, 2000; Ramsay, 2006; Simpson, 2006) indeed never fail to mention the militaristic hierarchy of the *partie* system, the strict discipline and strong solidarity that prevail within the occupational group (see Chapter 5), which therefore points to a high grid and group dimension.

Complications arise, however, as Cameron (2001) suggests that cultural sub-divisions may exist within the same occupation, depending on the level of influence exercised by the organisation in which members of the occupation work. In their ethnographic study of waiters in hotels, Mars and Nicod (1984), for example, used Mary Douglas's 'grid/group' analysis to construct a typology of hotels (and waiter's cultures) based on the constraints placed on waiters as a result of a hotel's social (e.g. type of consumer) and environmental (e.g. type of market) operating context (see Figure 4.5). Drawing upon Mars and Nicod's (1984) hotel typology, Cameron (2001: 110) argues that 'the domain of occupational culture ... [is] more widely diffused through the four quadrants of the basic model' as the social milieu and organisational culture of hotels can influence the occupational culture and attitude shared by chefs, and vice versa (see italics in Figure 4.5). While highlighting some of the limitations of 'grid-group' analysis, Cameron's findings are, however, very specific to a given social context in which chefs from a hotel chain react differently to management decisions when faced with a programme of radical change initiated by management. Little generalisation to the whole of the chef's occupation can therefore be inferred. It is through first-hand investigation that the author intends to clarify these issues and attempt to relate the theory of 'grid/group' analysis to the collected primary data.

Figure 4.5: A grid/group analysis of hotels and chefs

GRID	<p><i>Strong or high</i> ↑</p>	<p>Craft Hotels Strong Grid; Weak Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Small number of highly prestigious establishments * Low employee autonomy * Work is regimented * Key occupational reference groups provide the main source of identity <p><i>'Vulnerable chefs' (vulnerable to requirements of management)</i></p>	<p>Bureaucratic Hotels Strong Grid; Strong Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Large conglomerate-owned establishments * A strong preference for formal methods of bureaucratic regulation in their operation <p><i>'Carvery chefs' (reduced creativity and autonomy)</i></p>
	<p>Weak or low</p>	<p>Entrepreneurial Hotels Weak Grid; Weak Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Traditional, individualist and independent * A high competitive profile within the market place <p><i>'A la carte chefs' (chef's creativity is seen as an asset)</i></p>	<p>Traditional Hotels Strong Group; Weak Grid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Usually small and independently run

Source: Adapted from Cameron (2001: 106, 110, 112)

CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

As highlighted at the outset of this chapter, the underlying theoretical orientation of this study is the notion that identity and culture are interrelated in the sense that the cultural components of an occupational culture operate to reinforce a sense of identity amongst its occupational members. The examination of anthropological theories has been useful to locate this study within the symbolic school of thought from which it is possible to derive definite cultural assumptions and methods for studying culture.

Drawing upon Geertz's (1973) seminal text, culture is conceived as a system of symbols and meanings which is shared by social actors during social interaction to make sense of their world. The study of chefs' occupational culture will therefore involve a thorough (ethnographic) examination of the ways in which occupational members interpret their experiences and act on the basis of these interpretations. It also

follows from Geertz's conceptualisation of culture that symbols need to be studied for what they can reveal about the occupational culture of chefs and their brigades, following the principles of interpretation. In other words, the researcher must achieve a contextual understanding of the meanings behind the cultural traits and behaviour of chefs and their brigades, in line with the concept of 'thick description' advocated by Geertz.

In addition, the chapter has highlighted the lack of integrated definitions of occupational culture, due to organisational and occupational researchers' tendency to focus on discrete cultural components at the expense of an all-encompassing view of culture. Following Trice and Beyer's (1984) anthropologically-inspired conceptualisation of occupational culture, the present research will strive to consider both the occupational ideology of chefs (made up of the beliefs, values and norms of conduct that help chefs make sense of their world) *and* the cultural forms through which the occupation conveys its ideology to its members and perpetuates what 'being a chef' means to the individual (such as rites, rituals, stories and myths). Considering the heterogeneity of anthropological and sociological theories on cultural forms, the selection of a working definition for each cultural form was deemed essential to set the parameters of this study (see Table 4.1 and Appendix D).

Furthermore, an examination of theories of occupational culture formation has highlighted the widely-shared view amongst occupational researchers that occupational cultures are products of the social environment in which occupational members work and interact. In a similar vein, this study will benefit from an ethnographic examination of the tasks and problems to which chefs are confronted in their everyday lives, so as to understand the meanings behind chefs' beliefs, attitudes and norms. As Paoline (2003) suggested for the occupational police culture, the work environments of chefs may indeed shape what the occupational culture prescribes to its members, that is, the ways of coping with the strains of the environments (such as values, norms, practices and cultural forms) which, in turn, determine the outcomes of the culture in terms of the implications for the ways in which chefs are perceived by, and relate to, the 'outside world' (i.e. non-chefs).

Finally, the chapter has shown that an application of Mary Douglas's 'grid/group' analysis seems pertinent to the study of chefs' occupational culture in order to itemise

the components of the process of occupational culture formation and highlight the links between culture and behaviour (Mars, 1982; Mars and Nicod, 1984; Trice, 1993; Cameron *et al.*, 1999; Cameron, 2001). Applying Mary Douglas's model will also be useful to compare chefs' occupation with other occupational cultures which have already been analysed by sociologists and urban anthropologists, and from which much insight can be drawn. Although the chef literature already intimates a strong group identity and a strong grid dimension (see Chapter 5), the primary research will help empirically determine the nature of the occupational culture of (elite) chefs and their kitchen brigades in light of Mary Douglas's interrelated criteria.

5. The Occupational Identity and Culture of Chefs: Insights from the ‘Chef’ Literature

I want to tell you about the dark recesses of the restaurant underbelly – a subculture whose centuries-old militaristic hierarchy and ethos of ‘rum, buggery and the lash’ make for a mix of unwavering order and nerve-shattering chaos – because I find it all quite comfortable, like a nice warm bath. I can move around easily in this life. I speak the language.

(Bourdain, 2000: 3)

In his autobiographical novel *Kitchen Confidential*, New York chef Anthony Bourdain (2000) presents a detailed and vivid account of ‘kitchen life’ from an insider’s point of view. Despite the flourishing trend for chef biographies (White, 1990, 2006; Ladenis, 1997; Hennessy, 2000; Ramsay, 2006, 2007a; Simpson, 2006; Newkey-Burden, 2009) and other written accounts of both high-profile chefs and kitchen life (Ruhlman, 1997, 2001, 2006; Bramble, 1998; Mullan, 1998; Bourdain, 2001, 2006, 2010; Parkinson and Green, 2001; Dornenburg and Page, 2003; Kelly, 2003; Wright, 2005; Buford, 2006; Chelminski, 2006), *Kitchen Confidential* is unique in that it provides a particularly insightful depiction of the culture of professional cooking, whilst pointing to the importance of the kitchen environment in terms of understanding the identity of chefs. This kitchen environment is depicted in crude terms as a testosterone-heavy, male-dominated world, made up of individuals who find themselves on the fringe of society and running away from something in their life, or in Bourdain’s (2000: 61) words; ‘wacked-out moral degenerates, dope fiends, refugees, a thuggish assortment of drunks, sneak thieves, sluts and psychopaths’. Indeed, in his later work, Bourdain (2010: 57-8) goes on to further argue that:

Smoking weed at the end of the day is nearly always a good idea ... Treating despair with drugs and alcohol is a time-honored tradition ... if you look around you at the people you work with, many of them are – or will eventually be – alcoholics and drug abusers.

Besides, for Bourdain (2000: 124), chefs share a peculiar world-view, together with unusual customs, rituals and practices that define them as a ‘tribe’. Their unsocial working hours indeed contribute to their exclusion of ‘normal’ social interaction and their subsequent deep commitment to their colleagues, or what Bourdain (2000: 56) refers to as a ‘blind, near-fanatical loyalty ... under battlefield conditions’. Furthermore, according to Bourdain (2010: 209), ‘[t]he kitchen is the last meritocracy’. He pointedly remarks that:

Male, female, gay, straight, legal, illegal, country of origin – who cares? You can either cook an omelet or you can’t. ... There’s no lying in the kitchen. The restaurant kitchen may indeed be the last, glorious meritocracy – where anybody with the skills and the heart is welcomed (p. 53-4).

In addition, Bourdain illustrates the sense of communal solidarity that exists among chefs. Indeed, according to Bourdain (2000: 55), a chef ‘never shows up late, never calls in sick, and works through pain and injury’, although it is possible that chefs may actually do so out of awe and respect for the kitchen hierarchy. At the same time, Bourdain (2000: 293) presents a harsh portrait of chef culture where new recruits are treated as ‘cattle’, denied a personality, and where verbal insults about an individual’s personal circumstances, sexuality and physical appearance are commonplace. Such examples underpin Bourdain’s (2000: 3) description of the chef’s world as ‘...a culture whose centuries-old militaristic hierarchy and ethos of “rum, buggery and the lash” make for a mix of unwavering order and nerve-shattering chaos’.

In light of the paucity of academic studies addressing the occupation of chefs (see below), it is Bourdain’s novel which has stimulated the present researcher to conduct a more systematic and holistic investigation of this fascinating but little understood occupational culture. Yet, it is important to note the similarities between Bourdain’s autobiographical novel and George Orwell’s *Down and Out in Paris and London* (2003 [1933]) which, in effect, constitutes the first literary attempt to go behind the scenes of professional kitchens in 1920’s Paris and London. Although Orwell wrote about his experiences as a *plongeur* [dishwasher] and prep cook, at a time of the dole, depressed areas and malnutrition, the kitchen work he describes is characterised on the

basis of a rigid and extremely hierarchical division of labour, long shifts, low wages, intense heat, and lack of sanitation – characteristics that connect with Bourdain's (2000) more contemporary depictions of kitchen life. Particularly interesting is Orwell's (2003) description of the ambiguous social status of chefs and cooks and his attempt at deciphering their self-identity which, he argues, is intertwined with notions of craftsmanship and artistry. Orwell (2003 [1933]: 79) indeed explains that although less paid, chefs could enjoy higher prestige than waiters and would look down upon the whole non-cooking staff, highlighting the perceptions that cooks shared about the nature and importance of their job:

Undoubtedly the most workmanlike class, and the least servile, are the cooks. They do not earn quite as much as waiters, but their prestige is higher and their employment steadier. The cook does not look upon himself as a servant, but as a skilled workman; he is generally called '*un ouvrier*' [a workingman], which a waiter never is. He knows his [*sic*] power – knows that he alone makes or mars a restaurant, and that if he is five minutes late everything is out of gear. He despises the whole non-cooking staff, and makes it a point of honour to insult everyone below the head waiter. And he takes a genuine artistic pride in his work, which demands very great skill. ... He was an insufferable bully, but he was also an artist.

The value of autobiographies for an understanding of work identity should not be underestimated, a point also made by Strangleman (2005: 148) in his study of railway workers: '...oral histories and autobiography offer us access to a truth in both a subjective and objective sense and that it is a mistake to believe that we can jettison the one while valuing the other'. Since the emergence of the phenomenon of celebrity chefs which prompted Michelin-starred chefs to become more prominent on the media stage, the voices of elite chefs are heard more often. Many contemporary well-renowned chefs have commented upon the nature of the occupation and its culture, through both the media and their own publications. For Michelin-starred chef Marco Pierre White (1990: 12), the stigma and low status accorded to chefs has persisted whilst the occupation continues to attract under-achievers: 'The catering world in

Britain is like the French Foreign Legion; it's the last resort of the inadequate. Anyone who falls out of school falls into catering'. Similarly, Bourdain (2010: 61) points out that before cooking became 'cool'; it was portrayed as being 'for girls', or, 'for queers'. Furthermore, he asserts that: 'As chefs, we were proudly dysfunctional. We were misfits. And we knew we were misfits ... this was what had brought us to our profession, had made us what we were' (p.2). In addition, the Michelin-starred French chef Raymond Blanc (quoted in Barber, 2005: 24) pointedly remarks that:

To be a chef in Great Britain you have to have a frontal lobotomy and then your whole world is the low ceiling, the white tiles, the strip lights, the aluminium. So you can understand why the violence does happen, because none of these chefs have been trained to be a manager.

In line with Bourdain's (2000) US account, the Michelin-starred chef Gordon Ramsay corroborates the aggressive and violent behaviour that is part of the stereotype of professional kitchens in his own inimitable style: 'Kitchens aren't hairdressing salons or playgrounds. They're battlefields' (quoted in Delingpole, 2000: n/a). In other words: 'A kitchen has to be an assertive, boisterous, aggressive environment, or nothing happens' (quoted in Hollweg, 2001: 9). Perhaps more insightful still is Ramsay's observation that '...you need to get a beating to do well. Cooking is dog eat dog. The weak disappear off the face of the Earth' (quoted in Duncan 2001: 10).

Besides, for A.A. Gill, the restaurant critic who has worked in such kitchens: 'No other business would dare to treat its workers as they are treated in a restaurant kitchen' (quoted in Hennessy 2000: 67). As Gill (1997: 36) further observes:

It's a masculine place, incorrect, unfair, hierarchical. A hard-knock, sharp-edges, fat-and-fire place. That's not to say that women don't fit here, or are not respected, it's just that kitchens don't say please and thank you for a reason. You have to want to work in them very much indeed to get on here. This is not a place to have doubts, want a view, miss fresh air, [or] be squeamish ... Kitchens are tough because nobody can fail alone in them: everybody works together or they all fail together.

Yet, Gill (1997: 33) is perspicacious enough to point out that:

Outside, the world would be confusion to them, but the kitchen is the last workplace, apart from a museum and the law, to resist rationalisation and ergonomics and employ friendly psychology. A kitchen remains unreconstructed because it works, and because chefs like it this way.

As he explains, chefs sustain and defend their ‘Edwardian’ working conditions and resist any attempts to improve their hours, for they ‘take stoical pride in the assault course of the training in the school of hard knocks, branding burns, blistered feet and cirrlosed livers’ (Gill, 1997: 96). Similarly, for Hennessy (2000: 67), it is the chefs themselves who perpetuate the system through an obsession described as being akin to a religious ‘calling’, to the extent that ‘...any suggested amelioration to the madness of the normal kitchen tends to be opposed by the inmates themselves’. Besides, according to Bourdain (2007: 267), kitchen life may be likened to being aboard a ‘pirate ship’, while *the life* of a chef/cook is akin to being a member of organised crime. He pointedly remarks:

Being a chef or a cook is like being in the Mafia: once in, never out. ... Everywhere in the world, wherever people cook, there’s a look that chefs and cooks give you that transcends language: It says, ‘This is what I do. This is who I am. This is where I come from. This is my story – right here – on this plate...’

Despite such pertinent comments from the occupation’s insiders, no systematic academic study has ever been conducted to understand the identity of chefs from the point of view of the work culture. The Scottish chef Gordon Ramsay has described the rules and norms of chef life as ‘the knowledge’. Specifically he states: ‘[t]his job is the pits when you’re learning. You have to bow down and stay focused until the *knowledge* is tucked away’ (quoted in Duncan 2001: 10, emphasis added). Ramsay’s concept of ‘the knowledge’ is important as it points to the systematic transference of culture, identity and belonging between group members (see also Palmer *et al.*, 2010).

It is precisely these cultural processes by which occupational identity is formed that constitute the subject of investigation of this study.

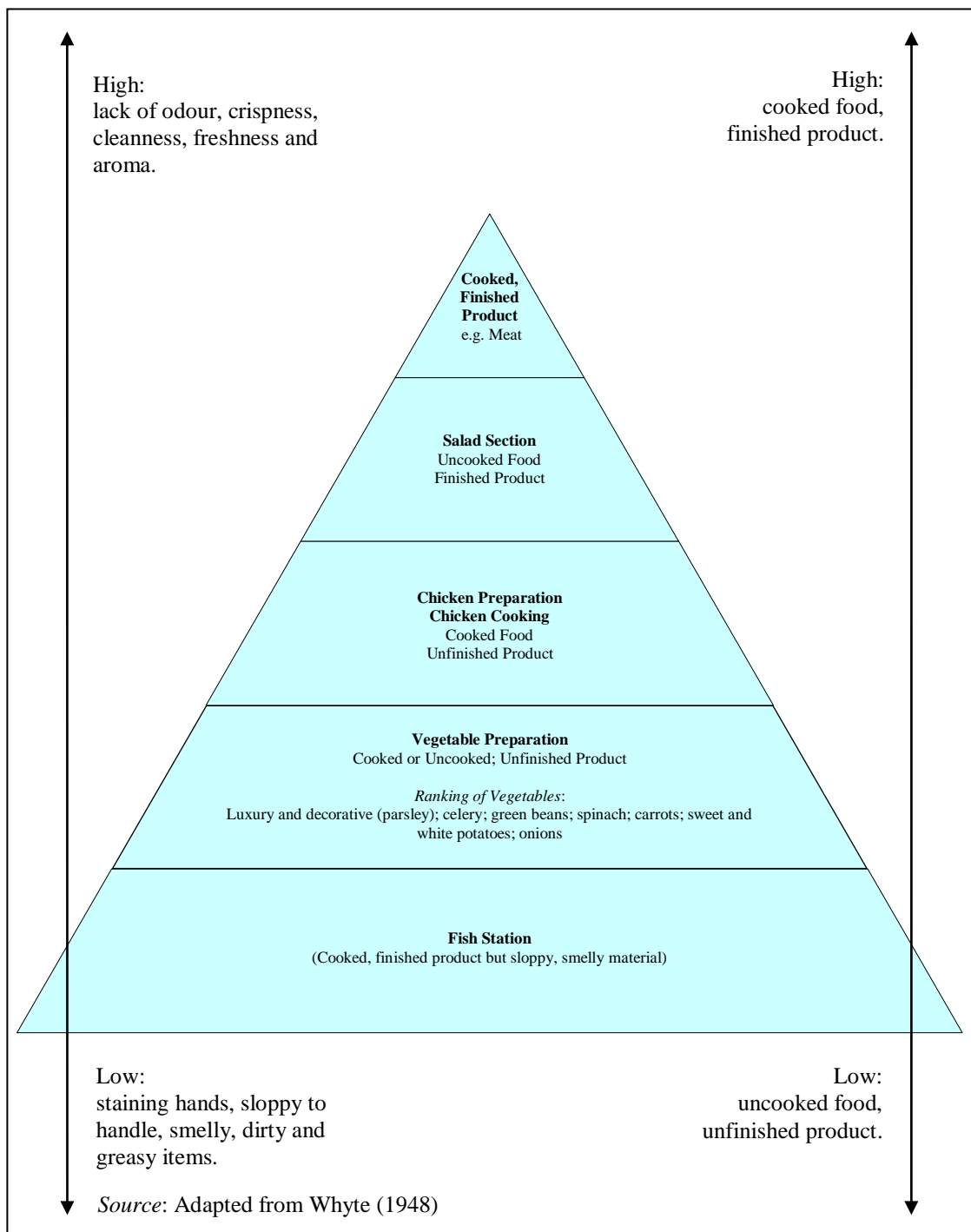
The remainder of this section aims to review existing academic literature on the occupation of chefs, from which it is possible to derive some interesting (but limited) insights about the identity and culture of chefs.

EARLY ACADEMIC INSIGHTS INTO THE OCCUPATION OF CHEFS AND COOKS

As highlighted earlier, the first systematic investigation of hotel and catering labour was Whyte's (1948, 1949) ethnographic study of human relations in which he offers insights into the conflictual relationships and status problems experienced by employees working in the kitchen and restaurant of a large Chicago restaurant.

More importantly for our purposes, however, is Whyte's (1948) discovery of the existence of both an official and informal status scale within the kitchen brigade. Whyte's observations revealed the characteristics of the materials which kitchen workers held in high or low esteem, which ultimately helped them decipher the degree of prestige and status associated with the different food stations (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Whyte's (1948) hierarchy of food materials as identified in one Chicago restaurant



More importantly, still, is the close association between Whyte's hierarchy of foodstuffs and the formal hierarchy of the *partie* system as summarised by Fuller (1981). The *partie system*, the origins of which are traced back to French chef Georges Auguste

Escoffier (1846-1935)⁶, still provides the basis of food production, notably in *haute cuisine* restaurants, and involves a division of labour based on particular foodstuffs and parts of the meal. Fuller (1981) postulates a useful generic hierarchy for the kitchen brigade, running from *chef de cuisine* (head chef) through the *sous chef* to the *chefs de partie* – i.e. the sauce cook, larder cook, pastry cook, fish cook, vegetable cook. As Saunders (1981a) acknowledges, there exists a variety of practical interpretations of the *partie* system, since variations in food organisation and kitchen hierarchy are a function of the type of the restaurant concerned and the market in which it operates. Yet, as Wood (1997: 85) points out, there is evidence to suggest that the *partie* system persists, however weakly, in many hotels and restaurants (including smaller units), for its emphasis on specialisation helps guarantee interdependency and teamwork, whilst fostering ‘individual skill and responsibility that allows for controlled creativity within a bureaucratic work structure’.

Whyte’s (1948) work was followed ten years later by a conceptual study by American occupational sociologist Edward Gross (1958), drawing exclusively on secondary sources of information. Following Whyte (1948), Gross (1958) sets out to analyse restaurant work sociologically, through an examination of the distinctive characteristics of restaurants, including the combination of production and service inherent to restaurant work which affects workers’ interaction and creates tensions. In addition, Gross draws heavily upon novelist George Orwell’s (1933) first-hand experiences of kitchen life in the 1920’s, to show how the highly variable nature of production and service creates ‘peaks of activity’, whilst requiring a high degree of co-ordination and synchronisation from the workers.

Particularly insightful is Gross’s (1958: 381) observation that the ‘closeness of articulation’ of kitchen work activities means that cooks and other kitchen workers are unlikely to experience a feeling of meaninglessness of work – even those at the very bottom of the kitchen hierarchy who undertake menial and repetitive tasks. Gross (1958: 380) nevertheless points to the relative low status of restaurant and kitchen workers in the ‘outside world’, but acknowledges that, unlike other cooks

⁶ Herbodeau and Thalamas (1955) point out that this division already existed to a certain extent and that Escoffier redefined it more closely. Traditionally there had been a number of sections, each responsible for a category of dishes but working independently of each other. Conversely, Escoffier organised his kitchen into five interdependent parties, each responsible for a type of operation as opposed to a type of dish (Taylor, 1977; Mennell, 1996).

and kitchen workers, head chefs tend to enjoy the prestige and economic position of professionals: ‘The chef is a highly skilled professional. ... In some respects he [*sic*] is the kingpin of the whole organisation and sets the tone of the restaurant. He is often regarded and regards himself as a *prima donna*’.

Perhaps more importantly, Gross highlights the key role of informal work groups in generating fellowship and understanding, and providing kitchen and restaurant workers with a sense of belonging, which may indeed suggest the existence of an occupational culture. Although his findings are not validated by empirical research, Gross’s work provides some interesting comments about the social environment of chefs and cooks, which, as the literature review on occupational culture (see Chapter 4) has highlighted, must be examined carefully since occupational groups tend to develop beliefs, values and attitudes in response to the social context of work (see for example Rothman, 1998; Paoline, 2003).

Drawing upon 25 case studies of large to medium-sized hotels throughout the UK (based on interviews with management and staff representatives and a 10% sample of all hotel employees at each hotel stratified by occupation), the report produced by the CIR (1971) was one of the first studies to highlight chefs as an occupational group by detailing what differentiates them from other hotel workers. Indeed, while the CIR found the hotel industry workforce as a whole to be highly status-conscious, competitive and individualistic (an attitude linked to their identifying with the aspirations of management in terms of career aspirations), the CIR also suggested that chefs tend to demonstrate greater cohesiveness and solidarity than other hotel workers. Such cohesiveness and solidarity was hypothesised to be attributable to three factors: the collaborative ‘teamwork’ involved in hotel and restaurant cookery; the craft orientation of chefs which leads them to feel superior to the other hotel workers who lack any formal training; and chefs’ removal from the realm of service which excludes them from tips and other informal rewards. With regard to the collaborative nature of chefs’ work, the CIR argues that chefs’ work takes place in a single location (often a small and confined environment) and by definition needs a collective, interdependent approach to labour, in accordance with the *partie* system. In addition, the CIR linked chefs’ collaborative approach to work to the fact that, in most hotels and restaurants, the

kitchen brigade is commanded by a head chef instead of a traditional manager, which leads to allegiance not only to the craft but also to the occupational group as a whole.

As Wood (1997) points out, later studies (e.g. Bowey 1976; Education and Training Advisory Council [ETAC], 1983; Gabriel 1988) have subsequently provided evidence that corroborates the findings of the CIR (1971), notably with regards to the first two characteristics of chefs (i.e. their craft orientation and collaborative teamwork). Particularly relevant, however, is Chivers's (1972, 1973) work, based on survey responses from 629 chefs and cooks⁷ (working in hotels, restaurants, clubs and hospitals in London and the West Midlands), in which the author focuses on the meanings of the occupation to its members, through an assessment of occupational choice and expectations, and corresponding class consciousness. Despite its focus on the structural aspects of work, Chivers's (1972, 1973) study is nevertheless valuable for the purposes of this study, for it offers some insights into chefs' and cooks' occupational culture, whilst providing an account of the historical development of their trade and the pros and cons of their jobs, which recalls Orwell's (2003 [1933]) classic descriptions of kitchen life in *Down and Out In Paris and London*.

In his review of Chivers's (1973) work, Bagguley (1987: 22) explains how Chivers's paper was intended as an intervention in the 'embourgeoisement' debate in British sociology of the 1960's and early 1970's, and an attempt to demonstrate, through the case of chefs and cooks, the relevance of the classical Marxist concept of proletarianisation for debates on changes in contemporary working class consciousness. Chivers indeed sets out to establish whether cooks form part of the working class or whether they have realistic chances of moving into the middle class, and concludes that there are four features of the chefs' and cook's work culture and work situation which should delay the development of class consciousness and hinder the effects of deskilling and proletarianisation evident in the occupation (Bagguley, 1987).

Firstly, Chivers (1973) suggests that chefs/cooks typically have *an orientation to service* in the sense that they derive work satisfaction from customers' appreciation of the food they cook. Secondly, Chivers refers to *the dedication to task* of the chefs/cooks who feel that their work is skilled, interesting and offers substantial scope for expressing their abilities, to the extent that for some chefs/cooks, 'cooking has become a way of life,

⁷ Many of the chefs and cooks under study worked in upmarket establishments or 'establishments of the elaborate menu' in Chivers's (1972: 148) terms.

for the work was always in their thoughts, even out of working hours' (Chivers, 1973: 636). Thirdly, Chivers points to *the status differences between 'chefs' and 'cooks'* as some 'chefs'⁸ see themselves as an elite serving an upper-class clientele in quality establishments and therefore differentiate themselves from the ordinary 'cooks' of more popular establishments. Chivers explains that these status differences, which have deep historical roots, undermine the perception of a homogenous occupation and therefore thwart the development of a working-class consciousness. Yet, as Wood (1997) pointedly remarks, it is not clear whether such status difference is similarly rationalised by chefs and cooks working in less prestigious establishments.

Although Chivers's (1973) study is now significantly dated, some of the above features may still characterise the working conditions of some chefs and cooks in the lower echelons of the industry, and may indeed have contributed to the low status (or stigma?) accorded to the cooking and food service professions which has long prevailed (see Herbodeau and Thalamas, 1955; Gross, 1958; Page and Kingsford, 1971; Saunders, 1981a; Gabriel, 1988; Fine, 1996a; Mennell, 1996; Trubek, 2000; Wildes, 2005).

What is more, Chivers's (1972) unpublished PhD thesis is valuable for its depiction of chefs' and cooks' culture, particularly his observation that chefs' and cooks' dedication to task and genuine interest in their work generate occupational solidarity – a finding which further corroborates the claim advanced by the CIR (1971) that chefs' work is characterised by a high degree of co-operation. Chivers's findings indeed suggest that chefs' and cooks' craft orientation and sense of status superiority are closely related to their team-oriented approach to work. In addition, Chivers argues that the nature of hotel and catering work (notably the unsociable hours) encourages patterns of friendship within the trade, whilst the occupational focus on craft offers opportunities for self-improvement, through the sharing of experiences and ideas, and advancement through the development of social networks. This strong craft orientation is also, according to Chivers, responsible for homogenising the attitudes of occupational members, making the culture of the occupation appear highly generalised. In his review of Chivers's (1972) work, Wood (1997: 88) contends that this 'relatively uniform and highly systematic approach to work' is 'perhaps most

⁸ The word 'chef' is to be understood in the sense that members of the kitchen brigade are referred to as 'chefs' in accordance with the *partie* system, i.e. *chef de partie*, *sous chef*, *chef de cuisine* (Fuller, 1981).

obviously experienced by the outsider in terms of the perception of chefs as arrogant, superior and self-serving', as the following quote from Chivers (1972: 161) illustrates:

...casual remarks dropped in the course of conversation ... suggested alleged errors in cooking were mostly the customer's rather than the cook's fault, that head chefs/cooks, not managers, should say how the kitchen is to be organised and operated, that waiters are sometimes 'beggars in uniform'⁹...

Chivers also suggests that the pressure under which the kitchen is placed, especially by waiting staff, can lead to chefs and cooks losing their temper. Chivers argues that these anger outbreaks may add to the camaraderie of the kitchen since friendship and harmony must survive temporary divisions in order for the kitchen to continue to function properly. Chivers further suggests that temper loss may also be a useful strategy for reinforcing the temporary independence of an individual or that of the kitchen as a whole (in the case of arguments with waiters, for example). Yet, Wood (1997: 86) is right to point out that Chivers fails to acknowledge that 'the cultural stereotype of the temperamental chef may actually lead to a situation where such behaviour is expected and where the expectation ... serves as an institutionalised form of defusing conflict between individuals'. The prevalence of such 'highly formalised ethic of behaviour', combined with the fact that head chefs often have 'god-like status' (Wood, 1997: 86), therefore contribute to limiting the scope for dissent within the occupational group and perpetuating what Johns and Menzel (1999) refer to as 'myths' in their study of kitchen violence.

Also particularly insightful is Chivers's (1972: 158-9) notion that chefs and cooks develop cosmopolitan occupational *communities*, in the sense proposed by Salaman (1974) (see Chapter 3), because of high occupational mobility and the necessity for work-based social networks – an insight he derived from both his findings and his own personal experience in the trade. On the subject of job mobility and career aspirations, Chivers's findings also provide an interesting account of chefs' and cooks' awareness of the clearly demarcated career structures that are available to them in the hotel and catering industry. Indeed, whilst many respondents to his study cited the

⁹ The phrase 'beggars in uniform' is also quoted in HCEDC (1969: 40).

ownership of a restaurant as a business goal, most of them also cited career cooking as their second-choice career choice, which, according to Chivers, reflects more realistic assessments on the part of his respondents. Thus, as Wood (1997) remarks, chefs are all the more likely to maintain a strong craft orientation and status superiority because their career structures encompass clearly defined alternatives in terms of opportunities to acquire skills and increase status.

Unlike waiters, for example, whose most natural progression involves working for high-quality restaurants (where the tipping potential is higher), the career choices that chefs are faced with in the commercial sector are largely determined by the state of the market for their skills (Wood, 1997). Indeed, fewer senior positions tend to exist for chefs in the commercial sector, notably in high-quality establishments such as Michelin-starred restaurants. Accessing superior and/or better-paid posts may therefore involve chefs accepting to work in a small/low market unit, where they are likely to miss out on the opportunity to exercise their skills and climb the professional ladder. As Wood (1997) notes, the career options for chefs in the commercial sector are therefore three-fold and involve either being promoted to a senior position in a high-class establishment (limited opportunities), remaining a member of the kitchen brigade in either a high-class or a less prestigious establishment, or taking up a senior position in a smaller and/or low market establishment. Similarly, the chef's dilemma in the commercial sector is neatly summarised by Bowey (1976: 136) as follows:

They are taken on as 'commis chefs' and trained as chefs, being promoted to posts carrying higher responsibility as their skills and experience increase. They also move from restaurant to restaurant seeking to move each time to a higher status restaurant where the food preparation is more intricate and therefore the skills learned more valuable. The differentials between the different grades of chef become increasingly more substantial as the skill level of the chef increases. ... however, a chef who is, say, three grades below the head chef in a high status restaurant may earn more money by accepting a head chef's job in a lower status perhaps smaller restaurant. If he [*sic*] does this he is likely to find himself without the opportunities for practicing and developing many of his skills, and his chances of reaching the top of his profession are lessened.

Still in the UK context, Saunders (1981b: 17) dedicated an article to chefs focusing on ‘the specific influences on occupational role performance’ in the kitchen, through an examination of ‘symbols, traditions, customs and culture’. However, the article constitutes repeated material from his book, *The Social Stigma of Occupations* (Saunders, 1981a: 119-122), in which he also addresses the history of professional cooking and the *partie system*. The sources of information upon which Saunders relies are not clearly acknowledged when it comes to the work situation of chefs, since the primary data collected essentially concerns the stigmatised occupation of the kitchen porter (i.e. a survey conducted in 11 West Midland cities and towns with kitchen porters in 70 hotels¹⁰). Saunders’s comments are nevertheless remarkably insightful especially as he acknowledges the lack of existing data on the occupational culture and identity of chefs: ‘When it comes to symbols in kitchens and indeed social interaction in general there, we may discover a most fertile but as yet little researched field for the behavioural scientist’ (Saunders, 1981b: 14).

Saunders (1981b: 17) identifies ‘learned occupational behaviour’ and ‘the cultural influences of the work setting’ as the two specific influences on the role performance of chefs. In particular, Saunders highlights the formality of both the authority system and the roles and behaviour of the social actors themselves, as illustrated in the fact that the head chef is expected by the members of the brigade to act in a traditional authoritative manner – a behaviour which the brigade members will, in time, also emulate themselves. Such beliefs, attitudes and behaviour are, according to Saunders, derived from the occupational socialisation process to which newcomers are initiated and are subsequently reinforced by unwritten rules and practices within the kitchen culture. In Saunders’s (1981a: 121) words:

Among chefs, at least, the occupational affinity derives from an early occupational conditioning process, when the apprentice first enters the kitchen, and this is reinforced by customs, norms and practices that emphasise professional conduct and attire, as well as possible sanctions against an offender. The elaboration of formal roles and behaviour that conform to the unwritten sub-cultural codes

¹⁰ Saunders’s (1981a) research constitutes an extension of his 1976 unpublished MPhil thesis, *Occupational Stigmatisation in the British Hotel and Catering Industry* (Saunders, 1976).

appears, therefore, to matter more than the oft-quoted informal groups referred to in management theory.

As the above quote shows, Saunders believes that chefs' compliance with formal roles and behaviour results in reduced scope for the formation of informal group ties, but this assertion is highly questionable in light of the camaraderie and friendship patterns that had already been reported to prevail in the kitchen environment, at the time of Saunders's writing (see CIR, 1971; Chivers, 1972, 1973).

Saunders further illustrates his point that formal roles and behaviour are still being adhered to, with the example of the head chef purposively generating conflict or expressing resentment and contempt towards the waiters/waitresses who are seen as unfairly taking the credit for all the hard work that the kitchen puts into the production of the meal experience. Saunders (1981a: 121) explains that the head chef's attitude towards the servers is in fact expected of the head chef by the brigade members who are in turn induced into perpetuating the 'feud', in order to reaffirm the ideology of the occupational group. As Saunders (1981a: 121) notes:

The head chef is recognised as the principal social actor from whom the general attitude towards restaurant people derives. ... Thus, the battle of the hotplate goes on between chefs and waiters as all the kitchen brigade take their cue from the master. Were he not to give such a lead, the others of the brigade might even mistrust him. Were these others not to participate in open or symbolic abuse, it would be looked upon as an unforgivable weakness.

It is clear from the above comments that Saunders's thesis is rooted in the Goffmanesque tradition. For example, in a manner which recalls Goffman's (1959) discussion of impression management, Saunders (1981a: 121) argues that chefs perform the traditional role that is expected of them by acting out the stereotype of the volatile foreign chef which they are likely to have encountered (directly or indirectly) during their occupational enculturation – i.e. by 'gesticulat[ing] with his [*sic*] hands and put[ing] on a foreign accent' if 'he is English'. According to Saunders (1981a: 121), the degree to which cultural norms are ingrained in chefs' behaviour is further illustrated in brigade

members' tacit acceptance of head chefs' aggressive and tyrannical behaviour: 'The head chef may well be a tyrant, but the brigade members will work with him and show him deference, because the accepted sub-culture associates aggressiveness with expertise'. Similarly, Saunders (1981a: 121) points to other cultural elements which can signal to brigade members the professional competence and degree of cultural initiation of a newly appointed head chef:

Enter a new chef and he [*sic*] is viewed with suspicion until the group has seen the quantity and quality of his knives and other tools, seen his monogrammed whites and his well-laundered hats; and, above all, seen his degrees of skill, exhibited by the speed of cutting and slicing, by his understanding of a French service and French phrases, the mispronunciation of which is quite acceptable.

In addition to these symbolic indicators of expertise and cultural enculturation, Saunders (1981a: 122) describes how the status distinction between chefs is symbolically expressed through dress codes:

White trousers are immediately associated with H.M. Forces or Hospital catering and not acceptable. ... The height of a chef's hat indicates his [*sic*] rank in the social order, while small, sensible paper or cloth hats are associated with 'cowboys'. Aprons must be of a length just below the knee as if worn above the knee they are associated with the worst American cookery, or a lack of feeling for food. ... It is also the custom for a chef to have a number of kitchen cloths swirling from his apron, although needed for functional reasons, but this conveys the impression that he is very busy and it registers an atmosphere of service-giving. ... Collar and tie is worn only by the head chef, who also wears shoes when other staff wear clogs or boots.

Even though some of above symbols and customs may no longer be significant in the realm of modern professional cooking, Saunders's comments are nonetheless interesting for they convey chefs' cultural tendency to attach meanings to a variety of artefacts and uniforms. With his focus on cultural traditions, customs and informal codes, Saunders

provides directly relevant insights into the occupational identity and culture of chefs, however dated. Yet, Saunders did not intend to systematically investigate kitchen culture, as illustrated in his failing to acknowledge the means through which he gathered the data relating to chefs. It is nevertheless possible to infer that Saunders witnessed chefs' behaviour whilst studying the work situation of the kitchen porter, and thus presents his observations as a side issue in his book. His remarks nonetheless offer a noteworthy glimpse of the occupational ideology and identity of chefs, whilst noting the need for more research in the field.

In the US context, Guyette's (1981) study also provides some interesting insights into chefs' self-concept and occupational identity, despite its exclusive reliance on hotel executive chefs. Guyette (1981: 72) indeed sets out to investigate the extent to which chefs' occupational identity relates to their management skills for, as he suggests, the 'divergence in the roles and responsibilities of the executive chef, who is on one hand a culinary artist and on the other a business manager, is a significant if often overlooked, problem in the hospitality industry'. Based on a survey sent to both hotel general managers and executive chefs (at the same establishments), Guyette highlighted that, while general managers and executive chefs agreed on what constituted desirable managerial and operational skills, the two groups significantly differed in their perceptions of how well executive chefs practised these skills. For example, 87% of chefs rated their organising skills as good or very good compared to 61% of general managers, whilst 90% of chefs judged themselves good or very good planners compared to 63% of their general managers. Interestingly, some 78% of general managers believed their chefs managed people ineffectively and 98.6% felt that chefs' managerial skills needed improving. In particular, general managers' main complaints were that chefs were poor at interviewing, initiation of work simplification, supervisory training and prevention of employee grievances. Yet, both chefs and managers found chefs to be most deficient in conducting productive staff meetings, counselling employees in non-work problems and using different leadership styles (Guyette 1981: 73-4).

In his analysis, Guyette highlights chefs' propensity to overrate themselves compared to general managers' assessments, which, Guyette argues, is the result of historical factors and notably the adoption of the European guild system within the US catering industry. The guild system is indeed 'a kind of master-servant relationship ... between

the head chef and his apprentices' (Guyette, 1981: 75) whereby apprentices are induced to develop culinary skills and internalise the authoritarian and the autocratic characteristics displayed by the head chefs, but not to develop modern managerial skills. In addition, Guyette points to the promotional process of the cooking profession which emphasises the importance of technical and culinary skills and encourages chefs to discount the importance of management skills. This situation is further aggravated by chefs' tendency to avoid situations where deficiencies in their management skills would be exposed, therefore leading to their becoming alienated from upper management. In response to the chefs' managerial inadequacies, Guyette found that general managers seek to control the work activities of chefs (through various quantitative measures such as food costs or labour costs to evaluate chefs' performance) rather than confront the problems directly.

The alienation of head chefs from hotel/restaurant managers has also been recognised as a significant managerial challenge within the UK hotel and catering industry (see Fuller, 1981). As early as 1978, Shamir remarked that it is often taken for granted by managers themselves that the kitchen department is the 'chef's kitchen'. In Shamir's (1978: 296) words: 'The kitchen is viewed as the chef's territory and hotel managers can be observed asking his [*sic*] permission to enter'. Similarly, more recent evidence (Pratten, 2003a; Johnson *et al.*, 2005) has pointed to chefs' lack of communication skills which may lead to alienation and have a detrimental effect upon relations with management. Furthermore, the lack of communication between chefs and managers has also been confirmed by Murray-Gibbons and Gibbons (2007) in their recent quantitative study with 40 chefs in Northern Ireland. Murray-Gibbons and Gibbons (2007) indeed provide evidence to suggest that the occupational stress experienced by chefs is primarily linked to communication issues with management, such as a lack of feedback on performance, a feeling of being undervalued and insufficient management support. Although this study is not concerned with management issues *per se*, the author is of the opinion that managers may well be able to improve relations with head chefs through a better understanding of the occupational culture of chefs. The insights generated by this study may therefore be of significant relevance to managers in the hotel and catering industry.

Research that is more closely focused on the identity and culture of chefs and cooks has been carried out in the US by American sociologist Gary Alan Fine (1985, 1987a, 1987b, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1995; 1996a, 1996b), although the latter chose not to study the kitchens of *elite* chefs, where chefs have a more self-conscious aesthetic orientation linked to the existence of greater cultural capital¹¹ (Bourdieu, 1984; Durand *et al.*, 2007; Stierand and Lynch, 2008). Most of the aforementioned published works are based on fieldwork data, collected in the 1980's through participant observation in four Minnesota restaurants, i.e. one French *haute cuisine* restaurant (albeit not in a primary cultural centre), one continental-style restaurant, one steakhouse and one chain hotel. Fine's (1996a) book, *Kitchens: The Culture of Restaurant Work*, is a useful synopsis of most of Fine's work for it encompasses the content of many of his published articles (1987a, 1990, 1992, 1995; 1996b).

A common theme throughout his work is the influence of the organisational and institutional environment of the kitchen on chefs' and cooks' behaviour. In addition, a symbolic interactionist perspective clearly underpins Fine's thesis, notably his notion that social reality is a product of a continual process of negotiation which can be observed in the work activities and behaviour of chefs and cooks. As Nelsen (1999: 197) explains in his pertinent review of Fine's (1996a) book, Fine is concerned with showing how economic and cultural forces affect kitchen work, whilst depicting chefs and cooks as 'actors who purposefully and continually renegotiate social meanings in the face of forces and demands quite beyond their control'. An illustration of this can be found in the first five chapters of his book which, respectively, describe the division of labour in the kitchen environment (see also Fine, 1987a), the temporal demands of restaurant cooking (see also Fine, 1990), the physical and spatial aspects of cooking, the community of kitchen workers, and the impact of broader economic forces on kitchen work.

¹¹ Whilst Pierre Bourdieu (1984) uses food consumption in France as an indication of the cultural capital of the eater, food preparation may also be regarded as an indicator of the cultural capital of the cook/chef. The chefs and cooks who are more attuned to the dishes of *haute cuisine* therefore have more cultural capital than ordinary cooks in lower market establishments (Fine, 1996a), hence possible differences in their respective self-concepts.

For example, Fine (1987a, 1996a) shows how, despite forms of social control (such as time constraints and the conflicting needs of employers and clients), chefs/cooks make their lives on the job more tolerable and more satisfying through various routine techniques, which he describes as shortcuts, tricks of the trade and approximations (i.e. trade-offs in quality which cooks were observed to resort to if pressed for time). Similarly, Fine (1990: 111) demonstrates how the organisation of temporal life in kitchens, including rushed periods and slow-down times, can ‘provide insight into the ways in which workers attempt to structure their jobs to make them self-satisfying and to provide themselves with some form of autonomy’. Temporal constraints are shown to influence the performance of work, which in turn influences the experience of work and results in a range of emotional reactions, including anger during rushed periods, and boredom during slow periods. Fine (1990: 105) argues that these emotional responses are, in effect, coping strategies for chefs and cooks to regain control over extreme temporal conditions, as illustrated in the case of anger:

...anger permits temporal organisation to be mastered by participants: it lets them “go on to the rest of the night”. By becoming angry one concludes a frustrating event, and provides for an opportunity for the reestablishment of rhythm. Whether this catharsis is effective is less significant than that it is believed to be so. Anger is seen as a means of achieving temporal stability and coping with the behavioural reality of the kitchen.

The cathartic use of anger may therefore account for chefs’ and cooks’ relative tolerance of such emotional displays, which, Fine (1996a: 133) explains, ‘need not be tied to the self, except when the display is too frequent or dramatic’. As one informant indeed stated: ‘Everyone screams at each other, and right away after work it’s all forgotten and everybody’s buddy-buddy’ (Fine, 1996a: 133). Conversely, Fine (1988) identifies playful behaviour as a coping strategy employed by chefs and cooks to keep themselves motivated during slow periods.

But the negotiated nature of social reality is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in Fine’s (1985, 1992, 1996a) consideration of how chefs’ and cook’s aesthetic sensibilities are constrained by broader environmental forces, such as customer taste, time constraints

and the economics of the restaurant industry. As the above comments have made clear, an emphasis on the structural aspects of work roles tends to predominate throughout Fine's analysis, although some more directly relevant insights can also be derived from his work, notably the ambiguous status of cooking as an occupation and related issues of self-concept, the artistic sensitivities of chefs and cooks, the use of occupational 'rhetorics' for identity work, and the formation of local kitchen communities (or 'idiocultures'). Each of these aspects will now be considered in detail in what follows.

One important theme emerging from Fine's fieldwork is the ambiguous nature of cooking, ambiguous in terms of the status and meaning of the occupation within society. Indeed, while cooking as a job can mean different things and involve a variety of activities – a point also highlighted by Schroedl's (1972) undergraduate piece of participant observation – the status of the occupation is also shown to significantly vary according to the type of cooking involved (e.g. school meals or restaurant cuisine) and the standing and market niche of the establishment in which one works. Despite such variations, Fine's (1996a: x) research points to chefs' and cooks' awareness of the overall negative image and low status of cooking as an occupation, which is often linked to a certain lack of understanding of what the job is really about:

My informants were convinced that the world outside the kitchen walls did not understand their working conditions and did not appreciate their skills or the pressures and troubles they experienced. They believed that the public thought of them as drunken and loud, as bums.

Fine's observations are consonant with the work of other authors (see Gross, 1958; Chivers, 1972, 1973; Saunders, 1981a; Gabriel, 1988; Mennell, 1996; Trubek, 2000) who also identified the low status and stigma of the occupation of cooking. According to Fine, the ambiguous status of the occupation is all the more apparent in the coexistence of two distinctive and superficially contradictory images in the public's mind: that of the volatile, drunken and ignorant chef and that of the artistic chef. Fine (1996a: 42) found such ambivalence to have implications for chefs' and cooks' sense of self-worth and identity, as illustrated in the case of one informant displaying 'an embarrassment bordering on self-loathing, revealing pride mixed with defensiveness'.

Drawing upon the work of occupational sociologist Hughes (1971), Fine (1996a) shows that chefs and cooks are compelled to develop strategies to cope with these public attitudes and regain a sense of pride and identity from their work. As he further argues, it is through their skills and the beautiful and artistic aspects of what they produce that chefs and cooks are able to learn to identify with their occupation. In Fine's (1996a: 44) terms: 'Through these skills and their public display, cooks persuade themselves that they matter in an industrial order that sometimes disregards them; they are worthy of self-respect and honour, achieving things of which others only dream'.

Chefs' and cooks' concern for aesthetics is indeed a recurrent theme in Fine's work (1985, 1992, 1995, 1996a). According to Fine (1987a: 151), although an industrial occupation, cooking provides an opportunity for cooks to express themselves aesthetically, since '[f]ood must not merely be edible and nutritious, but also look, smell, taste and feel "good"'. Fine's informants were indeed found to have craft and artistic standards by which they judged their products and performance, and from which they derived aesthetic satisfaction and pride. Even in routine dishes, aesthetics can be central to the self-esteem and occupational identity of chefs and cooks, a trait which was found to apply to both the steakhouse and the *haute cuisine* restaurant.

While a concern for occupational aesthetic standards is always present, Fine (1985, 1987a, 1992, 1996a) points to the three main constraints on aesthetics in professional cooking which restrict chefs' and cooks' creative autonomy; that is, taste (customers' expectations and demands), time constraints (organisation efficiency) and cost (the economics of the restaurant industry). Nevertheless, Fine acknowledges that the status and market niche of the establishment in which one works also influences workers' aesthetic concerns. With their emphasis on food excellence, the chefs and cooks of *haute cuisine* restaurants (such as Michelin-starred restaurants) are less likely to let the above issues come in the way of their own culinary standards, although, as Fine (1992: 1274) suggests, 'independent standards cannot radically vary from the demands of their customers, even for elite chefs ... and there are critical situations in which clients' demands take precedence...'. Fine notes that having to prepare food for an audience that may not share their aesthetic standards, or may not even be aware of their existence, can be a source of tensions. Although Fine does not go as far as suggesting that the situation may in fact generate chefs' and cooks' resentment of, and lack of

respect for, customers, Fattorini (1994) and Wood (2000: 136) point to high-profile chefs' disregard for customers (and food critics), 'and a self-belief that not only is the customer not always right, they never are'; to the extent that, for Michelin-starred chefs such as Marco Pierre White and Nico Ladenis, it is quite legitimate to eject 'difficult' and 'awkward' customers from one's restaurant (see White, 1990; Ladenis 1997). Interestingly, a similar phenomenon is at play (see Chapter 4) in the culture of jazz musicians, as highlighted by Becker (1951, 1963), in which the latter were shown to express hostility and contempt towards their audiences whose musical tastes differed from their own aesthetic sensitivities.

To Fine (1987a, 1992, 1995), it is the necessity to take customer taste into account which differentiates cooking from the higher reaches of the fine arts, although the lack of an aesthetic theory and the absence of both an active social network and recognised institutional gate-keepers, also preclude the development of a ubiquitous culinary art world. While most cooks' sense of what is aesthetically pleasing is implicit, Fine nevertheless recognises that one might discover a culinary art world in small sectors of the hospitality industry in the major culinary centres of New York, Paris and Lyon, for example, whereby more elaborate, artistic discussion among chefs may be found. That 'the higher levels of the occupation do merge with the fine arts' (Fine, 1985: 6) is all the more pertinent for this study for it hints at the saliency of aesthetics for the occupational identity of chefs and cooks working in *haute cuisine* restaurants (see also Revel, 1982).

It is also interesting at this stage to relate Fine's observations to other studies which have similarly noted the aesthetic sensitivity of chefs and cooks and its importance to their occupational identity. Thus, in his historical study of associations and journals among chefs at the top end of the restaurant trade in France and England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Mennell (1996: 169) notes that:

...however miserable the pay and conditions of the majority, the cooks, although they seem to have had a clear sense of their identity as an occupational group, showed little taste for confrontation with the employers or willingness to take industrial action. The peculiarity of the emphasis on the need for progress, improvement, achievement in cookery as such was that this was seen as a

collective enterprise, something that would be achieved by collaboration among cooks proud of their art.

Using quantitative research methods, Petersen and Birg (1988) similarly documented the persistence of artistry and creativity in the occupational self-conception of top American chefs. Peterson and Birg (1988: 67-68) questioned 62 chefs in Chicago (of which 14% were in hotels, 29% in restaurants, 23% in country clubs and 16% in corporations) and found that 92% of respondents claimed they were artistic, with corporate chefs considering themselves least so and restaurant chefs, country club chefs and hotel chefs most so. Petersen and Birg also highlight the apparent conflict in the ideology of chefs which simultaneously emphasises the importance of personal style and constancy of taste (see also Leschziner, 2007). Respondents perceived that this problem was resolved in creativity, as 98% considered themselves creative in the sense of designing new presentations, recipes and dishes, whilst still ensuring that their brigades consistently replicated dishes in the chef's own individual style. In addition, Petersen and Birg note that the occupational ideology of chefs tend to endorse an elitist orientation, with 83% of respondents believing that gourmet culture is creative and only 17% believing it is phony.

The aforementioned studies therefore corroborate Fine's (1987a, 1992, 1995) claim that chefs and cooks have clear aesthetic orientations, although not all chefs would consciously think of themselves as artists. In addition, as Wood (2000) argues, these studies show that the ideology of the occupation raises expectations in those who choose this career, since occupational enculturation is likely to result in newcomers developing an artistic sensitivity regardless of whether they are really creative in a precisely defined manner. In Wood's (2000: 135) terms: 'The stereotype of the creative chef' that characterises the occupational ideology 'transcends aesthetics...'. From the above literature, it follows that artistic connotations must be entrenched in the culture of professional cooking and play a significant role in the identity of chefs and cooks.

Yet, according to Fine, chefs and cooks do not solely rely on aesthetics to cope with negative public attitudes and derive a sense of self-worth from their work. Fine (1996a, 1996b) demonstrates that, given the varied nature of their job, chefs and cooks

are able to rely on a variety of occupational rhetorics as resources to define their work and create a sense of who they are, both to themselves and to their publics. As he explains, ‘cooking is highly internally differentiated, stretching from the lower depths of manual labour to the upper reaches of fine art’ (Fine, 1987a: 141). The occupation of cooking indeed involves a diverse set of tasks and requires a range of different skills which provide chefs and cooks with a large repertoire of discursive resources and lead them to describe themselves as being either quasi-professional, or quasi-artist, or businessman, or manual workers.

Such ‘bricolage of identity work’ (Fine, 1996b: 112), effectuated ‘in talk’, therefore help chefs and cooks justify their work and find sufficient worth in it to derive personal identity from it. In his analysis, Fine emphasises the situated character of these self-identifications, since chefs and cooks were found to draw upon these occupational images and analogies only when and if they seemed appropriate. For example, the professional analogising (aligning the types of actions that chefs and cooks perform to those performed in other fields such as medicine or surgery) was most likely to emerge ‘on those occasions in which subcultural knowledge was salient’ or on those occasions which ‘encourage[d] a vigorous attachment to one’s work’ (Fine, 1996b: 98). In addition, the rhetoric of art was most significant in situations where chefs and cooks were cooking for an audience or when they could ‘display their own creativity’ and ‘produce “novelty”’ (Fine, 1996b: 103). Conversely, the rhetoric of manual labour was commonly used to embody competence when performing physical labour, or to mitigate personal commitment and distance themselves from their work when external and organisational pressures constrained their ability to live up to their own artistic standards. Finally, the rhetoric of business was found to be triggered by situations where issues of security and (financial) prosperity were paramount, both at an organisational and personal level.

Fine further argues that while all four rhetorical stances could be found in each of the restaurants he studied, the organisation, tasks and career stage of chefs and cooks also significantly influenced the type and frequency of rhetorical techniques employed, which, according to Fine (1996b: 113), suggests that the ‘occupational self is a social construction, not given by an occupation’s dominant identity’. This argument is particularly noteworthy for it underpins Fine’s thesis throughout his work and comes

to clash with the way the concepts of identity and culture have been understood for the purposes of this study. Fine (1996a: 227-8) indeed refutes the existence of a (pan-industry) occupational (sub)culture binding all chefs and cooks together and transcending individual workplaces, and argues that:

The high level of competition among restaurants, coupled, with the temporal structure of kitchens and lack of occupational training ideology, makes the establishment of a tightly knit community somewhat doubtful. The absence of a vigorous, developed ideology that emphasises a perspective that transcends individual establishments, incorporating the whole of an occupational group, may also decrease the perceived need for such collective organisation. Each restaurant community copes with its own problems, in contrast to those occupations in which the problems of one establishment are linked to the problems of others. While restaurants have robust microcultures, their subculture is relatively attenuated when contrasted with other work worlds.

As illustrated in the above quote, Fine relates the striking absence of a pan-industry occupational community to the fragmented economic organisation of the restaurant industry and the structures of restaurant kitchens, insofar as each restaurant produces a singular cultural product and competes with others in the same market niche. To Fine, chefs and cooks are therefore more likely to derive a sense of identity from socialisation within local work communities in an organisational setting where several occupations may come together to form a work culture. Instead of a transcending occupational culture, Fine prefers to speak of the culture of 'idiocultures' in which work identity is created from local features, as members of a small interacting work group share experiences and collectively form a system of knowledge, beliefs, behaviours, and customs. Drawing upon Becker's (1986) terms, Fine (1996a: 227) suggests that '[w]ork communities are cultural communities', and therefore 'it is through the process of "doing things together" that rules, procedures, and traditions are established'.

Despite the undeniable idiosyncratic nature of each kitchen work group, the author does not share Fine's view that cultural traits cannot transcend individual kitchen workplaces. It seems that Fine's work itself does point to the existence of ideological

elements and cultural forms which were reproduced in his four case studies. In particular, Fine's (1996a: 82) research points to two significant markers of identity for chefs and cooks, that is, their kitchen spatial layout and knives, which are likely to apply to the occupation as a whole. Due to the confined space that often characterises kitchens, chefs and cooks were found to 'accommodate themselves to spatial constraints', and 'mar[k] territories' which could not be intruded without permission or risk generate bitterness and hostility (Fine, 1996a: 82). Whilst the chefs' and cooks' work station 'becomes an extension of one's identity', knives also carry significant symbolic meaning for chefs and cooks who tend to use their own knives and look after them carefully (Fine, 1996a: 82). As Fine (1996a: 83-4, emphasis in original) pointedly remarks:

While there may be *relatively* little difference between types of knives, the quality of the knife and the cook's ability in using it typifies the cook and is a status marker. ... Cooks were criticised for borrowing others' knives with or without permission. This emphasis on the quality of equipment reflects a hierarchy ... One's equipment is a mark of identity.

In conjunction, Fine (1996a: 85) remarks that '[a] cook who can chop rapidly, efficiently, and without injury is esteemed', therefore suggesting that the ability to chop 'like a professional chef/cook' not only denotes proficiency but also symbolises occupational enculturation and reaffirms that one belongs to the occupational group.

In his depiction of the work environment of chefs and cooks, Fine also highlights the extreme and unusual demands of the job, combined with workers' interdependency, which seemingly demonstrate that chefs and cooks form an occupational community/culture in the sense advocated by Salaman (1974) and Rothman (1998) (see Chapters 3 and 4). Fine (1988: 125) indeed found 'peak experiences' among chefs and cooks during the hectic, rushed periods, when the kitchen operated like 'a well oiled machine' and '[m]undane experiences [were] transformed into something resembling joy'. As one informant commented, 'I'm pumped up till you wouldn't believe. ... I just want to go, go, go' (Fine, 1987a: 144). The 'emotional high' helps chefs and cooks develop a sense of power and deep satisfaction and may indeed reinforce communal links

between brigade members – a phenomenon likely to transcend individual workplaces given the nature of kitchen work. Fine (1996a: 226-7) himself acknowledges that the brigade's interdependency fosters cooperation and generates a feeling of belongingness and community among chefs and cooks:

A recognition of belonging to a community also helps workers to accept the requests from colleagues to aid in tasks ... This desire for flexibility in the face of a division of labour justifies and encourages the development of a strong community and culture.

Additional observations seemingly come to justify the existence of an occupational community, notably chefs' and cooks' propensity to 'hang out' at the workplace or visit the workplace on a day off (see Shamir, 1981). Despite his focus on *local* occupational communities or 'idiocultures', Fine's (1988, 1996a) analysis provides interesting insights into the ways in which bonds of communality and friendship are reinforced both through play and humour, and through the collective consumption of alcohol at the end of their shifts. To Fine, jocular relationships play a significant role in the formation of workplace idiocultures, since they require that each person sacrifices himself/herself for the amusement of the others. Fine examines three genres of humour that is, teasing, horseplay and pranks (the latter two often involving symbolic manipulations of food to cause embarrassment or discomfort) which, he argues, all help to generate trust between brigade members. Whilst horseplay was found to be characteristic of a spatially tight work environment in which many young males from working-class backgrounds interact, pranks (such as sending new workers on mock errands) were identified as important rituals of initiation, 'establishing the recognition that one's fellow cook is "a good guy", can "take a joke", and can be trusted' (Fine, 1988: 123).

Last but not least, Fine (1996a: 128) points to the role of alcohol and 'collective imbibing' in creating bonds of community. While the social characteristics of alcohol, its easy availability in restaurant kitchens and the physical strains of the job may all foster communal drinking, Fine also reveals that alcohol was part of the accepted culture of the restaurants he studied, although all his informants promptly acknowledged the necessity to limit drinking to enable the community to function. Interestingly, while his

informants were found to play the stereotype of the drunken cook (see Page and Kingsford, 1971) and assume that their occupation was ‘overloaded with drunks’ (Fine, 1996a: 128), they claimed that no problem existed in their particular restaurant, which, according to Fine (1996a: 129), illustrates how chefs and cooks tend to accept ‘the universal validity of the stigma while denying it locally’.

In conclusion to this lengthy review of the extensive work of Gary Alan Fine, the most important insight to derive is the claim that occupational identity of chefs and cooks is constantly created and renegotiated through work interactions – a point which highlights the significance of a nominalist ontological position for this present study. Further, despite his refutation of the existence of a pan-industry occupational (sub)culture, many aspects of Fine’s work seemingly point to patterns of behaviour and cultural traits which are likely to transcend individual kitchen workplaces, although the validity of this claim will need to be assessed in light of the fieldwork of this present study. In addition, a later US study by Ferguson and Zukin (1998) similarly contradicts Fine’s (1996a) suggestion by pointing to the existence of a restaurant world ‘structured by a network of high-end restaurants run by self-consciously innovative chef-entrepreneurs’ (Ferguson, 1998: 636). Drawing upon data from interviews conducted with a number of New York chefs in high status restaurants in Manhattan, Ferguson and Zukin (1998) argue that the ‘centrifugal economic factors’ mentioned by Fine as inhibitors to the development of an occupational community are in fact countered by ‘centripetal social forces generated by close personal and professional connections’ (Ferguson, 1998: 636). These connections are, for the most part, the result of the apprenticeship system of training through which young chefs ‘enter a social network, a “mafia”, as the French chefs say, that is good for a lifetime of job contacts’ (Ferguson and Zukin, 1998: 99). While the network of chefs is undoubtedly denser in cultural capitals such as New York where elite restaurants abound, Ferguson and Zukin (1998) suggest that a network of chefs does exist at both a national and international level.

RECENT UK STUDIES ON SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE CULTURE AND IDENTITY OF CHEFS

More recently, a few UK researchers (Johns and Menzel, 1999; Cameron *et al.*, 1999; Cameron, 2001, 2004) have also taken chefs as their sole objects of analysis and addressed some specific aspects of their occupational culture and identity. Among these are Johns and Menzel's (1999) discussion paper exploring the attitudes and perceptions of chefs to the phenomena of kitchen violence and bullying. Although, as the authors themselves acknowledge, the study merely constitutes a discussion paper based on limited qualitative data (i.e. interviews carried out with chefs from six high-quality restaurants in Eastern England), it nevertheless provides an insightful analysis of the underlying causes of kitchen violence and bullying, by linking the views and attitudes of chefs to popular myths in today's western culture. All of Johns and Menzel's interviewees had trained and worked with major names in Michelin-starred restaurants, thus making the authors' findings all the more relevant to the present study.

Johns and Menzel first identified the paucity of academic work on kitchen violence despite sparse evidence – both survey-based (Anon, 1994¹²) and journalistic (Brownlow and Dawson, 1995¹³) – suggesting that the phenomenon is widespread within the UK hospitality industry. As the authors further point out, the available evidence suggests that violence may be even more widespread in kitchens than in any other workplaces in the UK (e.g. Anon, 1995). Drawing upon both primary and secondary data, Johns and Menzel described kitchen violence as comprising of a mix of verbal and physical abuse, and manifesting itself in both physical and psychological responses, including stress, strained relationships, alcoholism and heavy smoking.

In terms of the causes of kitchen violence, there was a tendency for Johns and Menzel's (1999: 103) interviewees to account for chefs' violent and bullying behaviour by highlighting the physical pressures of the job, such as the heat, the noise from machines and shouting voices, the variable demand leading to peaks of activity and

¹² Johns and Menzel (1999) report the findings of a large-scale 'straw poll' survey of the UK hospitality industry (Anon, 1994) in which 13% of the 3044 respondents claimed to have been physically abused by a work colleague, with kitchen workers and chefs complaining most frequently of physical abuse.

¹³ *The Big Story: Take Three Violent Chefs* (ITV, 28 September 1995), a TV programme showing footage secretly filmed in the kitchens of two of the UK's top restaurants and capturing examples of verbal and physical abuse inflicted by senior chefs on their kitchen staff.

‘a sense of constant scrutiny’ linked to chefs having to maintain standards of excellence whilst relying on their staff for food production. Yet, further analysis prompts Johns and Menzel to acknowledge that although physical pressures do contribute to kitchen violence; it is the socio-cultural aspects of kitchen work that seem mostly to blame for violence. The resigned attitude of many of their informants indeed seems to illustrate the extent to which kitchen violence has become deeply embedded in chefs’ working culture.

Most insightful, however, is Johns and Menzel’s (1999: 106) claim that kitchen culture exhibits a number of powerful popular myths that link violence with culinary art and with the cult of the individual in the following manner: ‘Quality food is art, violence is inseparable from art, therefore violence is inseparable from quality food preparation’ (myth 1); ‘Violence is an acceptable idiosyncrasy of great individuals’ (myth 2) and ‘Violence is a characteristic of the work and the workplace, not of the individuals involved’ (myth 3).

Drawing upon the above first myth, Johns and Menzel argue that the social tendency to regard the head chef’s work as art has the effect of justifying kitchen violence. Feeling their reputation and artistry at risk from the actions of their brigade, the head chefs are likely to feel justified to employ extreme measures of discipline or to resort to violence for the sake of their art. The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that the head chef (of *haute cuisine* restaurants) is also hailed as an individual both within the industry and by the media, therefore giving vent to the second myth identified above. Johns and Menzel (1999: 104) argue that this myth may not only lead to bullying but also to a situation where chefs make an example of their subordinates as a way of ‘lift[ing] them out of the crowd onto their own path of individuality’. Since there is evidence to suggest that young people copy aggressive behaviour from adult role models, junior and trainee chefs may in turn copy the behaviour of head chefs and therefore maintain a vicious cycle of bullying and violent behaviour.

The third myth advanced by Johns and Menzel (see above) was identified as being linked to the tacit assumption that bullying is a necessary part of motivating the kitchen brigade, and that trainee chefs gain ‘in reputation or “toughness” from inhabiting a world in which violence was such an everyday issue’ (1999: 106). Johns and Menzel’s research indeed points to the perception that the more mistreatment one can take, the

more benefit one may gain 'in terms of both learning and of the onwards rite of passage towards established chefdom' (1999: 106). To be able to bear violence and bullying becomes a 'test of worth' in what Johns and Menzel depict as 'the macho culture of chefs' (1999: 106). Kitchen violence and bullying were accepted by many of Johns and Menzel's informants as an inevitable part of kitchen work, an attitude which is also commonly expressed in the common adage '*If you can't take the heat, stay out of the kitchen*' (1999: 106). As the authors conclude, bullying behaviour and violent acts therefore function as supporting rituals for the three myths.

It is interesting to note that recent journalistic evidence by Midgley (2005: 53) also acknowledges the scope of the bullying problem in the industry and its likely consequences:

Catering is a notoriously tough business with high stress levels. When bullying is stirred into the mix, disaster can be the result, even for those who consider themselves psychologically robust. One of the results of a military style of management in the kitchens is that catering is an industry riven by poor health and high levels of drug abuse and alcoholism.

Most importantly, Midgley (2005) confirms Johns and Menzel's (1999) claims by drawing upon informal observational research undertaken in a Glaswegian French restaurant by Phil Hodgson of Ashridge Business School, according to whom the persistence of a macho culture can be attributed to chefs passing on learned behaviour. In Hodgson's words (quoted in Midgley, 2005: 57):

Leadership is transmitted through role models. You grow up with a leader and you either vow to be like that leader or not like that leader. If you are impressed by the outcome of what the people who impress you as leaders do in your early years, you tend to think that must be the way to do it. When you go on to become a chef in your own kitchen or a more senior chef in someone else's, you take with you the leadership style you saw working.

Midgley also corroborates Johns and Menzel's (1999) third myth by highlighting the tendency of high-profile chefs, such as Gordon Ramsay and Anthony Bourdain, to pridefully recount stories of how they were bullied as a trainee, whilst asserting the necessity to run a kitchen in an aggressive manner to maintain discipline and achieve results. Further evidence can also be found in the following quote from chef Marco Pierre White (1990: 12) which is a particularly striking illustration of Johns and Menzel's claim's that kitchen violence and bullying is regarded as a necessary part of cooks' training by the victims themselves:

The boys in my team know that if they want to get to the top they've got to take the shit. Harveys [White's former restaurant] is the hardest kitchen in Britain; it's the SAS of kitchens. But you don't get to the top by being pampered.

Such comments may indeed help perpetuate the myth that kitchen violence is part of the work environment, by converting it into an 'external enemy' (Johns and Menzel, 1999: 107) and therefore shifting the onus/blame away from individuals. Despite his lack of empirical data, Wood (1997, 2000) similarly argues that the deeply-ingrained stereotype of the creative, temperamental and volatile chef may in fact merely facilitate or allow chefs to behave in this way, since creativity may be used to explain or excuse bullying, temperament and volatility.

Interestingly, the prevalence of bullying and harassment in professional kitchens has also been confirmed through quantitative means by Murray-Gibbons and Gibbons (2007) in a survey with 40 chefs in Northern Ireland and by Mathisen *et al.* (2008) in a survey of 207 employees in 70 Norwegian restaurants. Both Murray-Gibbons and Gibbons (2007) and Mathisen *et al.* (2008) indeed provide evidence to suggest that primary sources of occupational stress not only include excessive workload and communication issues with management, but also experiences of bullying and harassment. Drawing upon Johns and Menzel's (1999) myths of kitchen violence, both Murray-Gibbons and Gibbons (2007) and Mathisen *et al.* (2008) respectively argue that such aggressive behaviour is often seen as the norm of the kitchen and that head chefs and managers should therefore nurture a more supportive working environment in order to prevent threats of violence and challenge such kitchen norms.

Cameron *et al.* (1999) and Cameron (2001, 2004) have also focused on the work of chefs (the word ‘chef’ to be understood in accordance with the *partie system*), although their concern predominantly lies with the relationship between occupational and organisational commitment from a cultural perspective – therefore only generating a few insights of relevance to this study. Drawing upon secondary sources, Cameron *et al.* (1999) first hypothesised a reciprocal and adversarial relationship between the occupational culture of chefs and the organisation culture of the hotel(s) in which they work. As they argue, the relationship is reciprocal in the sense that chefs are involved in both cultures simultaneously, whilst being adversarial in the sense that both cultures contend for the individual’s attachment and therefore remain rivals for possession of identity. The adversarial nature of the relationship is further exacerbated when the occupational culture is threatened by organisational issues linked to marketing and economics. Cameron *et al.* (1999: 229) argue that the chef culture can therefore be seen as a subordinate group existing within a superordinate group (i.e. the hotel organisation), whereby conflict is likely to emerge between ‘the organisation with its tight boundaries and the chef culture with its boundaries beyond the organisation’, since ‘the subordinate group has a global culture, the superordinate group a local culture!’ According to Cameron *et al.*, loyalty to the occupation is also explicit in the trend for *commis* chefs and junior chefs to move within the labour market in order to gain new skills and build on personal reputation for learning, especially in the advent of their career prospects being inhibited at any one establishment.

In a later qualitative study involving interviews with eight executive chefs from a 4-star UK hotel chain, Cameron (2001) builds upon these themes and uses Mary Douglas’s (1978) grid-group analysis to empirically demonstrate the allegiance that chefs give to their occupation when faced with a programme of radical change initiated by management. Cameron uses the grid-group analysis in order to examine each of the chef’s behavioural responses and allow for detailed consideration of the analytic possibilities for anticipating and managing such tensions across the different hotels (see Chapter 4). An interesting insight to be derived from Cameron’s (2001: 12) study is therefore the fact chefs ‘exist as a distinctive occupation’, which his research made clear in the context of management ‘ignor[ing] the strategic integration of out-group cultural identities’. Interestingly, Cameron (2001: 104) goes as far as suggesting that ‘the values

of the [chef's] occupation are intensely cosmopolitan' – an idea which, although not strictly demonstrated through empirical means, contradicts Fine's (1996a) arguments about the unlikelihood of a transcending occupational culture for chefs and cooks.

Finally, Cameron's (2004: ii) unpublished PhD thesis draws upon the above themes and 'relates both the commitment and cultural concept of occupation and organisation to a self-percept of chefs working for 4- and 5-star UK hotels'. Using both quantitative and qualitative data, Cameron demonstrates that chefs value their occupational identity which they develop both in relation to their craft traditions and through a perception of their occupation as an art with quasi-professional standing (see also Fine, 1987a). Through discourse analysis, Cameron (2004: 271) shows that chefs have 'developed cognitive schemas to occupation, which are, in order of importance: opportunity, reputation, occupational worth, hard work, long hours and skills'. In other words, chefs view the opportunity for developing culinary skills as foremost to the occupation, and are therefore *attitudinally* committed¹⁴ to their occupation. In contrast, chefs were shown to enact a *behavioural* commitment relationship to their organisation in the sense that 'chefs stay with an organisation as long as they consume an expectancy to a series of accumulated side-bets¹⁵' (Cameron, 2004: 285). Hotel organisations are thus used instrumentally, to provide amenities for chefs to realise their occupational goals.

Despite his focus on chefs working in 4- and 5-star hotels, Cameron's work is useful for the purposes of this study for it highlights the value that chefs place upon their occupational identity, and confirms the existence of 'a sub-culture to which chefs are clear as to *whom they are* and how they are to be represented as an occupation within society' (Cameron, 2004: 285, emphasis in original). The nature and content of this occupational identity is, however, seldom addressed in Cameron's work, albeit for its finding that 'opportunity, reputation, occupational worth, hard work, long hours and skills' (2004: 271) have great significance to the group.

¹⁴ In the work organisation literature, attitudinal commitment is generally defined as 'an affective response (identification) which links or attaches the individual to an organisation, whereas behavioural commitment reflects a decision to stay in the organisation because of investments which have forfeiture implications' (Mottaz, 1989: 145).

¹⁵ Becker (1960) describes 'side-bets' as investments (time, effort, rewards, etc.) made between the individual and an organisation which tie the individual to the organisation, because these investments have forfeiture implications (i.e. leaving the organisation could lead to a loss of valued investments).

CULTURAL INSIGHTS FROM MANAGERIAL STUDIES

Insights related to the culture of chefs can also be derived from both UK and European studies focusing on broader managerial and organisational concerns. Among these are Pratten's (2003a, 2003b) papers on the retention and training of chefs and the qualities that make 'a great chef', which are both grounded in similar sources of information, i.e. industry statistics, the comments of top chefs and food writers published in various media sources, as well as limited primary data obtained from 'lengthy discussions with, and observations of, those working within the sector' (Pratten, 2003b: 454). Although mainly conceptual and management-oriented, Pratten's (2003a) paper on the retention and training of chefs is interesting for its description of the working conditions of kitchens which, as highlighted in an earlier chapter of this literature review (Chapter 4), are likely to have influenced the development and maintenance of kitchen culture.

Most importantly is Pratten's observation that the glamour of the industry brought about by the advent of celebrity chefs and ubiquitous TV cookery programmes, has had the effect of obscuring the hard work and level of dedication required to become a chef and 'make it to the top'. Pratten's research indeed highlights that chef trainees tend to cite many of the characteristics of the kitchen work environment as their main reasons for leaving the industry, including the discipline linked to 'a long tradition of culinary authoritarianism' (Anon, 2001); the poor working conditions (extreme heat in a cramped environment); long and anti-social hours, poor pay and enduring sexism. Although it is easy to see why these working conditions and attitudes are in themselves significant deterrents for many chef trainees, Pratten suggests that the glamorous image of the industry is also to blame for trainees' lack of awareness of the rigours of the catering industry. Indeed, Pratten shows that although the reasonably high number of students commencing culinary college training would suggest that the industry is receiving adequate numbers of new entries, the UK hospitality industry is currently undergoing a serious shortage of experienced chefs, because many new entrants tend to leave the industry within a few years of on-the-job training. The higher the level of experience, the more serious the shortage – a situation which, according to Pratten, can be accounted for by the reluctance of many cooks to take on supervisory responsibilities.

Becoming a *sous* chef or head chef indeed involves more administrative and managerial tasks, as well as more ‘risk and stress’ (Pratten, 2003a: 240).

To halt the exodus, Pratten suggests developing suitable training throughout the career of the chef, since the skills required to be a head chef (i.e. communication skills, supervisory techniques, leadership qualities, stock control, ordering, budgeting, etc.) are seldom offered in training courses. Interestingly, this is also reminiscent of an earlier US study by Guyette (1981) (reviewed above) which claims that the traditional guild system discourages trainee chefs from developing managerial skills. Besides, it is important to note that the recruitment, training and retention of chefs have long been recognised as managerial challenges within the hospitality industry with high turnover levels of chefs identified as an enduring problem (Nightingale, 1967; HCEDC, 1969; HCTB, 1989; Mennell, 1996; Rowley and Purcell, 2001; Pratten, 2003a; Pratten and O’Leary, 2007; Robinson and Barron, 2007; Robinson and Beesley, 2010).

Despite the vain attempts of hospitality managers to resolve this staffing crisis by changing management and recruitment practices, it is surprising that researchers have not identified the need to give due consideration to complex cultural issues underpinning the work and identity of chefs. Managers indeed need to be able to understand and work with the cultural dynamics inherent in job roles because they may impact on key management concerns such as workplace stress, recruitment, retention and team building of all staff, not just chefs.

Furthermore, managers’ vain attempts to resolve this staffing crisis may also be best accounted for in light of the meaning and identity that chefs derive from their work (see also Chapter 3). As Strangleman (2004) shows in his study on the privatisation and culture change in the UK rail industry, workers’ commitment to their work often lead them to resist programmes of change initiated by management. In Strangleman’s (2004: 176, emphasis in original) words:

When change is arbitrarily imposed or enacted on such a workplace, it is precisely *because* of the commitment of the workforce, *because* they have invested meaning in their work, that there is resistance. Conservatism on the part of the workforce towards change is therefore an essential part of what it is to be adult – namely that people use their experience of the past to guide their present and future

actions and attitude. In actively targeting the established part of a workforce ... management are effectively destroying the quality of commitment to work. In the process they damage wider social relations, and the tacit skill and knowledge that organisations need.

With its emphasis on culture and identity, the present study has therefore the potential to provide insights of practical relevance to human resource managers in the hospitality industry and to answer fundamental questions such as: 'why do some teams work better than others?'; 'why do some individuals 'fit' and not others?'; 'how can individuals and work groups with a high degree of skill, artistry and individualism be managed?' and 'is 'managed' even the right word to use?'.

In another article published in the same year, Pratten (2003b) reiterates some of the above material whilst focusing more specifically on the aforementioned skills and characteristics needed to progress to the top of the profession. More importantly, however, is the stress given to the attitude and frame of mind required to become a great chef, which Pratten (2003b: 458) neatly summarises as follows: 'Those who reach the highest level of culinary excellence are driven by a compulsion that few would feel'. Drawing upon the life experiences of Michelin-starred chefs Marco Pierre White, Gordon Ramsay and Marcus Wareing, Pratten describes the dedication, passion and obsession which function as powerful drivers for aspiring Michelin-starred chefs. However descriptive, Pratten's work is useful in the light of Johns and Menzel's (1999: 106) article (reviewed above) which points to chefs' perception that the mistreatment endured was 'proportional to the benefit gained in terms of both learning and of the onwards rite of passage towards established chefdom'. Johns and Menzel (1999: 105) indeed speak of 'a macho belief that chefs who wished to reach the pinnacle of their profession had to be willing to sacrifice their sleep, social lives, physical and psychological health'. Drawing upon both Johns and Menzel (1999) and Pratten (2003b), it could therefore be argued that chefs share the belief that the ones who 'make it' in the industry (by becoming experienced chefs and progressing to the higher echelons of the hierarchy, whether or not they reach the very top of the profession) are the ones who embrace the kitchen culture fully and share the belief

that the grind, mistreatment and difficult working conditions are both inevitable parts of the job and the key to success.

Interestingly, not all chefs endorse such attitudes to kitchen violence and mistreatment. For example, former Michelin-starred chef Prue Leith, also often referred to as the ‘doyenne’ of British cuisine, has accused Marco Pierre White and Gordon Ramsay of ‘peddling “macho nonsense” and bullying staff to raise their profile’ (Foggo, 2006: 10), notably as she denounced White’s claim that a chef has to be a ‘pain junkie’ (White, 2006: 152) as ‘arrogant rot’ (Leith, 2006: n/a). In another article (Pyke, 2002: 5), Prue Leith is quoted as saying that:

There are still a few megalomaniac chefs and managers who think that you can frighten people into good performance. That ‘kicking ass’ works. ... Unhappily these flawed geniuses sometimes make it on to television and give our industry a name that it does not deserve.

These comments are particularly valuable for they help corroborate the point, raised earlier in this section, that the brutal management techniques endorsed by some chefs perpetuate macho beliefs and myths of kitchen violence. The fact that a female chef is able to acknowledge and articulate the mythical and damaging aspect of these macho beliefs is also of particular significance (see below, ‘Gender Segregation in Professional Kitchens’).

Other management-oriented studies of relevance to this study include the research undertaken by a few European authors (Balazs, 2001, 2002; Johnson *et al.*, 2005; Surlemont and Johnson, 2005; Surlemont *et al.*, 2005), who, like Pratten (2003b), also focus, *inter alia*, on the qualities and leadership lessons of successful chefs in multiple-Michelin-star restaurants. Such a focus on the *haute cuisine* sector of the restaurant industry, and Michelin-starred chefs in particular, is rare in the literature, as highlighted by Johnson *et al.* (2005: 171) who suggest that ‘who chefs are and what they do (especially in relation to the Michelin system) are still relatively little investigated’. Yet, as Surlemont and Johnson (2005: 578) pointedly remark, this is most surprising since the *haute-cuisine* sector plays a key role in ‘trend setting, image building and in setting

standards for the industry as a whole', despite constituting only a marginal and elite segment of the restaurant industry, with less than 0.5 per cent in volume.

The aforementioned authors tend to justify their choosing Michelin-starred chefs as their subjects of enquiry on the grounds that *haute cuisine* and quality gastronomy has, in Europe, become synonymous with the Michelin Guide. As Surlemont and Johnson (2005: 578) explain, the Michelin Guide (also known as the 'Red Guide') is indeed a highly respected institution in the *haute cuisine* community and is widely accepted as *the* reference by both gastronomes and chefs for restaurant categorisation. In consequence, the star-rating system 'potentially signals the institution as being part of the *haute-cuisine* sector' (Surlemont and Johnson, 2005: 578).

Despite its influence, the Michelin-star system¹⁶ and its impact on the occupational culture of chefs have never been systematically investigated, but for recent attempts at understanding the key success factors of Michelin-starred restaurants, in terms of resources (Durand *et al.*, 2002 in Johnson *et al.*, 2005), leadership factors (Balazs, 2001, 2002) and other management-related factors such as restaurant pricing strategies (Snyder and Cotter, 1998), restaurant behaviour/capacity utilisation (Cotter and Snyder, 1998), revenue-generating strategies (Surlemont *et al.*, 2005) as well as Michelin-starred chefs' motivations, management styles and perceived managerial challenges (Johnson *et al.*, 2005). Despite their managerial outlook, cultural insights can be derived from a few of these studies, notably Balazs's (2001, 2002). Whilst

¹⁶ The history of the Michelin Guide is in itself interesting for an understanding of the extent of its influence in the realm of *haute cuisine*. Created in 1900, the Guide was initially designed by the French Michelin tyre company to provide technical advice to motorists. In 1926, the Guide introduced the star system for notable culinary excellence, although two and three stars were added in the early 1930's. From a national (French) presence, the Michelin Guide expanded internationally and is now the most respected and widely used culinary guide in Europe (Ferguson, 2004; Surlemont and Johnson, 2005; Ottenbacher and Harrington, 2007). Today, Michelin produces 24 hotel and restaurant guides annually and covers 20 European countries, three cities in the United States and three in Asia (Michelin Travel Publications, 2011a). Michelin stars are awarded to establishments serving cuisine of the highest quality, regardless of the style and type of cuisine. Although no written criteria, guidelines or accreditation standards are issued (to avoid standardisation), the cuisine is judged on 'the quality of the ingredients, the skill in their preparation, the combination of flavours, the levels of creativity, the value for money and the consistency of culinary standards' (Michelin Travel Publications, 2011b: 8).

The Michelin star system allocates one star to restaurants that have 'very good cooking in its category' (130 restaurants in the UK), two stars for those that have 'excellent cooking, worth a detour' (17 in the UK) and three stars for the elite group that are 'exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey' (four in the UK) (Michelin Travel Publications, 2011b: 8). The Guide's solid reputation is said to rest on the quality of work of its inspectors, who make their evaluations in absolute secrecy (Snyder and Cotter, 1998), and on the consistency of its grading system which has remained the same since 1933, therefore facilitating comparison between restaurants (Surlemont and Johnson, 2005).

informally observing and talking to head chefs and their staff in several French three-Michelin-starred restaurants, Balazs (2002: 247) was indeed able to shed light on the organisational culture created by 'France's great chefs' and the different dimensions characterising their leadership style, which, she argues, range from a *charismatic* role involving envisioning, empowering and energising colleagues and subordinates; to an *architectural* role involving designing the organisation's structure and implementing control and reward systems.

Among the leadership lessons highlighted by Balazs (2001) emerge certain cultural dimensions of relevance to the identity of Michelin-starred chefs; notably the head chef's dual role of businessperson and creator (recalling previous academic studies such as Fine's [1996b]), chefs' strong belief in the traditional values of their craft allied to an intense focus on perfection and the military aspect of their work environment in which innovation and creativity must be tempered by culinary rigour and formalisation of dishes (a paradox also highlighted by Peterson and Birg [1988]). Last but not least, Balazs's study points to the commitment, dedication and solidarity which prevail among the kitchen brigade, and which, Balazs (2001: 142) argues, is made possible by the 'lead and let live' ethos of the head chef who exerts stern discipline whilst putting significant emphasis on the personal growth of his/her brigade members, by training them from the lowest starting position, delegating responsibilities and making them feel appreciated. Interestingly, Balazs (2001: 145) also highlights the key role played by banter in generating feelings of belongingness and camaraderie and diffusing tension, as illustrated in the following quote:

The stress would be unsupportable, were it not for the jokes that the chef cracks when he is not upset about a botched or late dish. The team responds to these jokes, keeping up a friendly and close, but always respectful banter with the chef, and a less respectful, teasing tone with each other.

Her interpretation of the working relationship between head chef and *sous* chef is also interesting from a cultural point of view. Balazs indeed argues that the *sous chef* tends to be the polar opposite of the chef, that is, 'calm, introvert, and stable' (Balazs, 2001: 143), while the head chef is often 'quirky, and can get upset if things do not go

well' (Balazs, 2001: 144), to the extent that, in the best restaurants, 'the team chef–second sometimes goes so far as to play the roles of “good cop–bad cop” towards the kitchen staff'. Balazs indeed seems to suggest that both head chefs and *sous* chefs derive their identity from enacting their respective roles (in accordance with impression management, as described by Goffman [1959]) insofar as these character traits are expected of them within the occupational culture of chefs.

Like Balazs (2001, 2002), Johnson *et al.* (2005: 185) also focus on the key factors that Michelin-starred chefs attribute to the success of their restaurants, but, unlike Balazs (2001), conclude that 'there seems to be no single “recipe” for financial success among star-rated operations' – but for the professional and culinary rigour which informs every aspect of the business. Johnson *et al.*'s (2005) research is based on semi-structured interviews with chefs from 36 restaurants ranked as having two or three Michelin stars over the period of ten years in France, Belgium, the UK, and Switzerland, and focuses mainly on the effects of the Michelin rating system on business and financing. With its emphasis on managerial concerns, the study highlighted the challenges faced by the Michelin-starred chefs interviewed who almost unanimously felt they needed to improve their human resources skills, management competencies, and financial acumen. To Johnson *et al.*, this finding is not surprising given the propensity of chefs to give precedence to their art rather than to the financial/management side of the business – a fact which also recalls the findings of both Guyette (1981) and Pratten (2003a).

Yet, the study also provides insights into chefs' motivations and the way they perceive the Michelin star ranking system. Their findings indeed confirm the notion that the occupation is exercised for love and prestige rather than for financial gain, especially in light of the financial difficulties associated with running a luxury restaurant. The majority of their interviewees were found to have entered the occupation as a response to their passion for *haute cuisine*, and to view the award of an additional star as the supreme professional accolade. Johnson *et al.*'s interviewees also pointed to the high levels of stress and pressure associated with gaining a Michelin-star ranking, due to the need of consistently achieving high quality levels. Although not acknowledged by the authors, it is clear that the Michelin Guide plays a key role in defining the identity of chefs and providing them with a sense of self-worth. It is therefore easy to see how the

loss of a star can become a source of anguish and a blow to their identity, as illustrated in the story of French chef Bernard Loiseau [1951-2003] who committed suicide amid rumours that Michelin were planning to downgrade his restaurant from three to two stars, although it later emerged that this was not the case (see Chelminski, 2006). Similarly, French chef Marc Meneau (quoted in Rao *et al.*, 2005: 977), who lost one of his three stars, once spoke about ‘mourning for a child’. The importance of the Guide in the process of identity formation is also noteworthy in the work of Johns and Menzel (1999) who identified the importance of maintaining guide recognition as creating significant workplace pressures and, in their study, contributing towards violence.

Another similar study undertaken by Surlemont and Johnson (2005) highlights more explicitly the role of the Michelin Guide in shaping the identity and culture of elite chefs in the *haute cuisine* community. Surlemont and Johnson (2005) indeed argue that the mechanism of the star system helps to encourage consistent standards throughout the industry, especially in light of head chefs’ tacit belief that professional and technical rigour will one day be rewarded by Michelin recognition. To avoid the selection of a restaurant that should not have been selected, the Guide is slow to promote a chef since it must ensure that the chef is consistent over time in the quality and service that is delivered to customers. In addition, Surlemont and Johnson (2005: 578) suggest that the Michelin-star rating system helps ‘preserv[e] creativity for artistic goods’ by purposely not disclosing any criteria and therefore inducing chefs to focus on their creativity, instead of looking towards how an outside referee may judge their work. In other words, Surlemont and Johnson seem to suggest that the Michelin Guide rating system plays a significant role in diffusing the notions of consistency, perfectionism, culinary rigour and creativity in the culture of elite chefs in the *haute cuisine* community.

To finish with, this section will examine three themes of significant relevance to this study which have not yet been addressed by the aforementioned studies on chefs, that is, the effect of *nouvelle cuisine* on the culture and identity of chefs, the phenomenon of television and celebrity chefs, and issues of gender inequality in the kitchen affecting kitchen culture.

THE EFFECT OF *NOUVELLE CUISINE* ON THE CULTURE AND IDENTITY OF CHEFS

Nouvelle cuisine is an approach to cooking and food presentation that emerged in France in the late 1960's and early 1970's, in opposition to classical cuisine which was strictly based on the canon and conventions of the French chef Marie-Antoine [Antonin] Carême [1784-1833] and Escoffier. Table 5.1 compares the codes of classical and *nouvelle cuisine* using the five dimensions originally advanced by Fischler (1993) and later adapted by Rao *et al.* (2005). In recent times, *nouvelle cuisine* has been associated with the French culinary journalists Henri Gault and Christian Millau who applied the term to the new style of cookery found in the work of Fernand Point [1897-1955] and his disciples, including, *inter alia*, Paul Bocuse, Michel Guérard and the brothers Jean and Pierre Troisgros (Barr and Levy, 1984; Fischler, 1990; Wood, 1991; Gillespie, 1994; Mennell, 1996; Ferguson, 1998; Ferguson and Zukin, 1998; Trubek, 2000; Rao *et al.*, 2003, 2005; Durand *et al.*, 2007; Cousins *et al.*, 2010). Unlike classical cuisine, this new style called for simplicity and elegance in creating dishes and placed a higher importance on dish presentation (see Gault and Millau's (1976: 154-9) Ten Commandments of *nouvelle cuisine* in Table 5.2).

Table 5.1: Category types in French gastronomy

	Classical Cuisine	Nouvelle Cuisine
Culinary Rhetoric	Names of dishes refer to rhetoric, memory, and legitimacy.	Appellations refer to poetry, imagination and evocation: Small ('petit'), Diminutives, 'émincé', 'allégé', Symphonie, Trilogie, Menu, Assiette, etc.
Cooking Rules	<p><i>Conformation</i> = staying in conformity with Escoffier's principles (e.g., gratins and quenelles, terrines, pâtés, confits, jambons).</p> <p><i>Sublimation</i> = sublimating the ingredients: brioches, croûtes, farces, chaussons, croustades, vol au vent, sauces, flambages, Chateaubriand.</p>	<p><i>Transgression</i> = using old cooking techniques with new ingredients, or using old cooking techniques with old ingredients, yet for which these cooking techniques were not legitimate: mixing meat and fish, salad mixing vegetables and foie gras, Pot au feu with fish.</p> <p><i>Acclimatisation</i> = importing "exotic" foreign cuisine traditions, notably seasoning and spices: Fish pasta, raviolis, cannelloni, cheesecake, carpaccio, risotto, tajine.</p>
Archetypal Ingredients	High game, shellfish, cream, poultry, river fish.	Fruits, vegetables, potatoes, aromatic herbs, exotic ingredients, sea fish.
Chef Role	Restaurateur (rarely the owner, and never the cook) has power in rooms of luxury hotels and palaces. Classical service is organised through the saucepan. Waiters cut and serve dishes, blaze preparations. Rituals are outside the plate.	Chef is at centre of operations. Since "service à la japonaise" (service through the plate and service under a "cloche") waiters no more intervene in process.
Menu Organisation	Extremely long menu, almost all classical dishes are registered. Need for large inventories, hence less freshness. Consuming is a long ceremony. Related art is <i>Architecture</i> (three dimensions). Relief and contours are importance. One sense is critical: vision.	Very narrow menus. No inventories to increase freshness. Consuming is a shorter ceremony. Related art is <i>Painting</i> (two dimensions): service through the plate leads cooks to add products only for aesthetical reasons. Colours, contrasts, and decoration, and the five senses are important.

Source: Rao *et al.* (2005: 975)

Table 5.2: The Ten Commandments of *nouvelle cuisine*

1.	<i>Thou shall not overcook.</i> This applies to almost all the products used (and abused) by classical cuisine: fish, shells, seafood, game birds, game animals, waterfowls, poultry, which were overcooked (overcooking protects from poisoning due to poor and long storage conditions).
2.	<i>Thou shall use fresh, quality products.</i> Select products only if you are sure of their outstanding quality, avoid intensive agriculture.
3.	<i>Thou shall lighten thy menu.</i>
4.	<i>Thou shall not be systematically modernistic.</i> Avoid a new orthodoxy.
5.	<i>Thou shall seek out what the new techniques can bring you.</i> This will also increase the cooks' working conditions, through airing and ventilation, reduce consumption of coal or wood, which are replaced by electrical or gas techniques.
6.	<i>Thou shall eliminate brown and white sauces.</i> Abolishing marinated dishes and high game; abolishing white and brown sauces, which are heavy and indigestible.
7.	<i>Thou shall not ignore dietetics.</i> The postwar times of malnutrition are over.
8.	<i>Thou shall not cheat on thy presentation.</i> Simplicity instead of fakery.
9.	<i>Thou shall be inventive.</i>
10.	<i>Thou shall not be prejudiced.</i>

Source: Rao *et al.* (2003: 816-7)

Ferguson and Zukin (1998: 94) argue that the advent of *nouvelle cuisine* seemingly resolved the 'old conundrum about whether the chef is an artist or a worker' (see Fine, 1987a, 1992, 1996a) and produced a newly prominent cultural field (Ferguson 1998), given the significant emphasis that *nouvelle cuisine* placed on the creativity and artistry of chefs both in terms of food production and presentation (see also Fischler, 1990). In Wood's (1991: 331) terms, '[c]onstant innovation, experimentation and self-sacrifice by chef practitioners are all factors advanced in support of the proposition that *nouvelle cuisine* is not merely cookery but involves 'art' beyond ordinary culinary craft'. Indeed, Rao *et al.* (2005: 974) argue that with its emphasis on innovation, the culinary rhetoric of *nouvelle cuisine* accorded more 'power and creative freedom' to chefs for whom classical cooking merely consisted of 'conformation to the rules formulated by Escoffier and sublimation of the ingredients such that the raw material is visually transformed'. Nevertheless, as Rao *et al.* (2003, 2005) suggest, the identity of chefs has never been rigidly defined by *nouvelle cuisine* either. Their study of chefs' signature dishes in French Michelin-starred restaurants indeed points to the erosion of categorical boundaries between classical and *nouvelle cuisine*, as chefs freely borrowed from both traditions in line with Lévi-Strauss's (1968) concept of '*bricolage*'.

In addition, a number of authors have commented on the effect that *nouvelle cuisine* had on elevating the social standing of chefs, by reducing the role of waiting

staff and giving chefs the responsibility for the arrangement of food on the plate. As Levy (1986: 139) explains, ‘...the arrangements of the plate became the duty (and pleasure) of the cook, not the waiter – and food as art was born. Silver service died, as chefs everywhere made pictures on plates’. This is confirmed by the view of an insider, Michelin-starred chef Nico Ladenis (1997: 194), according to whom the emergence of *nouvelle cuisine* resulted in the image of the chef shifting from that ‘of a simple, humble person, someone with little ambition, a plodding, shuffling body who did the dirty work’, to that of an artist or star performing for an audience.

Furthermore, Wood (1991) suggests that the rhetoric of *nouvelle cuisine* is embodied in a set of values and beliefs about the organisation of culinary production, linked to concepts of individualism, risk and entrepreneurship. As he explains, it became clear to *nouveaux cuisiniers* that the production of *nouvelle cuisine* could not flourish under ‘elite patronage’, in culinary establishments that had historically been linked with upper and upper-middle class values and characterised by an occupational hierarchy ‘predicated more on position, status and time-serving than on creative talent and innovation’ (1991: 334). Instead, *nouveaux cuisiniers* aspired to be chef–businessmen with full responsibility for the production, the quality of the product and the standards of delivery of the product to the consumer. Drawing upon Wood’s insightful comments, it can therefore be argued that the advent of *nouvelle cuisine* led to a change in the self-concept of chefs for whom individualism, risk and entrepreneurship became critical expressions of their artistic freedom. Although *haute cuisine* is not exclusively defined by the principles of *nouvelle cuisine*¹⁷, the prevailing trend for chef–patrons in the *haute cuisine* sector (Ashley *et al.*, 2004; Johnson *et al.*, 2005) may indeed highlight the significant impact that *nouvelle cuisine* had upon the identity and culture of (elite) chefs.

¹⁷ Nowadays, *haute cuisine* restaurants serve a variety of cuisines, ranging from fusion cuisine, regional cuisine, postmodern cuisine or the ‘molecular gastronomy’ of, *inter alia*, Michelin-starred chefs Ferran Adrià and Heston Blumenthal (both of whom incidentally reject the appellation) and Pierre Gagnaire (Wikipedia, 2006a). *Haute cuisine* should therefore not be defined in relation to any particular style but rather in relation to its careful preparations, elaborate service, obsessive attention to detail and critical acclaim (Wikipedia, 2006b).

THE PHENOMENON OF TELEVISION AND CELEBRITY CHEFS

The phenomenon of celebrity chefs will now be considered for an understanding of the transformation which the image of the occupation has undergone in recent years, and its effects on the identity and culture of chefs. A popular interest in chefs has indeed grown considerably for the past two decades, as illustrated in the boom in television cookery and food programmes, which, as Ferguson and Zukin (1998) and Ashley *et al.* (2004) point out, must be understood in relation to the more general expansion of lifestyle programming. In the UK, for example, there are numerous cookery shows on both daytime and prime-time television on the five terrestrial channels, together with reality TV shows such as *Hell's Kitchen* and *Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares* and non-terrestrial channels entirely devoted to food such as UKTV Food.

This explosion of interest in television cookery led a number of chefs to gain celebrity status – a phenomenon also reinforced by media diversification which significantly increased their exposure across various media forms (Wood, 2000; Ashley *et al.*, 2004). Thus, whilst the activities of celebrity chefs are frequently reported in daily newspapers and magazines, there is also a flourishing trend for cookery books authored or compiled by Michelin-starred chefs (Blackiston, 2002, 2006; Campbell, 2005; Aikens, 2006; Antona, 2006; Blumenthal, 2006, 2009, 2011; Everitt-Matthias, 2006; Locatelli, 2006; Guest, 2007; Hartnett, 2007; Murchison, 2007; Ramsay, 2007b; Wareing, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Atherton, 2008; Byrne, 2008; Demetre, 2008; Geraghty, 2008; Pern, 2008, 2010; Wishart, 2008; Kitchin, 2009; Haworth, 2010), together with biographies (White, 1990, 2006; Ladenis, 1997; Bourdain, 2000; Hennessy, 2000; Ramsay, 2006, 2007a; Simpson, 2006; Newkey-Burden, 2009) and other written accounts of both high-profile chefs and kitchen life (Ruhlman, 1997, 2001, 2006; Bramble, 1998; Mullan, 1998; Bourdain, 2001, 2006, 2010; Parkinson and Green, 2001; Dornenburg and Page, 2003; Kelly, 2003; Wright, 2005; Buford, 2006; Chelminski, 2006). Although the phenomenon of celebrity chefs is not entirely new (it is argued that Carême was the very first celebrity chef [see Kelly, 2003]), the scope of the phenomenon is such that ‘we have entered a period of chefs as “show business stars” or “haute-couture” [designers], professions that offer striking parallels’ (Chemla, no date, quoted in Ferguson and Zukin 1998: 93).

A number of authors (Gillespie, 1994; Ferguson and Zukin, 1998; Ashley *et al.*, 2004) have pointed out that chefs' stardom also has clear connections with the rise of *nouvelle cuisine* which brought to the fore the artistic status of chefs whilst stressing the 'visual aesthetics of dishes' (Gillespie, 1994: 21) and therefore making food 'more televisual' (Ashley *et al.*, 2004: 177). As highlighted earlier, *nouvelle cuisine* is also associated with the rise of the chef-owner/entrepreneur. Ashley *et al.* (2004: 175) explain that the high capital investment required to launch a new restaurant has led many chefs to actively cultivate publicity, notably through 'branding' of their image as they become associated with a distinctive visual trademark ('Gary Rhodes has gelled spiky hair ... Jean-Christophe Novelli plays the "dishy" Frenchman'). By diversifying their activities and becoming media personalities and 'brands' in their own right (see Bourdain, 2006; Ruhlman, 2006), chefs therefore gain a distinctive identity which gives their restaurants a competitive advantage and ensures commercial success in a highly competitive restaurant trade (Gillespie, 1994; Ferguson and Zukin, 1998; Ashley *et al.*, 2004; Ferguson, 2004). This trend is particularly interesting in light of the changes that it brought to the culture of chefs, notably in terms of encouraging an entrepreneurial ethos and flattening the status hierarchy of chefs. As Gillespie (1994: 21) argues, the Escoffier-inherited ranking system based on time-serving and the acquisition of skill (through training and apprenticeships) has largely been 'supplanted at the level of the entrepreneurial "chef as star" by a system of personal association and mentoring'. As Gillespie (1994: 22) further argues, '[s]erving in the world's great hotels is no longer a guarantee of star status, recognition or deference – either from peers or public'. Today, 'those who occupy positions at the apex of the modern culinary hierarchy are those who have demonstrated individualism, entrepreneurship and a willingness to take risks' (Gillespie, 1994: 22) – qualities which, interestingly, Wood (1991) also related to the advent of *nouvelle cuisine* and its effects on the culture of chefs (reviewed above).

The rise of celebrity chefs has also had the effect of transforming the image of the occupation and redefining the relatively low status of professional chefs in the UK (Chivers, 1972, 1973; Saunders, 1981a; Gabriel, 1988; Mennell, 1996) 'to a much enhanced role of chef/entrepreneur, expert and intellectual; a kind of modern-day renaissance man' (Randall, 1999: 49). Indeed, although the world of chefs and their

brigades had traditionally remained secluded, the emergence of celebrity chefs and their 'open kitchens' revealed to the public the previously secret 'backstage' (Goffman, 1959) of professional cooking, whilst imprinting a certain glamour onto the occupation.

Trubek (2000: 131-2) goes as far as suggesting that '[i]n a culture that worships celebrity, champions individual achievement, and cherishes personal time, the chef has become a figure of merit', which in turn has enabled chefs to raise their occupation to the status of 'profession'. Trubek shows that, since the nineteenth century, chefs involved in public cooking had worked hard to fulfil the conditions for professional status (by forming associations and schools, holding conferences and competitions, and consistently claiming the expert knowledge required to adequately perform their work) and yet, struggled to obtain the social, political, and economic approbation that would validate their professional claims. Drawing upon the work of Magali Sarfatti Larson (1977, 1990) on the nature of professions in modern capitalist society, Trubek (2000) argues that chefs' attempts to professionalise their occupation ended up in vain because they lacked the necessary 'closure' to organise a protected market for their services. Since higher education is, according to Larson (1977, 1990), the primary means of attaining and maintaining closure (by controlling membership through educational credentials) and since cooking as a mode of expertise cannot be easily incorporated into a system of higher education, it is therefore the nature of chefs' knowledge which separated cooking from other professions. In addition, Trubek (2000) argues that the difficulty to separate the practice of cooking from the domestic sphere (in the UK especially, unlike France, according to Mennell [1996]), together with the ephemeral nature of chefs' end products, also facilitated the constant negation of their professional claims.

For Trubek (2000), it is the recent advent of television and celebrity chefs in a society that values fame and individual merit that enabled chefs to create the necessary closure around their expertise to achieve professional status. As Cameron (2004) argues, it is common to hear Michelin-starred chefs, such as Marco Pierre White or Nico Ladenis, referring to their occupation as a profession, although the latter do not refer to all chefs but primarily to those who have proved their standing in a hierarchy of high culinary skills, by progressing through the different positions of the *partie* system, over many years. Although a professional status is likely to apply more to

those adequately experienced chefs, the rising popularity of celebrity and Michelin-starred chefs can nevertheless be said to have raised the standing of the occupation and brought it close to professional status in the eyes of the public.

Theoretical perspectives highlighted in previous chapters (Goffman, 1959; Becker, 1963; Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Lemert, 1972; Jenkins, 2004) have shown how the views and perceptions of *others* in the 'outside world' significantly influence the self-conception of chefs. Similarly, occupational sociologists have demonstrated the interrelationship between the societal status conferred to a person's occupation and that person's self-image and self-worth (Hughes, 1958; Gold, 1964; Saunders, 1981a). In light of these theoretical insights, it is argued that the image change brought about by the rise of celebrity chefs must have profoundly affected the identity of chefs and raised their self-esteem.

In addition, it is often argued that the phenomenon of celebrity chefs has helped to improve the image of chef as a career, as illustrated in the rise in culinary trade school applicants, whilst also bringing about a number of misconceptions about the occupation leading to high drop-out rates amongst young trainees and subsequent shortages of skilled chefs (O'Brien, 1997; Wood, 2000; Trubek, 2000; Pratten, 2003a; Pratten and O'Leary, 2007). The distortion of reality emerging from media representations has also been highlighted as a problem for occupational members themselves (Fattorini, 1994). Discussing the case of food journalism, Fattorini (1994) argues that the glamorised representations of food and catering (featured in magazines and cookery books) can cause conflicts between restaurant chefs and their customers. Fattorini points to the way in which lifestyle media construct consumers as pseudo-professionals (who believe that they know just as much about food as the professional chef), therefore leading to resentment amongst professional chefs, because the 'motives of the domestic cook (pleasure, enjoyment of the end product, cooking as a leisure activity) are different from those of the professional, for whom food is just one part of the job' (Fattorini, 1994: 27).

According to Fattorini, such resentment is further exacerbated by differences in social class between chefs and customers, and by romanticised and sanitised media representations of kitchen work. Fattorini argues that the photographs of foodie magazines and cookery books tend to portray chefs as wearing pristine whites and quietly drinking coffee or a glass of wine within the vicinity of their restaurant – an

image far removed from the reality of professional cooking. This has the effect of blurring the distinction between consumer and provider in the eyes of consumers, and making professional kitchen staff feel alienated, misunderstood and under-appreciated. Nevertheless, in addition to generating resentment, it can be argued that the situation may also result in reinforcing a sense of identity and belongingness amongst the occupational members who are able to define themselves in relation to the non-chef community (Barth, 1969; Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

Also noteworthy is the trend for certain Michelin-starred and ‘celebrity’ chefs to distance themselves from celebrity chefs and television chefs ‘in an attempt to assert their cultural legitimacy within the culinary field’ (Ashley *et al.*, 2004: 179). Drawing upon Bourdieu’s (1971, 1993) discussion of cultural and economic capital, Ashley *et al.* (2004: 179) explain that it is the relative scarcity of the chefs’ skills, imagination and artistry which gives chefs their legitimacy within the culinary field – a legitimacy which they risk losing by searching for a ‘mass’ audience and economic profit through television. To illustrate their argument, Ashley *et al.* (2004: 179) state the case of Jamie Oliver who claims that ‘he’s probably spent more time in the kitchen than most of the “slightly wanky, cheffy circle of TV chefs”’ (quoted in Lane, 2000: 3). Whilst still chasing television and book contracts, celebrity chefs must attempt to ‘distance themselves from “media sell-outs” like Ainsley Harriott, who, they have been assuring themselves for years, is not a real chef at all’ (Brookes, 1999: 6). In the words of Gordon Ramsay: ‘Ainsley’s not a chef. He’s a fucking comedian’ (quoted in Anon, 2004: 13).

Chef Anthony Bourdain’s restaurant memoir, *Kitchen Confidential* (2000), ‘presents itself as a backstage encounter with the “culinary underbelly”’ (Ashley *et al.*, 2004: 164) in which the occupation’s practices and argot are crudely exposed. By setting itself in opposition to ‘the inauthenticity offered by the ‘frontstage’ world of restaurant dining and television chefs’ (Ashley *et al.*, 2004: 164), the memoir also helps Bourdain (2000) differentiate himself from celebrity and television chefs and legitimate his own professional status (see also Bourdain, 2001, 2006). Although the opportunity to gain celebrity status is willingly embraced by chefs to ensure the economic success of their restaurant, the ‘celebrity’ chef raises the issue of cultural de-legitimation and therefore remains alien from the genuine culture and identity of professional chefs.

GENDER SEGREGATION IN PROFESSIONAL KITCHENS

Despite women's continuous involvement in domestic cooking, historians have shown that cooking as art and profession has traditionally been the preserve of men (Banner, 1973; Goody, 1982; Mennell, 1996; Swinbank, 2002) – a situation which has continued to the present day, for women are still under-represented in the realm of professional cooking and in the *haute cuisine* sector in particular. This section aims to review the literature in order to identify the underlying historical, sociological and cultural causes for the under-representation of female professional chefs, whilst highlighting the likely consequences of this phenomenon on the culture and identity of (elite) chefs and their brigades.

Despite the paucity of academic studies addressing the issues of gender segregation in professional kitchens (but for Fine, 1987b; Burrell *et al.*, 1997; Cooper, 1998), journalistic evidence from both the UK and the US has shown that professional kitchens are still male-dominated domains (Coeyman, 1997; Salkever, 2000; Narayan, 2001; Perlik, 2001) where chauvinistic views continue to prevail (Gaskell, 1997; Rayner, 2004; Roche, 2004).

Although figures from the UK hospitality industry relating to the proportion of male and female chefs/cooks do not differ greatly¹⁸, it is important to recognise that the chef's occupation is highly segmented among the different sectors of the industry, with male chefs/cooks working predominantly in restaurants, including hotels and pubs and bars, and female chefs/cooks in schools, canteens, social work and hospitals (People 1st, 2006). Furthermore, as Wood (1997, 2000) pointedly suggests, the tendency to conflate the chefs/cooks category disguises the fact that women are more likely to be cooks than chefs – a phenomenon linked to the deskilling of the cooking process since the 1970's (see Chivers 1973; Gabriel, 1988; Crompton and Sanderson, 1990; Bagguley 1987, 1990, 1991; Purcell, 1996, 1997) and the corresponding 'feminisation of labour' whereby the low status and rewards of deskilled jobs become associated with the performance of such jobs by women.

Progress towards gender equality has also been particularly slow among restaurant owners and chefs in the *haute cuisine* sector which, according to Burrell *et al.* (1997)

¹⁸ In the UK, there were 135,000 male chefs/cooks compared to 109,000 female chefs/cooks according to the Office for National Statistics (2006).

and Pratten (2003b), has a reputation for sexism. In the UK context alone, only five restaurants, out of the 140 restaurants awarded a Michelin star in 2010, have a female head chef (i.e. Frances Atkins, Tessa Bramley, Rose Gray [1939-2010] and Ruth Rogers [both at the *River Café*], Angela Hartnett and Hélène Darroze) (Michelin Travel Publications, 2010). Likewise, in a comparative study between France, Italy, Spain and the UK, based on a cross-national survey of hotel employment practices and case studies of hotels in each country, Burrell *et al.* (1997) found that the cooking craft tradition tends to work to the detriment of women in both France and the UK, although resistance to women chefs in the *haute cuisine* sector is felt to be stronger in France. Yet, the tradition that continues to compel British (and American) chefs to acquire experience working in a French kitchen (Bartholomew and Garey, 1996; Mennell, 1996; Cooper, 1998) may indirectly expose female cooks to chauvinism and erect further barriers to their career prospects (Rayner, 2004).

The perdurability of sexist and chauvinistic attitudes in the *haute cuisine* sector is also reflected in the opinions of a few UK Michelin-starred chefs, as quoted in journalistic articles (Gaskell, 1997; Rayner, 2004). Drawing upon Gaskell's (1997: 21) interview with Michelin-starred chef Raymond Blanc, Wood (2000: 131, emphasis added) neatly summarises some of the most popular 'common sense views' as follows:

...Raymond Blanc offers up the observations that it is a very demanding occupation physically; it is probably a question of DNA as women have been so subservient to men for so long that they can cook for duty not pleasure; that women tend to follow recipes slavishly where "The men will always add something personal. Something creative"; and that in commercial kitchens men and women often find their partners and, as relationships develop, men emotionally blackmail their female partners out of their job. Before the politically correct reach for their nutcrackers, it should be noted that Raymond Blanc is really articulating *common sense views that abound in the industry*.

Likewise, according to the Michelin-starred chefs interviewed by Rayner (2004) (i.e. Eric Chavot, Angela Hartnett, Philip Howard, Giorgio Locatelli, Michel Roux jr and Marcus Wareing), the most common reason given to account for male dominance in

professional kitchens is the requirement for physical strength and stamina, linked to the long working hours and the necessity to lift heavy pots. Although popular, the latter reason seems however unfounded given that the lifting of heavy pots is either redundant in modern kitchens or easily counteracted through teamwork.

These attitudes could therefore be reflective of the phenomenon described by Leidner (1991, 1993) in his discussion of gender-segregated service jobs, whereby gender segregation reinforces the belief/assumption that non-traditional members (women in this instance) do not possess the traits necessary to perform the roles. In other words, when an occupation has historically been the province of a single gender, gender segregation provides conforming evidence that people of that gender must be especially well suited to the work, even if at other times and places, the other gender does the same work (as in the case of women involved in domestic cooking). As a consequence, gender segregation creates the impression that gender differences are natural, although they are in fact social constructions (Leidner, 1993; Dick and Jankowicz, 2001). In light of the above, it seems important to briefly outline the historical origins of gender segregation in professional cooking in order to understand where these social constructions come from and why they continue to affect the occupational culture and identity of chefs.

According to sociologists and (feminist) historians, the under-representation of female chefs in the realm of professional cooking and *haute cuisine* is indeed best explained in relation to the *socially constructed* male/female divide that has characterised the culinary hierarchy throughout history (Banner, 1973; Goody, 1982; Mennell *et al.*, 1992; Mennell, 1996; Trubek, 2000; Swinbank, 2002; Ferguson, 2004). Thus, Banner (1973: 212) argues that there have been no female great chefs throughout the ages ‘because the role has not been available to them’, despite women’s continuous involvement in the creation of new dishes and new cuisines as part of everyday cooking, and their indirect influence on male professional chefs. Banner (1973: 206) shows that male chefs have traditionally been eager to exclude women from the realm of professional cooking and *haute cuisine* in order to reduce competition and shore up their own status, for they knew that ‘any identification of their occupation with women would only serve to debase it in the world’s eyes’. The situation was, according to Banner (1973: 205), further exacerbated by the fact that status-conscious aristocrats have

traditionally preferred to be served by men, since '[b]y taking over a role normally assigned to a woman, a man raises the status of that role and thereby the status of his employer'.

Despite the validity of the above arguments, Mennell (1996) argues that Banner (1973) fails to account for the reason why male chefs/cooks have been able to deny the role of 'great chef' to women, which, according to Mennell (1996), is linked to the association of women with ordinary domestic cooking in most human cultures. Similarly, Swinbank (2002) applies a feminist analysis to explain the existence of a culinary hierarchy in western culture, in which men's cooking, in contrast to women's, has mainly been public cooking. As Swinbank (2002: 478) explains, the low status accorded to women's domestic cooking results from a combination of the nature/culture divide and the sexual division of labour with which it has become associated:

In western society the nature/culture divide which aligns women with matter and nature and men with reason and the intellect and culture has led to a deeply engrained cultural belief held by both men and women, that when cooking is done by men it is elevated to a level separate and distinct from and, above all, superior to that done by women.

Like Banner (1973), Goody (1982), Mennell (1996) and Swinbank (2002) all demonstrate that, from Egyptian times to the era of Michelin-starred restaurants of the twentieth century, women's culinary creativity has been appropriated by male professional chefs in the creation of *haute cuisine*, although the latter have consistently sought to distance themselves from women's domestic cooking and denied their dependence on it. As Trubek (2000) and Ferguson (2004) argue, this deliberate distancing by male chefs became especially marked with the development of French *haute cuisine* as chefs aspired to the status of professionals. According to Trubek (2000: 126), this phenomenon is particularly well illustrated in the writings of Escoffier in which the latter was keen to establish a 'male/female, professional/ domestic, making-art/making-do division of culinary labour'.

It is also interesting to note that the gender connotations of the appellations 'chef' and 'cuisinier(e)' in the French language point to the traditional exclusion of women from

the realm of professional cooking (Cooper, 1998; Wood, 2000; Pratten 2003b). Indeed, whilst the word 'cuisinier' (French for 'cook') has a female counterpart ('cuisinière'), the word 'chef' is a masculine term for 'head' or 'chief' which is specific to men and for which there is no feminine equivalent. Similarly, Chivers (1973) points out that, in the UK context, the term 'cook' has historically been associated with both subordinate women in the world of public cooking and women cooking in the home.

Interestingly, Ashley *et al.* (2004: 183) suggest that such distancing by male chefs from (feminine) domestic cooking is still relevant to today's practices, as illustrated in the case of male television chefs who endeavour to present cooking as a source of pleasure and entertainment, 'to suggest that the care invested in the meal is not a product of domestic labour but "aestheticised leisure"'. Brunsdon *et al.* (2001: 36-9), Hollows (2003a) and Ashley *et al.* (2004) all similarly explain that, to maintain their claims to expertise in culinary matters, whilst legitimating cooking as a masculine practice, male television chefs (such as Jamie Oliver) create domestic life as a sphere of leisure and lifestyle rather than labour, by emphasising performance and appearance display. More importantly, however, is the persistence of a gender-based culinary hierarchy among celebrity and television chefs and cooks, reflecting perduring gender-based stereotypes within western society (Wood, 2000). There is indeed significant evidence to suggest that television chefs are almost always male, whilst female professional chefs rarely become a 'big household name' in the way that male chefs do, unless they are presented as '*mediators* rather than *creators* of cuisine', as in the case of Julia Childs in the US (Swinbank, 2002: 494), and Delia Smith (Wood, 2000) and 'Domestic Goddess' Nigella Lawson in the UK (Hollows, 2003b).

In addition to the above historico-sociological factors, it is important to note, along with Mennell (1996), that the influence of the military model on the realm of professional cooking may also have contributed to the development of a gender-based culinary hierarchy, whilst permeating the occupational identity and culture of chefs. According to Mennell (1996), it is probable that men's function in the kitchens of the court began as an extension of their role as cooks within armies during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Thus, as Cooper (1998) points out, no women in the armies meant no women in the kitchens and consequently no women in the guilds. In time, as male chefs sought to separate their profession from domestic cooking, they

also introduced in the kitchen uniforms, discipline and hierarchy based on the military model (Mennell, 1996). An example of this can be found in the chef's white toque which has been identified as a version of the black hats of the Greek Orthodox priests and uniforms, based on those worn by soldiers in the Turkish Army (Cooper, 1998). Similarly, the terms 'brigade' and '*partie* system' both derive from the realm of the army (Balazs, 2002; Ferguson, 2004) upon which French chef (and ex-military) Escoffier is said to have drawn to develop his efficient and autocratic model of kitchen organisation (Cooper, 1998). As Cooper (1998) and Swinbank (2002) argue, these military-inherited traits may in fact account for the perduring hierarchical structure and male management style that characterise modern professional kitchens (see Bourdain, 2000), whilst contributing to a masculine and macho ethos which continues to alienate women.

The masculine ethos of professional kitchens has indeed repeatedly been highlighted as one of the most significant reasons for women's exclusion from professional cooking. Burrell *et al.* (1997: 173) found that 'the atmosphere in French and UK kitchens was often described as "masculine" and characterised by vulgar jokes or "banter"', whilst several of their interviewees 'indicated that women found this type of atmosphere unpleasant and that it put them off working in the kitchen'. As Johns and Menzel (1999) and Swinbank (2002) have argued, a macho culture is likely to be encouraged and 'justified' in a pressurised restaurant environment, and to lead to macho and misogynist language and behaviour that creates a hostile and intimidating working environment for women. Based on 500 surveys with US female professional chefs and cooks and additional in-depth interviews, American chef Ann Cooper (1998) demonstrates that the macho atmosphere of professional kitchens linked to swearing, rudeness, sexual jokes and 'hazing'¹⁹, is indeed a significant factor deterring women from entering the trade and/or hindering their career development.

In the broader literature on occupational cultures, the distinctive features of (traditional) male occupational cultures have also been identified as significant obstacles for women working in male-dominated occupations (Rothman, 1998). Drawing upon a range of occupational cultures, Rothman argues that group solidarity is indeed

¹⁹ 'Hazing' is a North American term denoting subjection of new recruits to strenuous, humiliating or dangerous tasks (rites of passage?) in view of promoting group loyalty and camaraderie through shared suffering (Pearsall, 2001: 654; Wikipedia, 2006c).

emphasised and encouraged in different ways in women's and men's occupational cultures (Reskin and Padavic, 1994), as women are more prone to celebrate personal life (Lamphere, 1985), whilst men prefer social activities that promote reciprocity (Spradley and Mann, 1975; Padavic, 1991), courage, masculinity and heterosexuality, such as reciprocal buying of drinks, hazing, or playful, ritualistic sexual assaults on newcomers. The entry of women into traditionally-male occupations has generated an extensive literature (for example, Spencer and Podmore, 1987; Sheppard, 1989; Marshall, 1995) whereby the barriers that women face in traditionally-male occupations are often linked to their difficulties in adjusting to male occupational cultures.

Yet, other authors, influenced by Joan Acker's (1990, 1992) theory of gendered organisations, have shown that gender segregation is often maintained by active strategies of exclusion and demarcation within the occupation (Witz, 1992; Britton, 1997, 2000a, 2000b; Pierce, 1995; Williams, 1995; Lupton, 2000; Rundblad, 2000). According to Acker (1990, 1992), organisations and occupations play a key role in maintaining gender inequality by reproducing gendered ideas and practices, through ideology, structure and interaction patterns. At the ideology level, occupations are gendered in that the public's ideas about appropriate incumbents are linked to notions of masculinity and femininity, as in the case of the military (Britton and Williams 1995; Williams 1989), nursing (Williams 1989) and clerical work (Pringle 1989; Rogers and Henson 1997). It could be argued that the same is true of chefs in the realm of *haute cuisine*, as Wood (2000) alludes to in his discussion of stereotypical ideas surrounding the image of chefs. At the level of the organisational structure, Acker (1990) and Williams (1995) argue that policies and practices governing divisions of labour and allocations of responsibilities may reflect gendered ideas, by 'framing the "ideal" worker as one with few nonwork obligations' (Britton, 2000b: 281). Bartholomew and Garey (1996) and Cooper (1998) also point to similar mechanisms at work in the realm of professional cooking linked to the work-family conflicts which primarily affect women in western society: the irregular and unsociable work schedules compel female chefs and cooks to choose between giving up their career to care for a family and putting their family aspirations on hold.

Finally, according to Acker's (1990) theory, patterns of interaction may function to increase gendered inequalities, as when male workers resist the encroachment of

women in male-dominated occupations, or when sexual harassment discourages women from entering or remaining in the occupation (West and Fenstermaker 1995; West and Zimmerman 1987). From this perspective, the perpetuation of a macho culture in the realm of professional cooking, through hierarchical and competitive structures, misogynist talk, sexual joking and hazing (Cooper, 1998), may thus be understood as a deliberate strategy to exclude women from the occupation (as highlighted in other occupations, see Kirkpatrick [1974] and Easterday *et al.* [1977]).

Yet, ethnographic research in four Minnesota restaurant kitchens undertaken by Fine (1987b) contradicts the above hypothesis by showing that women *can* be accepted by male chefs and cooks, as long as they accept and mirror patterns of male bonding and behaviour. According to Fine, the relationship between male and female cooks/chefs depends more on the woman's attitudes than on the community of men where norms and rules are entrenched and unlikely to change rapidly. The rules are given by the majority, and women have little choice but to comply with them if they wish to be accepted. Although unstated by men and typically not even realised by them, these rules have an ethnomethodological reality (Garfinkel, 1967), in the sense that women are able to highlight their existence by accidentally breaking them.

According to Fine (1987b: 134), the most significant obstacles which women must overcome to become accepted in a male-dominated kitchen are: 'off-colour' humour and obscene language, sexual talk directed at women, and the need for cooperation in accomplishing the informal side of work. Whilst male cooks see rough talk and the trading of obscene stories as enjoyable and desirable to provide breaks from work, women tend to attribute deliberate intention to their male co-workers, and be offended by it. Yet, female chefs/cooks are likely to be rejected by the occupational group if they are seen as disrupting the atmosphere by refusing to take part in the banter, especially as joking is a traditional way by which unstated but crucial values are expressed. Fine further explains that, for some male cooks, the introduction of women into the kitchen environment would mean removing sexual joking from the workplace, which in turn would lead to a diminished sense of community and make work less satisfying and efficient.

With this in mind, Fine identifies the use of sexual remarks targeted at female colleagues (including 'hustling' and playful sexual banter) as reminiscent of the

practice of 'binging' (see Haas, 1972) in which the more established workers in the construction industry 'test' the new recruits to see whether they can be accepted as trustworthy members of the occupation. Fine (1987b) indeed discovered that sexual remarks are not designed to make a woman's life unpleasant (although it might well be their effect) but are typically aimed at newcomers and those of less status in the work environment. The female cook/chef is thus expected to accept this male sensual play and sexual talk and banter in return, in line with the male norms of the workplace.

Finally, Fine argues that male chefs and cooks are likely to reject women if they believe that the latter are unable to become full members of the kitchen community because of their inability/reluctance to do everything that men can (i.e. to lift heavy pots and packages of food and to perform dangerous tasks such as cutting meat). Fine highlighted that when a female cook declines to participate in the informal underside of the occupation and perform strenuous or dangerous tasks, she becomes untrustworthy and therefore cannot be accepted by the males, who are then likely to generalise her behaviour to the whole of womankind. On the contrary, when a woman does perform all the tasks involved in a cooperative work relationship, her success is not generalised to the gender group for she is seen as an exception.

Fine's (1987b: 144) research thus shows that '[m]en do not object to female co-workers out of misogynistic urge. It is not gender *per se* that is the problem, but rather the cultural traditions surrounding gender'. In other words, Fine suggests that women must embrace the occupational culture and identity of chefs and cooks in its masculine expression, or risk being seen as a threat to the group, due to women's potential to disrupt the patterns of male interaction which most contribute to building group solidarity and belongingness (i.e. joking, 'binging', 'hazing' and trust through full cooperation).

To demonstrate the validity of his findings, Fine points to the sexual dynamics of participant observation and argues that being a male researcher was advantageous to obtain close rapport with male chefs and cooks on sex-role issues, unlike research undertaken by women researchers which tends to deemphasise the male perspective on 'token' women and to ground the research findings 'in what women think "must" cause the behaviour of their male colleagues' (Fine, 1987b: 132). Despite their pertinence, Fine's findings seem to be suggesting that the masculine ethos of the

occupational culture is *immutable* whilst painting a rather bleak future for women who have no choice but to become ‘one of the boys’ or at least play by the boys’ rules (see also Roche, 2004). Unlike Fine, Paoline *et al.* (2000) and Paoline (2003) suggest that the representation of females (as well as racial minorities, and college-educated personnel) in the police workforce has the potential to bring different outlooks to the occupation, which may in turn change socialisation patterns and transform the way in which officers collectively interpret the world around them. In addition, it is important to note that Fine’s (1987b) findings may now be outdated and irrelevant to today’s practices. This study therefore intends to provide an updated account of the situation through first-hand investigation, whilst continuing Fine’s (1987b) analysis of the problem of gender segregation in professional kitchens from a *cultural* viewpoint.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Despite the lengthiness of the above review, it is necessary to reiterate the paucity of studies addressing the culture and identity of chefs, in any systematic manner, notably in the UK. Whilst the piecemeal nature of the body of literature has called for a chronological approach to the review, the main insights derived about the occupational culture and identity of chefs will be summarised thematically, and conceptualised in light of theories of identity and culture formation (see Chapters 2, 3, 4) in the Research Findings/Discussion (see Chapter 7).

LITERATURE GAPS AND CONSEQUENT RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The above review of the existing literature has however helped identify a number of literature gaps which the present study seeks to address. Whilst there is no systematic and *holistic* study addressing the occupational identity and culture of chefs, the following themes can be identified as *specific* research lacunae:

- The occupational group of chefs working in the haute cuisine sector is particularly under-researched, but for a few management studies (i.e. Balazs, 2001, 2002; Johnson

et al., 2005) with little relevance to occupational culture and issues of self-concept, identity formation and 'identity work' (Fine, 1996a, 1996b; Prus, 1996).

- There is also a paucity of research on the social structures and processes through which the culture and identity of chefs is created and maintained, notably the occupational *ideology* and *cultural forms* through which such ideology is conveyed. Insufficient attention has indeed been given to cultural forms such as symbols, myths, stories, rites, rituals, ceremonies, gestures, language, physical artefacts and settings (see Trice, 1993), but for the identification of a few 'chef' symbols in the work of Saunders (1981a, 1981b) and Fine (1996a) and a few myths of kitchen violence highlighted by Johns and Menzel (1999). In addition to the identification of ideological and cultural forms *per se*, the process of occupational *socialisation* and *enculturation* of chefs is still little understood, notably with regards to the haute cuisine sector.

- Little attention has been given to the influence of gender, race/ethnicity and social class on the culture and identity of chefs/cooks, but for the now dated work of Chivers (1972, 1973) on proletarianisation and that of Fine (1987b) on issues of gender inequalities in professional kitchens.

- Finally, there is a need to address the potential relevance of tackling the enduring HRM issues experienced by managers in the hospitality industry through a better understanding of the occupational culture (i.e. the recruitment, retention and training of chefs, and alienation of chefs from management).

6. Methodology and Methods

RESEARCH FOCUS

TO EXAMINE THE OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITY AND CULTURE OF CHEFS IN UK HAUTE CUISINE RESTAURANTS

RESEARCH CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

To reiterate from the introductory chapter, this research falls into the field of hospitality studies and focuses on chefs and their kitchen brigades, a world which has traditionally remained secluded, until the emergence of the recent phenomenon of celebrity chefs and their ‘open kitchens’, revealing the previously secret ‘backstage’ (Goffman, 1959) of professional cooking. Although a popular interest in chefs has grown considerably for the past two decades, remarkably little methodical analysis has been carried out about the work of chefs (Wood, 1997) and, in particular, the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths) that help to perpetuate a sense of cohesion, identity and belonging that defines ‘being a chef’.

In light of the above, this study will endeavour to address the following research aim and objectives:

RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The research aim is to examine the occupational identity and culture of chefs in UK haute cuisine restaurants. In support of this aim, the research objectives are as follows:

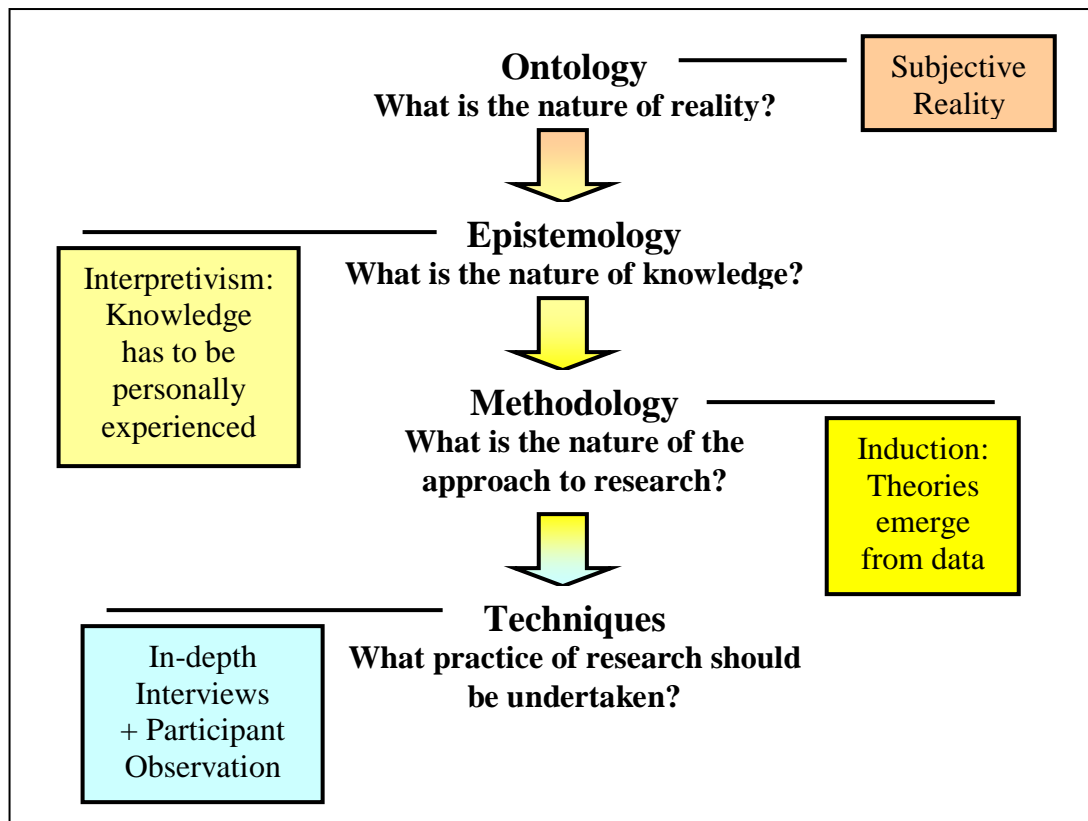
1. To explore the role of work in identity formation with regard to chefs, and examine their self-concept and occupational identity.
2. To examine how the occupational identity and culture of chefs is created and maintained through social structures and processes, such as the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths.

3. To investigate whether issues related to the social class, gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity of chefs influence, or are influenced by, the culture and identity of the occupational group.
4. To consider the implications of the occupational identity and culture of chefs for HRM issues, such as the recruitment, retention and training of chefs.

SELECTION OF A PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH PARADIGM

As illustrated in Figure 6.1, this section explores the rationale behind the interpretivist research paradigm adopted for the study, taking into account both the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin the research, together with the consequent methodological considerations.

Figure 6.1: Selection of research paradigm and associated stages



Sources: Adapted from Burrell and Morgan (1979) and Goulding (2002)

Following an examination of the implicit research assumptions, it is argued that a nominalist ontological position should be adopted insofar as the ‘reality’ to be investigated is subjective and constructed through the social interactions of chefs and

their brigades. The discussion then turns to the epistemological assumptions that stem from the adoption of such an ontological position. Under the interpretivist paradigm, it is maintained that knowledge of this subjective reality will by necessity also be subjective and based on the experience and insights of the social actors themselves. Accordingly, the chosen interpretivist paradigm calls for an inductive approach to research and the use of an 'ideographic' methodology (Burrell and Morgan, 1979), which involves the collection of rich and qualitative evidence based on the first-hand knowledge of chefs and their brigades.

Drawing upon the work of Kuhn (1970 [1962]), Thompson *et al.* (1989: 133) state that 'a paradigm refers to a group of researchers sharing common assumptions about the nature of reality, utilising common methodologies, and dealing with similar problems'. In broad terms, a paradigm can be defined as a basic belief system or world view that defines the nature of the world and underpins researchers' knowledge claims (Goulding, 2002), whilst helping to clarify research designs for data collection and interpretation (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002).

It is traditionally acknowledged that the choice of a particular paradigm is not only determined by the nature of the research problem, but also by the researchers' own assumptions about the nature of reality and knowledge (Collis and Hussey, 2003). Goulding (2002: 36) remarks that it is indeed well accepted today that whichever paradigm is adopted, 'the findings will only be one perspective drawn from a range of possibilities'. Under the influence of Kuhn's (1970 [1962]) work it is customarily deemed imperative for a research study to be framed within one philosophical paradigm and to remain within it (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

ADOPTED ONTOLOGICAL POSITION

Burrell and Morgan (1979: 1) note that 'all social scientists approach their subject via explicit or implicit assumptions about the nature of the social world and the way in which it may be investigated'. It seems paramount indeed to start off by outlining the key assumptions implicit in the research study, since the latter have clear implications for the ontological and epistemological positions adopted.

The following statements illustrate the implicit assumptions held about the nature of the world of chefs: The world of chefs is socially and structurally complex; chefs have a shared experience and level of knowledge; the meanings that chefs ascribe to social situations are important in determining what shapes their behaviour and motivates their actions; knowledge is thus derived from the direct experience of chefs.

The basic ontological choice that social scientists are faced with is encapsulated in the nominalism-realism debate, which questions ‘whether the object of investigation is the product of consciousness [nominalism, also known as subjectivism] or whether it exists independently [realism, also known as objectivism]’ (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998: 103). It is clear from the aforementioned statements that the research ontological position adopted is nominalist insofar as the ‘reality’ to be investigated is the product of chefs’ individual consciousness, rather than being objective and external to them (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

It is considered that the world of chefs is socially constructed and given meaning by the social actors themselves; and therefore it will be understood through an examination of the perceptions and actions of the chefs and their brigades (Collis and Hussey, 2003; Bryman, 2004). In effect, adopting a nominalist position is to deny that one real world exists ‘out there’, independently of what individuals perceive, and instead to support the view that ‘reality is essentially mental and perceived’ (Hunt, 1991: 35). Kitchen reality is thus subjective and constructed on the basis of shared meanings and through the social interactions of chefs and their brigades.

ADOPTED EPISTEMOLOGICAL POSITION

Burrell and Morgan (1979) suggest that it is widely accepted that different sets of ontological assumptions about the social world imply different epistemologies which then determine the adoption of different philosophical research paradigms, among which the two extreme positions are positivism and anti-positivism [also known as interpretivism] (Morgan and Smircich, 1980; Tomkins and Groves, 1983; Bryman, 2004).

Whilst the term ‘positivism’ is used to refer to epistemologies ‘which seek to explain and predict what happens in the social world by searching for regularities and

causal relationships between its constituent elements' (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 5); by contrast, the epistemology of 'anti-positivism' [or 'interpretivism'] contends that the social world can only be understood from the point of view of the individuals who are directly involved in the activities under study (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

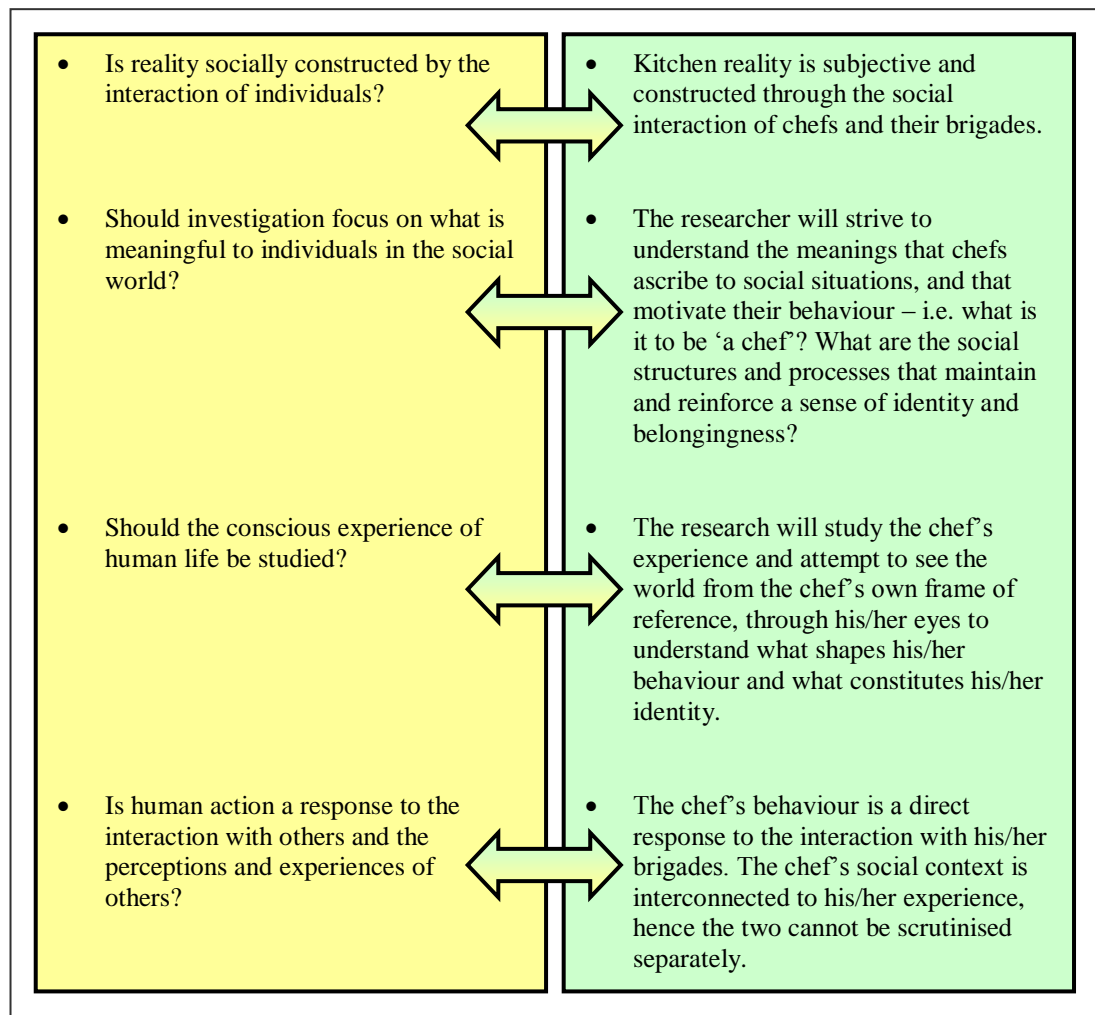
With regard to the research in question, the adopted nominalist ontological position calls for a particular set of epistemological assumptions about 'the best ways of enquiring into the nature of the world' (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002: 31). Given that the kitchen reality is considered to be subjective and constructed on the basis of the shared meanings of chefs and their brigades, knowledge of this reality will also be subjective and based on 'experience and insight of a unique and essentially personal nature', rather than being acquired and transmitted objectively in a tangible form (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 2). The epistemological position adopted for the study is thus interpretivist and characterised by the following assumptions about the grounds of knowledge:

- Knowledge is of significance if it is based on the understanding of the different constructions and meanings that people [i.e. chefs] place upon their experience. Knowledge is not of significance because it is based on observations of an external reality and measurement of social phenomena, as the positivists claim (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998; Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002; Collis and Hussey, 2003).
- It therefore follows that understanding how individuals shape and give meaning to their social world requires 'an interpretative approach with a concern for the inner world of the subjects' (Finn *et al.*, 2001: 6). In other words, interpretivist researchers should strive to explain why individuals have different experiences and interpret the meanings that the latter ascribe to certain social situations, rather than looking for external causes or stimuli to explain human behaviour (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002).
- The researcher is not independent of what is being researched, but a part of it (Collis and Hussey, 2003). It is acknowledged that there is an unavoidable involvement of the researcher in the observation process, since researchers bring about certain values and beliefs that impinge upon their interpretation (Clark *et al.*, 1998). Furthermore, as Collis

and Hussey (2003) point out the interpretivist paradigm assumes that social reality is within us and dependent on the mind, hence the act of investigating reality will undoubtedly have an effect on that reality.

In guise of synopsis, Figure 6.2 attempts to reconcile some of the ontological and epistemological assumptions that form the interpretivist paradigm, and demonstrates the viability of the paradigm for the research in question.

Figure 6.2: Assessment of the viability of the interpretivist paradigm for the research



Source: Adapted from Finn *et al.* (2001: 6)

METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Associated with the ontological and epistemological issues is a third set of methodological assumptions concerned with the process of research, or what Goulding (2002: 36) refers to as the way in which ‘the enquirer go[es] about finding out what he/she believes can be known’.

Although some authors use the terms methodology and methods interchangeably, for the purposes of this research methodology is understood to mean ‘the overall approach to the research process’, whilst methods refer to ‘the various means by which data can be collected and/or analysed’ (Collis and Hussey, 2003: 55). In particular, methodology addresses research design issues such as the scope of the research, the research approach in relation to the use of theory, the type of data collected, and the way in which the data will be analysed and interpreted.

A common trend in the research methods literature is the recognition that different ontologies and epistemologies are likely to predispose social scientists towards different research methodologies, as Figure 6.3 illustrates (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002; Collis and Hussey, 2003).

Figure 6.3: Research paradigms and methodological implications

Positivism	Interpretivism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on meanings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks for causality and fundamental laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tries to understand what is happening
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces phenomena to simplest elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at the totality of each situation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulates and tests hypotheses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops ideas through induction from evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tends to produce quantitative data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tends to produce qualitative data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data is highly specific and precise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data is rich and subjective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The location is artificial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The location is natural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationalises concepts so that they can be measured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses multiple methods to establish different views of phenomena
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes large samples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small samples are investigated in-depth overtime

Sources: Adapted from Remenyi *et al.* (1998: 104) and Collis and Hussey (2003: 55)

Before outlining the methodological implications of the adopted research paradigm, it is important to note, first and foremost, that the research requires the collection of primary data – considering the lack of theorising about the occupational identity and culture of chefs – and therefore takes the form of an empirical study, as opposed to a theoretical study (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). It is from the collection of relevant evidence that conclusions will be drawn.

More specifically, the interpretivist research paradigm tends to call for an inductive approach to research. Indeed, as Remenyi *et al.* (1998) pointedly remark it is not possible to spell out *a priori* the steps of interpretivist study since the approach unfolds as the research proceeds (through evidence collection). Rich descriptions are sought which are the building blocks of the argument. Furthermore, the need for an inductive approach to research is also justified considering the gap identified in the literature with regard to the occupational identity and culture of chefs, and the consequent difficulty in formulating theoretical constructs. The research will therefore start with no presuppositions about the chefs' occupational identity and culture and allow ideas to emerge from the collected data.

Furthermore, the chosen research paradigm also influences the type of data to be collected. Indeed, under an interpretivist paradigm, considerable emphasis is placed upon the quality and depth of the data, in order to generate a rich picture and explain and understand human behaviour (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). The research problem formulated under an interpretivist paradigm thus demands the collection of qualitative evidence that 'captures the richness of detail and nuance of the phenomena being studied' (Collis and Hussey, 2003: 57). It is indeed important under an interpretivist paradigm to conduct the research in the field, in the natural location of the social actors, in order not to control any aspects of the phenomena (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002).

Burrell and Morgan (1979) distinguish two types of methodologies in close relation to the two extreme research paradigms. They argue that the objective approach to social science – underpinned by positivism – is likely to entail a nomothetic methodology which focuses on the importance of basing research upon scientifically rigorous protocols involving the testing of hypotheses. By contrast, interpretivists tend to adopt an ideographic methodology which 'is based on the view that one can only understand the social world by obtaining first-hand knowledge of the subject under investigation';

and emphasises the importance of ‘getting close to one’s subject’ and ‘letting one’s subject unfold its nature and characteristics during the process of investigation’ (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 6). The chosen interpretivist paradigm for the research indeed lends itself to such an ideographic methodology. In order to ‘get close’ to the chefs’ own experience, the researcher will need to undertake a detailed analysis of the insights generated during the encounters with the chefs, both through the reported perceptions and stories recorded from the in-depth interviews and through the researcher’s own observations and field notes.

Besides, it is well worth noting that the interpretivist paradigm places much emphasis on the use of language and conversations between people, in order to understand how social actors ‘invent structures to help them make sense of what is going on around them’ (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002: 54). Particular attention needs to be given to the verbal medium, including the collection of stories, in order to shed light onto the way chefs create their own meanings. In-depth interviews and participant observation seem particularly suited to such purposes.

It is also well recognised in the literature that the use of different research methods is useful under an interpretivist paradigm to obtain different perceptions of the social phenomena under examination (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). Combining in-depth interviews with participant observation may therefore prompt a richer picture into the culture of chefs and the process of identity formation.

Lastly, consideration needs to be given to the way the data will be analysed and interpreted, under the interpretivist paradigm. The researcher needs to look to understand what is happening in a situation, by looking at the totality of the situation and searching for patterns (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). Van Maanen (1983: 9) notes that the interpretivist paradigm calls for ‘an array of interpretative techniques which seek to describe, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency of certain phenomena’. The interpretative technique adopted is thus a process of ‘sense-making’ which requires some form of reflexivity whereby recognition is given to the effect of the researcher’s bias onto what is being analysed and interpreted (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002: 54). Attention to issues of subjectivity and bias is indeed paramount to limit the issue of low reliability generally associated with interpretivist methodologies (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

In summary, this section has shown how different worldviews or research paradigms imply different grounds for knowledge about the social world (Burrell and Morgan 1979). Different ontological assumptions about the nature of reality indeed define different epistemological and methodological positions, to be adopted within the relevant philosophical research paradigm.

RESEARCH DESIGN

As discussed earlier, the research adopts a nominalist ontological position insofar as the ‘reality’ to be investigated is believed to be subjective and constructed through the social interactions of chefs and their brigades. This nominalist ontological position thus calls for an interpretivist epistemology, whereby the knowledge of this subjective reality is, by necessity, also subjective and based on the experiences and insights of the chefs themselves. Following an interpretivist paradigm implies that the researcher attempts to understand the social world from the point of view of chefs and their brigades, whilst interpreting the meanings that they ascribe to social situations and that motivate their actions.

The chosen interpretivist paradigm calls for an inductive approach and the use of an ‘ideographic’ methodology (Burrell and Morgan, 1979), which involves the collection of rich and qualitative evidence based on the first-hand knowledge of chefs and their brigades, in order for the researcher to view and interpret the social world through the eyes of the chefs under study. Both unstructured, in-depth interviews and overt participant observation are apposite to meet these methodological requirements, whereby the strengths of each method help to meet different facets of the research objectives.

Unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews with chefs are appropriate to investigate the chef’s self-concept and explore how chefs construct their own reality on the basis of a personal framework of beliefs, attitudes and values. Yet, the issue of reactivity associated with the artificial nature of the interview encounter can affect the validity of the research, as interviewees can become conscious of not divulging too much about themselves; or can exaggerate and distort reality. The unstructured, in-depth nature of the interviews, however, help to counteract these reactivity issues by

making the encounter less artificial, thus turning the interview into a ‘conversation with a purpose’ (Webb and Webb, 1932: 130).

Whilst the principal research instrument utilised in this study was the unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interview, in addition, ethnographic studies were conducted in the kitchens of haute cuisine restaurants, in order to understand, through direct observation, how the culture of chefs constructs and is constructed by the behaviours and experiences of chefs and their brigades. It is important to note that, while it was not the intention of the researcher to write an ethnographic account of ‘kitchen life’ *per se*, ethnography is seen as particularly relevant to the research objectives so as to go beyond what the chefs say about themselves (in the face-to-face interviews) and explore the shared system of meanings that form the kitchen culture. Combining unstructured, in-depth interviews with overt participant observation may therefore prompt a richer picture into the culture of chefs and the process of identity formation, as the information given by chefs about their own behaviour in interviews can be compared with observation of samples of their actual behaviour. In effect, ethnography enables the researcher to penetrate the ‘back region’ (Goffman, 1959) of the chefs’ world, and witness and identify the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths) that constitute the culture of kitchens. It is clear that such ‘kitchen behaviour’ could not be accounted for without direct observation, hence the imperative need to conduct ethnography in order to create a ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) and rich situational analysis of kitchen culture (see Van Maanen, 1988; Alasuutari, 1995; Vidich and Lyman, 2003).

In particular, overt participation is the selected type of ethnography and involves the researcher working in kitchens and collecting primary data through the direct observation of events, as well as through conversations, on-the-spot interviews and reflective interviews with members of the kitchen brigades, which help to clarify the meanings that they ascribe to certain situations, and, drawing upon the anthropological lexicon, to understand the ‘native’s view’ (Malinowski, 1964 [1922]). In addition, systematic note-taking and the use of a ‘reflective’ journal are deemed essential to encourage reflexivity and increase the validity of the research (see Mars and Nicod, 1984; Adler and Adler, 1998).

Whilst both unstructured, in-depth interviews and overt participant observation present some limitations, it is argued that the systematic use of reflexivity, together with the combination of both methods for respondent validation and triangulation purposes, help to offset issues of reactivity and observer bias, and generate a more valid and reliable set of data.

A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE TWO RESEARCH METHODS SELECTED FOR THIS RESEARCH: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWING AND ETHNOGRAPHY

As highlighted earlier, the research methods that have been selected for this research are qualitative interviewing and ethnography. This section seeks to discuss the relevance and appropriateness of these research methods for this research, taking into account the purposes of each method and its advantages and disadvantages, together with issues of validity and reliability. After a consideration of how the chosen interpretivist paradigm restricts the choice of methodology, the relevance of each research method is assessed in the light of the limitations and delimitations imposed by the research questions, and in conjunction with the practical constraints inherent in each method.

As discussed earlier, the philosophical paradigm adopted for the research is interpretivism. The implicit research assumptions made by the researcher call for a nominalist ontological position insofar as the ‘reality’ to be investigated is subjective and constructed through the social interactions of chefs and their brigades. Epistemologically, it follows that knowledge of this subjective reality will by necessity also be subjective and based on the experience and insights of the social actors themselves.

Morgan (1983: 19) highlights that decisions on methodological matters are fundamentally determined by the philosophical paradigm adopted since the latter influences researchers’ subsequent choice of ‘modes of engagement’. Interpretative research approaches reject the positivist’s over-deterministic orientation towards an understanding of human action and behaviour, on the basis that human beings are, unlike animals or physical objects, able to reflect on the events and phenomena that surround them and to attach to the social world meanings that subsequently influence their actions and behaviour (Gill and Johnson, 2002). Consequently, it is generally

argued that the research methods to be adopted under an interpretivist paradigm should allow researchers to view and interpret the social world through the eyes of the people under study (Bryman, 2004), thus leading to what Max Weber (1864-1920) termed *verstehen* to denote an understanding of how people make sense of their worlds (Gill and Johnson, 2002). In the words of Burrell and Morgan (1979: 6) such interpretivist methodological approaches are ‘ideographic’ and involve ‘getting close to one’s subject’ and ‘understand[ing] the social world by obtaining first-hand knowledge of the subject under investigation’.

The adoption of an interpretivist paradigm for the research thus requires research methods that enable the collection of rich and qualitative evidence based on the first-hand knowledge of chefs and their brigades. Accordingly, both in-depth interviews and ethnography would be relevant to the research, by enabling the researcher to ‘get close’ to the chefs’ experiences and leading to *verstehen*. This view is supported by Lofland and Lofland’s (1995: 16) position that researchers must ‘participate in the mind of another human being (in sociological terms, “take the role of the other”) to acquire social knowledge’; something which they are best capable of achieving through face-to-face interaction.

In addition, Bryman (2004) argues that interpretivist researchers’ preference for ‘seeing through the eyes of the people under study’ necessitates unstructured methods of data collection which offer the required flexibility to gain access to people’s world views and to tailor the research questions to the needs of the research. In-depth interviews and ethnography are particularly well suited to an ongoing configuration of the research process, enabling the researcher to start the research with a general focus and to gradually formulate more specific research questions out of the collected data.

Philosophical assumptions aside, the relevance of research methods is also dependent upon the research objectives. The research aims to understand how chefs view themselves in occupational terms, and to get insights into the reasons for their ‘kitchen behaviour’. Asking chefs about themselves in an in-depth interview seems the only viable means of finding out about chef’s self-concept, which is in that instance unlikely to be amenable to observation alone (Bryman, 2004). Indeed, it is generally argued that interviews are highly relevant to understand respondents’ attitudes and opinions, but most importantly to uncover the meanings that respondents attach to

issues and situations (Kvale 1996). Moreover, Jones (1985: 46) argues that interviews constitute an appropriate research method when the aim of the research is to understand how individuals construct the reality of their situation formed from the 'complex personal framework of beliefs and values, which they have developed over their lives...'. In-depth interviews would indeed enable the researcher to develop an understanding of the ways in which chefs and their brigades think about their world, and 'invent structures to help them make sense of what is going on around them' (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002: 54). Particular attention to respondents' stories and accounts throughout the interviews is likely to provide insights into the meanings that chefs ascribe to certain kitchen rites, rituals and relationships that are inherent to the process of chef identity formation.

Consideration also needs to be given to the degree of structure within the interviews. Unstructured, in-depth interviews are thought to be appropriate to the research in order to elicit rich and detailed data, whilst fulfilling Lofland and Lofland's (1995: 85) case that the essence of the research interview is the 'guided conversation'. Unlike semi-structured interviews where the same specific questions are asked each time, unstructured interviews are less artificial as the interviewers only have a list of topics which they want the respondents to talk about, but are free to ask them in any order and to vary the phrasing of the questions according to the replies already received (Finn *et al.*, 2000; Fielding and Thomas, 2001). Although the interviewer's role is minimised to allow the respondent to express his/her own ideas, the interviewer may nonetheless respond in a flexible way to the interviewee to achieve a free-flowing conversation, whilst still maintaining a focus for what is being asked (Wilson, 1996; Finn *et al.*, 2000; Fielding and Thomas, 2001).

To explore the social structures and processes that help construct and maintain the chef's identity, the research would certainly benefit from the flexibility and free-flowing nature of unstructured, in-depth interviews. However, the researcher needs to be aware of the drawbacks associated with this type of interview, such as the difficulties of data analysis. Comparability of responses is much reduced as interviewees do not answer the same questions, whilst the search for common themes may prove a time-consuming process. Finn *et al.* (2000) suggest that data quality is also highly dependent upon the listening and communicating skills of the interviewer who also

needs to pay special attention to non-verbal communication, such as the tone used in the replies (Clark *et al.*, 1998).

Issues of reactivity affecting the research validity also need to be taken into account when undertaking interviews. Bryman (2004) argues that the unnatural character of the interview encounter can lead to the emergence of reactive effects on the part of the respondents. Indeed, chefs' knowledge of the fact that their behaviour and culture is being scrutinised by the interviewer may make them conscious of not divulging too much about themselves. Conversely, the interview encounter may encourage respondents to exaggerate certain phenomena and distort reality (Foster 1996). The interviewer's communication skills may help tackle these reactive effects and turn the interview into 'a conversation with a purpose' (Webb and Webb, 1932: 130).

The second qualitative research method that is now considered in light of the research objectives is ethnography, which is broadly defined as the systematic observation of social groups that grew out of anthropological studies (Clark *et al.*, 1998). The distinctive feature of ethnography is fieldwork which involves the researcher spending considerable time with people in their natural settings, in view of understanding the culture of the people, and more specifically 'the ways that culture constructs and is constructed by the behaviours and experiences of its members' (Goulding, 2005: 299). Ethnography enables the researcher to explore the nature, construction and maintenance of a culture through the observation of its members' behaviour, and therefore is apposite to meet the research objectives. Geertz (1973: 17) states that 'behaviour must be attended to, and with some exactness, because it is through the flow of behaviour – or, more precisely, social action – that cultural forms find articulation'. Furthermore, Foster (1996: 61) argues that the aim of ethnography is also 'to produce detailed, qualitative descriptions of human behaviour that illuminate social meanings and shared culture'. The observation of the day-to-day social structures and processes of the chefs' workplace would thus enable the researcher to go beyond what chefs say, in order to explore the shared system of meanings that form the kitchen culture.

The research strategy of ethnography used initially by anthropologists is now commonly used by sociologists to study more contemporary cultures like communities and gangs, for example. A good illustration is Whyte's (1943) study of 'street corner society' which the ethnographer explored by living among a poor American-Italian

community. Ethnography has also been widened to the study of shop-floor relations (Roy, 1960; Lupton, 1963), and organisational and occupational cultures, such as that of jazz musicians (Becker, 1951), the police (Van Maanen, 1974; Paoline, 2003), and an advertising agency (Rosen, 1991). Various ethnographic studies also exist in the realm of hospitality and catering, such as Whyte's (1948, 1949) study on restaurant work processes, Spradley and Mann's (1975) on cocktail waitresses, Mars and Nicod's (1984) on the occupational culture of waiters, and Fine's (1987a, 1990, 1992, 1996a, 1996b) on US kitchen culture. The aforementioned studies all chose ethnography as a research method in view of understanding the meanings and processes through which members of particular groups make sense of their world. In a similar fashion, ethnography would be appropriate for the research in question, in order to understand what constitutes the social reality in which chefs operate, and to penetrate the 'back region' (Goffman, 1959) of the chef's world.

In practical terms, undertaking an ethnographical study means sharing the lives of the people under study and observing them from a position of detachment (Finn *et al.*, 2000). Fielding (2001: 148) notes that the techniques to record the experience are the direct observation of events, as well as information from conversations and interviews, and 'some effort to "think" oneself into the perspective of the members, the introspective, empathetic process Weber called *verstehen*'. Consideration also needs to be given to the role of the researcher and his/her degree of involvement in the activities of the people under study; that is, whether he/she will be participant or non-participant. Participatory observation combines immersion in the research setting and full participation in the lives and activities of those studied, in view of sharing their experiences and feelings, instead of merely observing what is happening (Boyle, 1994; Gill and Johnson, 2002). It is generally argued that participatory observation is the ethnographic technique most suited to research studies which emphasise 'interpretations of events, interaction between "actors" and the importance attached to language and meanings' (Finn *et al.*, 2000: 71). Furthermore, as Delbridge and Kirkpatrick (1994: 39) remark 'we cannot hope to adequately explain the behaviour of social actors unless we at least try to understand their meanings'. Applied to the research in question, overt participant observation would enable the researcher to move around, observe, interview and participate in kitchen tasks as appropriate, in an attempt to learn about

the symbolic world of chefs and to discover the nuances of meaning they ascribe to social phenomena.

Besides, undertaking participatory observation would enable the researcher to avoid the pitfall generally associated with non-participant observation; that is, interpreting events in a way which is reflective of the researcher's own value judgements, and not of the culture being studied, due to a lack of involvement with the group (Finn *et al.*, 2000). Moreover, Foster (1996) points out that the non-participant observer is likely to be viewed with suspicion by the subjects of the research, who might even react to the observer with hostility, or change their behaviour in order to present themselves in a particular way, thus undermining the validity of the research. Conversely, taking a participant role helps build rapport and relationships of trust and openness which can reduce issues of reactivity, by encouraging subjects to behave more 'naturally' (Foster, 1996).

Another significant choice needs to be made with regard to the overtness or covertness of the researcher's motives during participatory observation. Although the 'open' ethnographer runs the risk of changing the behaviour of members of the group under study by virtue of his/her openness, overt participation offers greater flexibility and avoids the ethical problems that deception entails (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). In the words of Roy (1970: 217) the overt ethnographer also becomes free to observe and 'run around as research interest beckons'.

The discussion now turns to a comparison of the two research methods, which highlights the clear advantages that overt participant observation has over unstructured, in-depth interviews, for the research:

- First, information about chefs' behaviour can be recorded directly by the researcher during participant observation, without having to resort to the retrospective accounts given by chefs during interviews (Foster, 1996).
- Whilst immersed in the research setting, the researcher is better equipped to learn about the culture of chefs and interpret their 'symbolic world' through the chefs' own eyes (Bryman, 2004). Conversely, interviews only provide artificial simulations of the social world of chefs (Gill and Johnson, 2002).

- The participant observer is able to acquire an understanding of the communications conventions of the group – not simply their dialect or jargon, but also the special meanings attached to ordinary words and slang, plus all forms of non-verbal communication (Clark *et al.*, 1998). Reflection on the group's use of the language is likely to provide insights into the rules that govern the relationships between chefs and their brigades (Fielding, 2001).
- The participant observer confronts chefs in their 'natural environments' and therefore enables a contextual understanding of the chef's social behaviour. This feature is not amenable to interviews which, by their very nature, disrupt the normal flow of events (Finn *et al.*, 2000; Bryman, 2004).
- In addition to the contextual nature of ethnography, participant observation benefits from the holistic view that it takes, by emphasising the interrelationship between cultural events, processes and relationships, rather than isolating individual aspects of the chef's culture (Clark *et al.*, 1998; Finn *et al.*, 2000).
- Because the interview relies primarily on verbal behaviour, the matters that chefs take for granted are less likely to emerge in interviews than in participant observation (Foster, 1996; Bryman, 2004). The observer may indeed be able to 'see' what chefs cannot, and to provide insights into the social structures and processes of chef identity formation. Participatory observation thus involves the synergic use of both 'emic' ('outsider' perspective) and 'etic' ('insider' view) data (Boyle, 1994). Prolonged immersion in the research setting provides the ethnographer with an insider's perspective from which he/she can understand how chefs make sense of their world; whilst, at the same time, the ethnographer still retains the necessary detachment of an outsider in order to analyse the culture of chefs more objectively (Spradley, 1980).
- Similarly, prolonged interaction in the kitchen may enable the researcher to explore the deviant and hidden activities characteristic of the kitchen culture that chefs may be reluctant to talk about during an interview (Bryman, 2004).

- Lastly, the unstructured nature of participant observation is also beneficial to uncover unexpected issues, and to minimise the influence of the researcher's preconceptions, given the absence of systematic questioning that is the hallmark of interviews (Foster, 1996).

Although overt participant observation is clearly suited to meet the research objectives, it is important to acknowledge the problems and limitations inherent in this research method, and which are likely to affect the validity of the research. In addition to the obvious issue of gaining access to chefs' kitchens, conducting an ethnographic study takes considerable time, in order to be accepted by the people being researched, and requires special attention to ethical considerations (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Marshall and Rossman, 1999).

Furthermore, the possibility of reactivity between the subjects of the community and the researcher in a piece of overt research constitutes a significant threat to the validity of observational data. Foster (1996) points out that conducting ethnography may lead to personal reactivity, as subjects start behaving differently because of the personal characteristics or behaviour of the observer, but also to procedural reactivity, characterised by a change in subjects' behaviour caused by their knowledge of the fact that they are being observed. Yet, it has been noted that in the case of participant observation, subjects tend to become accustomed to the observer's presence and begin to behave more 'naturally' the longer the observer is around, thus reducing the influence of reactivity (Bryman, 2004).

The reflexive nature of ethnography implies that the researcher is part of the world that is under study and is consequently affected by it, therefore posing a further threat to the validity of observational data (Boyle, 1994). Observer bias derives from such reflexivity, as observations are inevitably filtered through the interpretive lens of the observer and affected by the researcher's theoretical standpoints or existing knowledge (Foster, 1996). In effect, observations can never provide us with a direct representation of reality, since the observer's subjectivities can affect what behaviour is selected for observation and how this behaviour is interpreted and recorded, thus potentially resulting in invalid data (Foster, 1996). Furthermore, Bryman (2004) points out that the

researcher may also only be able to see through the eyes of some people who form part of a particular group, such as only people of the same gender, for example.

Lastly, an important problem ethnographers face in the field is that of ‘going native’, a term with an obvious origin in anthropology (Fielding, 2001). This is when the researcher identifies too closely with the subjects and loses his/her sense of detachment, thus leading him/her to adopt an over-sympathetic view of subjects and therefore to present a biased and inaccurate account (Foster, 1996). Although this issue is highly relevant for participant observers, Fielding (2001: 149) warns against the more likely danger of ‘not getting close enough’; that is, ‘of adopting an approach which is superficial and which merely provides a veneer of plausibility for an analysis to which the researcher is already committed’.

To deal with the limitations of participant observation, it is important for the researcher to balance the outsider and insider aspects of his/her role, or what is often termed ‘managing marginality’ in reference to the researcher’s attempt to manage a marginal position *vis-à-vis* subjects, to be at one with the group and yet to remain apart (Foster, 1996). Other ways of assessing validity may include techniques such as reflexivity, triangulation and respondent validation. Reflexivity involves the continual monitoring of, and reflection on, the research process, with regard to the extent of the researcher’s role in the process of data production and the extent to which the data is affected by the social context in which they were collected (Foster, 1996). Triangulation and respondent validation are also useful to supplement and check the data obtained from observation (Foster, 1996).

In summary, it is clear that both the use of unstructured, in-depth interviews and overt participant observation are apposite to the research, although the strengths of each method will help to meet different facets of the research objectives. This section has shown the extent to which the research interpretivist paradigm directs the choice of research methods towards qualitative and unstructured research methods, which enable the researcher to view and interpret the social world through the eyes of the people under study. Whilst both research methods are suitable to examine the culture of chefs and the process of chef identity formation, unstructured, in-depth interviews are seemingly more adequate to investigate the chef’s self-concept and explore how chefs construct their own reality on the basis of a personal framework of beliefs,

attitudes and values. Yet, this section has also demonstrated the clear advantages that overt participant observation may have over unstructured, in-depth interviews, due to the synergic use of both emic and etic data. Whilst immersed into the culture of chefs, the researcher will be better equipped to acquire a contextual and holistic understanding of chefs' social behaviour and to uncover unexpected and taken-for-granted social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen 'ideology', symbols, rituals, rites and myths) that are inherent to the process of chef identity formation.

Whilst both unstructured, in-depth interviews and overt participant observation present some limitations affecting the validity of the research, it is argued that the systematic use of reflexivity, and the combination of both methods for respondent validation and triangulation purposes, would help to offset issues of reactivity and observer bias, and generate a more reliable set of data.

SAMPLE

The research population was identified as being the totality of chefs in UK haute cuisine restaurants. Determining the sample for the study involved identifying a sampling framework (Mason, 1996); the population available who could provide the information that would answer the research questions posed.

The sample may be described as a purposive sample (Gilbert, 1993; Robson 1993; Cohen and Manion, 1994; Holloway and Wheeler, 1996; Parahoo, 1997). This is generally described as a sample where the researcher uses their judgement to select cases to be included on the basis of their relevance to the research question. According to Streubert and Carpenter (1999: 22) 'individuals are selected to participate in qualitative research based on their firsthand experience with a culture, social interaction or phenomenon of interest'. Thus, following a purposive sampling technique, the sample frame identified for the purposes of this study was Michelin-starred chefs and their kitchen brigades. Indeed, given their high-level of competence and experience, and the similar knowledge, training and passion that the group collectively shares, Michelin-starred chefs and their brigades constitute the elite or 'la crème de la crème' of the occupation and therefore were considered to be particularly informative cases for study who could provide the information that would answer the research questions

posed. Besides, Marshall and Rossman (1999: 113) argue that 'elite' individuals, such as Michelin-starred chefs, 'are those considered to be influential, prominent, and/or well-informed people in an organisation or community; they are selected for interview on the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research'.

The size of the sample was relatively small, which given the richness of the data generated is apposite in qualitative research. Mason (1996) suggests that this is usually necessary for pragmatic reasons to do with costs, particularly time and money.

The contact details of all potential participants were sourced from the Michelin Guide(s) Great Britain and Ireland (2006-8). Participants were recruited by sending a letter/email to each chef explaining the research and asking for volunteers to agree to participate in an unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interview. The recruitment of interviewees and access to fieldwork sites to conduct ethnography (participant observation) was carried out on an availability basis. The researcher however endeavoured to make the sample representative by taking into consideration the following issues: The location of the establishment (rural/urban, i.e. London); the type of establishment operated (hotel/restaurant); the number of Michelin stars held (one, two or three); the chef's status as patron or employee; the chef's gender/ethnicity; the size of the kitchen brigade and its gender mix. Indeed, ensuring that the participants form a representative sample increases the generalisability of the findings (Mason, 1996). Details of the chefs interviewed are listed in Appendix G.

DATA COLLECTION

The research was planned in two main stages, an initial stage using unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews as preparation for entering the culture, and a subsequent stage of ethnography (overt participant observation) and reflective interviews. The first stage, involving in-depth interviews, was used to investigate the chef's self-concept and explore how chefs construct their own reality on the basis of a personal framework of beliefs, attitudes and values. In-depth interviews were conducted throughout Great Britain and Ireland with fifty-four Michelin-starred chefs between January 30, 2007 and February 27, 2008, until theoretical saturation was reached (the point at which no major new insights are being gained) (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990,

1998; Seidman, 1991; Charmaz, 2000). The interviews varied in length, extending anywhere from thirty-four minutes to five hours and thirty-seven minutes. The average interview time however was two hours and fifty-seven minutes.

The second stage, involving ethnography (participant observation), was used in order to go beyond what the chefs say about themselves (in the face-to-face interviews) and explore the shared system of meanings that form the kitchen culture. Ethnographic studies, involving the direct observation of events, note-taking, conversations, on-the-spot interviews, reflective interviews and personal reflection, were carried out between May 8, 2007 and February 6, 2008, in four different Michelin-starred kitchens, including: A small hotel (one Michelin star); a large hotel (two Michelin stars); a rural stand alone restaurant (one Michelin star); and an urban (i.e. London) stand alone restaurant (two Michelin stars). Participant observation was conducted in each kitchen for twenty days, sixteen hours a day, eighty hours a week, over a period of thirty days on average. This timeframe provided short breaks between observations to write-up field notes. It is also worth noting that the number of observations/timeframe is advocated by Fine (1996b) in his study on US kitchen culture. In addition, noting the requirement to correspond sample size to qualitative method, Sandelowski (1995) recommends about thirty to fifty interviews and/or observations for an ethnographic study. Interviews (including conversations, on-the-spot interviews, and in-depth interviews) were carried out with all forty-six members of every kitchen brigade, including 'key informants' in every kitchen (see Whyte, 1943; Mars and Nicod, 1984; Wolcott, 1990; Robson, 1993; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). The interviews varied in length, extending anywhere from eleven minutes to four hours and thirty-two minutes cumulatively. The average interview time however was one hour and forty minutes.

RESEARCH METHODS: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWING

As noted previously, the principal research instrument utilised in this study was the unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interview. The interview, as numerous authors have commented, is arguably the most intensively used technique for data collection in social research (Holstein and Gubrium, 1997; Bryman, 2001). This informal interview format, which is often likened to a guided conversation, was selected since it is

designed to elicit information for qualitative analysis on a diversity of germane issues, while incorporating the flexibility to explore emergent topics in particular detail (Unruh, 1983). Maccoby and Maccoby (1954: 499) state that an interview is ‘a face to face verbal exchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinions or belief from another person or persons.’ A number of commentators including Burgess (1984, 1988) argue that empirical data elicited in this way is invariably more personal and detailed and closer to an individual’s lived experiences than that obtained from, for example, surveys. This, according to Reinharz (1992: 19) is because it provides access to ‘people’s ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher’. Miller and Glassner (1997) point out that although this approach is intended to privilege the voice of the respondent, the narrative that ensues is undoubtedly a collaborative construction produced *in situ* from the conversational exchange between the participant and the researcher. Holstein and Gubrium (1997: 123) liken this interaction between the respondent and the researcher to an “‘improvisational’” performance’ that ‘is spontaneous, yet structured – focused within loose parameters provided by the interviewer who is also an active participant’. Drawing upon the work of Paget (1999), Bain (2002: 58) makes the point that the researcher:

...is intimately implicated in the contextual and interpersonal creation of knowledge about the interviewee’s subjective experience through the selection of questions posed, how they are phrased (open or closed, probing or discontinuous), and how the answers are incorporated into an evolving conversation.

It is this interactive involvement of the researcher in particular that has led to many criticisms of the in-depth interview. Holstein and Gubrium (1997: 113) point out that those concerned with conventional quantitative research seldom consider the interview to be a reliable technique in the collection of data as it is as varied as any social encounter and thus susceptible to ‘bias, error, misunderstanding or misdirection...’. Bain (2002: 59) notes that it can be problematical to replicate an interview due to the ‘lack of standardised question and answer exchanges, the context-specific nature of the replies, and the subtle nuances of mood that shape the ongoing interaction’. She

further points out that if an interview might have developed somewhat differently had another researcher steered the conversational exchange, the criticism ultimately concerns how reliable the research findings are. Kirk and Miller (1986: 69) highlight that in ethnographic research practice the issue of reliability is concerned with ‘whether or not (or under what conditions) the ethnographer would expect to obtain the same finding if he or she tried again in the same way’. Peräkylä (1997) further points out that reliability can be augmented in other tangible ways by ensuring the inclusiveness and accuracy of transcriptions and digital recordings and testing the truthfulness of interpretation against other information sources.

What is more, interlaced with the problem of reliability is the issue of reactivity. Bryman (1988: 112) suggests that reactivity is ‘the reaction on the part of those being investigated to the investigator and his or her research instruments’. In an interview setting, this could involve characteristics of the researcher influencing the participant. Besides, it could entail the participant tailoring their responses to what they interpret the basic aims of the research study to be. Miller and Glassner (1997: 101) state that:

The issue of how interviewees respond to us based on who we are – in their lives, as well as the social categories to which we belong, such as age, gender, class and race – is ... of critical importance in establishing research relationships, rapport and trust, and in evaluating both the information obtained and the interaction that occurs, within in-depth interviews.

Besides, the ability to allow the respondent to elaborate freely, and steer the conversation into new and different lines of enquiry is a valuable interviewer skill utilised by the researcher. According to Atkinson (2002) the crucial point is that a balance is required between encouraging a free-flowing dialogue in which the respondent feels free to elaborate, and orienting the direction of the discussion in a manner that is considered by the researcher to be meaningful in terms of the research objectives. The choice was therefore made to select a broad interview guide as opposed to a pre-structured and rigid ‘list’ of questions (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). Such a balance is noted by Jones (1985: 47) who points out that although

...we are tied to our own frameworks, we are not totally tied up by them ... if we hold on to, modify, elaborate and sometimes abandon our prior schemes in a contingent response to what our respondents are telling us ... we are some way to achieving the complex balance between restricting structure and restricting ambiguity.

The selected manner of interviewing should essentially be steered by, and 'fit', the conceptual orientation. It is argued that in this research this aim is accomplished as the concern lies with extracting the chefs' own views and definitions. Jones (1985: 46) suggests that:

To understand other persons' constructions of reality we would do well to ask them ... and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms ... and in a depth which addresses the rich context that is the substance of their meanings...

This highlights that such an approach to data collection was necessary as the action/interaction orientation taps into the individual frames of reference and self-expressed worlds of the chefs.

Drawing upon the work Goffman (1959), Di Domenico (2003: 109) points out that the interview situation is itself a process of social interaction and as such:

...the interviewee's definition of the interview situation will be affected by aspects such as their 'first impressions' of the researcher, the extent to which they feel comfortable or at ease being interviewed, and the way in which they choose to manage the presentation of 'self' to the researcher.

These are unavoidable characteristics of the face-to-face interview. In order to secure 'good' data, the researcher tried to build-up a trust with every chef. A relaxed atmosphere was promoted and respondents were assured that confidentiality and anonymity would be safeguarded. Drawing upon the work of De Laine (2000), Di Domenico (2003: 109) notes that the researcher must however 'actively listen and respond to what the respondent says in order to engage with them, using one's ability

to do so as a research instrument in furthering the understanding of their “world” and construction of reality’.

Gillham (2000) suggests that empathic neutrality is important whereby the researcher uses personal insight while adopting a non-judgemental standpoint in the collection and analysis of data. Di Domenico (2003: 109) argues that ‘meanings and actions are necessarily set in context, as context frames the accounts relayed by the individuals concerned. Also, social life is seen in terms of processes rather than in static terms’. Furthermore, drawing upon the work of Charmaz (2002), she asserts that ‘crucially, concepts and categorisations and/or theories emerge from the data rather than from *a priori* categories or from imposed ideas which merely “bully” the data into fitting predetermined categories preferred by the researcher’.

It was agreed that all the interviews would be conducted via prior appointment at the workplace of the respondents. This enabled the researcher to place the respondents in their natural settings. This further supports the social action/interaction orientation as it may be argued that the interview itself is a form of social encounter involving focused interaction between two parties. In this case, the interviewer and the interviewee interact, albeit in the knowing situation of an interview, in order to ascertain the chefs’ own definitions and beliefs in a natural setting in which they are familiar.

The first interview was conducted as a pilot study and was utilised to pre-test questions and to identify important issues and useful lines of enquiry. From this trial run the researcher was able to determine which questions were confusing and/or repetitious, what subjects could freely follow one another in conversation and what potentially pertinent topics had been excluded.

A flexible interview guide was used for all the interviews conducted. This was used as a guide or prompt to topics for discussion and there was no predetermined fixed ordering. Thus, the researcher was free to probe for further detail or further clarification during the interview while ensuring that the chief topics were covered (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). It was found that the time available to interview participants varied. Owing to the need for sufficient time to gain useable and comparable data, rather than decline the offer to interview, it was decided that all thematic headings and key points would be broached during each interview, with more or less probing as dictated by the circumstances. The intended methods of analysis were also considered

when constructing the interview guide (see Appendix H). The interview guide according to Charmaz (2002: 679) demonstrates a symbolic interactionist approach of 'learning participants' subjective meanings and on stressing participants' actions. The questions are intended to tap individual experience.' Holstein and Gubrium (1995: 39) argue that during the interview, the researcher 'does far more than dispassionate questioning; he or she activates narrative production. ...it is the active interviewer's job to direct and harness the respondent's constructive storytelling to the research task at hand'.

The interviews were conducted along the lines of a conversation. The aim here was to put respondents at their ease and so augment the likelihood of gaining information that may more readily indicate underlying feelings, assumptions and beliefs. An apposite illustration of the way in which the interviews were conducted is provided by Cohen (1984: 226):

The proper ethnographic interview is a conversation in which ethnographers risk the appearance of naivete and ignorance in order continually to satisfy themselves that they have understood what is being said ... the conversations we have with our informants are instruments, first for stripping away the ballast of expectation and assumption...

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) suggest that what is required is a research design that is reflexive that enables the researcher to assess progress and to appraise how what has been learnt may influence the future direction of the research. A reflexive process therefore requires the researcher to be an active listener and to respond to both the answers and the behaviour of the respondent. It may also lead the researcher to alter the questions posed and their order depending on the situation. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983: 113) further point out that:

Ethnographers do not decide beforehand the questions they want to ask, though they may enter the interview with a list of issues to be covered. Nor do ethnographers restrict themselves to a single mode of questioning. On different occasions, or at different points in the same interview, the approach may be non-

directive or directive depending on the function that the questioning is intended to serve.

Open-ended questions/phrases were therefore used, such as ‘What do you think/feel about..?’, and ‘Can you explain what you mean by that comment?’ Likewise, some themes that arose occasionally led to specific, directive, questions being posed. While these can be leading, the important point according to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 155):

...is to assess the likely direction of bias that the question will introduce. Indeed, a useful tactic is to make the question ‘lead’ in a direction opposite to that in which one expects the answer to lie, and thus avoid the danger of misleadingly confirming one’s expectations.

Similarly, Kemp and Ellen (1984: 234) state that ‘if conversation disappears it can sometimes be rekindled by indicating that you know something already, by proffering a different opinion or by providing a calculatedly wrong assertion’.

The main questions that were posed (or answered before they were asked) at some stage during each of the interviews are listed in Appendix H. The exact wording and order of questions varied somewhat depending on what seemed suitable for each of the interviewees. The researcher carried this inventory of questions in a notebook as a checklist that could be discreetly referred to if necessary. However, the researcher relied mainly on memory and the precise phrasing of the questions would vary depending on the conversational tone of the particular interview. Even with this degree of flexible structure, the researcher was still faced with the task of maintaining the dialogue, nudging the conversation in particular directions, and acquiring as much information as possible in a short period.

The interview format followed an unstructured line of enquiry. The questions posed were open-ended to encourage the respondents to tell personal narratives and to digress into recollections. During the interview process, chefs themselves drew the attention of the researcher to details that might have remained obscured had the researcher relied on a more structured interview format. The interview therefore

appeared to rely mainly on intuition with the exchange resembling an extended conversation that was gently steered in various directions.

From the start it was the intention of the researcher to encourage a comfortable interview exchange that mirrored a conversation. Baker (1997: 130) suggests that in conventional social science terms the relative success of an interview is usually gauged by ‘whether there was good “rapport”, whether the respondent talked a lot, and what they talked about, whether and how they divulged what the interviewer was after’. Bain (2002: 67) points out that rapport requires ‘more than empathy, supportive body language and non-judgemental responses from the interviewer’. Citing Blumer (1969), Miller and Glassner (1997: 106) argue that rapport ‘involves the interviewee feeling comfortable and competent enough in the interaction to “talk back”’.

Besides, Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) suggest that while the task of building rapport is important, it is not however the only concern. Equally necessary they argue may be establishing and maintaining the interview situation itself. Ostrander (1993: 19-20) points out that this is especially likely to be a problem when one is interviewing relatively powerful people:

Elites are used to being in charge, and they are used to having others defer to them. They are also used to being asked what they think and having what they think matter in other people’s lives. These social facts can result in the researcher being too deferential and overly concerned about establishing positive rapport.

The level of rapport the researcher was able to foster with the chefs varied with the personality of each individual. In the role of interviewer the researcher was as honest and genuine as possible in an attempt to generate an atmosphere that would encourage the chefs to openly share their experiences, anecdotes and impressions, while also ensuring that the data gathered was consistent in terms of the issues being discussed.

The decision to encourage the chefs to speak freely meant that the interviews varied rather significantly in length, extending anywhere from thirty-four minutes to five hours and thirty-seven minutes. The average interview time however was two hours and fifty-seven minutes. The interview typically began with cordial introductions, a short conversation about the nature and purpose of the research, and a brief overview of the

topics to be discussed, while the chef lead the researcher to a setting in which they were comfortable talking. As the number of interviews grew, the respondents assumed that the researcher had probably ‘heard it all before’ from other chefs and that their experiences were not all that unique or important enough to merit recording. The researcher reassured them that each chef had had something valuable and insightful to contribute to the research, and once their consent to record the conversation had been obtained, both researcher and respondent eased into the interview.

At first, a few chefs seemed to be uncomfortable at the idea of making an audio recording of the interview and doubted the eloquence and clarity of their ‘performance’, but the digital recorder was diminutive and unobtrusive and was quickly forgotten. Despite their initial uneasiness, most of the respondents were really quite articulate, an indication perhaps of the generally high-level of competence, experience, knowledge and passion that the group collectively shares. To facilitate interpretations of the interviews the researcher also utilised researcher observations and impressions noted during the interview. These ‘memos’ were subsequently written in the margins of the relevant transcripts alongside the accompanying data to which they refer.

When the interviews drew to a close, almost all of the respondents took the time to say how much they had enjoyed the conversation. For some chefs the conversation seemed to be rather a cathartic process of personal reflection, clarification and re-evaluation, as it afforded the opportunity to discuss issues they had thought about, but seldom articulated. For others it raised questions that they had not otherwise considered and drew their attention to settings and relationships that they had usually taken for granted. In either case, many chefs appeared to appreciate the opportunity to talk about themselves and their experiences to an interested, supportive and sympathetic listener. For those respondents who expressed particular interest in the research study, the researcher agreed to send them a copy of the findings for their perusal.

At the end of an interview the researcher often switched off the recording device and engaged in casual conversation with the respondent. The researcher found that the amount of energy spent in actively listening, sustaining the conversation, and noting body language made interviewing an exhausting activity. In order to stay as alert as possible, the researcher endeavoured not to arrange two interviews in one day (although this was unavoidable on two occasions).

RESEARCH METHODS: ETHNOGRAPHY AS METHOD

Ethnography is generally recognised as having its roots in social anthropology (Berg, 1989; Morse, 1994; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Holloway and Wheeler, 1996; Mason, 1996; Streubert and Carpenter, 1999; Gilbert, 2001; Silverman, 2001). There are numerous definitions of the term, either as a generalised approach or as a specific method (Field and Morse, 1985; Morse, 1994; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Holloway, 1997; Streubert and Carpenter, 1999). While these definitions differ, primarily in their level of specificity, there does seem to be general agreement regarding the characteristics of ethnography. In this study the term ethnography is used to encompass participant observation and qualitative interviewing.

Regarding ethnography as a method of data generation, Davies (1999: 4-5) points out the eclectic (in terms of techniques employed) nature of ethnography as well as the centrality of prolonged 'engagement' with those being studied, describing it as a 'research process based on fieldwork using a variety of (mainly qualitative) research techniques but including engagement in the lives of those being studied over an extended period of time'. A number of authors however highlight the relationship between ethnography and a *particular* data generation technique, namely participant observation. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 1) see the term

...as referring primarily to a particular method or set of methods. In its most characteristic form it involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly in people's lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research.

The significance of the researcher entering the culture to be studied is clearly recognised by research theorists (Morse, 1994; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Parahoo, 1997; Silverman, 1997). Anthropologists historically lived in the culture they were studying so as to understand it. Current ethnographers however do not always fully enter the culture. According to Baszanger and Dodier (1997: 8) a critical reassessment of ethnography has resulted in new definitions that 'reassert the value of fieldwork'. They

argue that recent definitions focus more on the relationships between forms of actions rather than identifying the culture in its entirety.

Anthropologists originally studied cultures that were new to them. Nowadays however it is customary for ethnographers to study a culture with which they are already accustomed. Citing Garfinkel (1967), Gosby (2001: 51) suggests that ‘this brings with it a challenge to treat the culture as “anthropologically strange”, to view it through “new eyes” rather than impose previous assumptions upon it’. In turn, this requires the ethnographer to increase self-awareness of the assumptions they hold and take steps to distance these from the participant observation they conduct.

Hammersley (1992) in advocating a qualitative approach to research goes on to assert that participant observation in natural settings is essential in discovering the social world. Gosby (2001: 51) further argues that ‘ethnography has been redefined as it has developed methodologically’. According to Lipson (1989) when adopting an ethnographic approach the researcher becomes the prime data collection tool, utilising techniques such as interviewing and participant observation. She also highlights the significance of recognising the effect the researcher has on the research. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 15) state that the researcher must be aware of their value commitments and adopt a reflexive approach to research which recognises and questions these.

Parahoo (1975: 151) highlights that the purpose of participant observation is to get a holistic view of the participant’s behaviour. He suggests that this may be accomplished by the researcher sharing the experience with the participant. For many authors concerned with qualitative research the term reflexivity is used in the context of an awareness of the ways in which the researcher affects the entire research process. Murphy *et al.* (1998: 188) state that:

By reflexivity we mean sensitivity to the ways in which the researcher’s presence in the research setting has contributed to the data collected and their own *a priori* assumptions have shaped the data analysis. Qualitative research calls for a level of self-conscious reflection upon the ways in which the findings of research are inevitably shaped by the researcher process itself and an analysis which takes such factors into account.

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) reflexivity involves the recognition 'that social researchers are part of the social world they study' (p.16) and that 'there is no way in which we can escape the social world in order to study it' (p.17). However, rather than treating reactivity as a source of bias to be eliminated, they note the expediency of *exploiting* it and suggest that 'how people respond to the presence of the researcher may be as informative as how they react to other situations' (p.18). Okely (1992) suggests that reflexivity therefore entails recognition of the ways in which the 'self' of the researcher affects the research process.

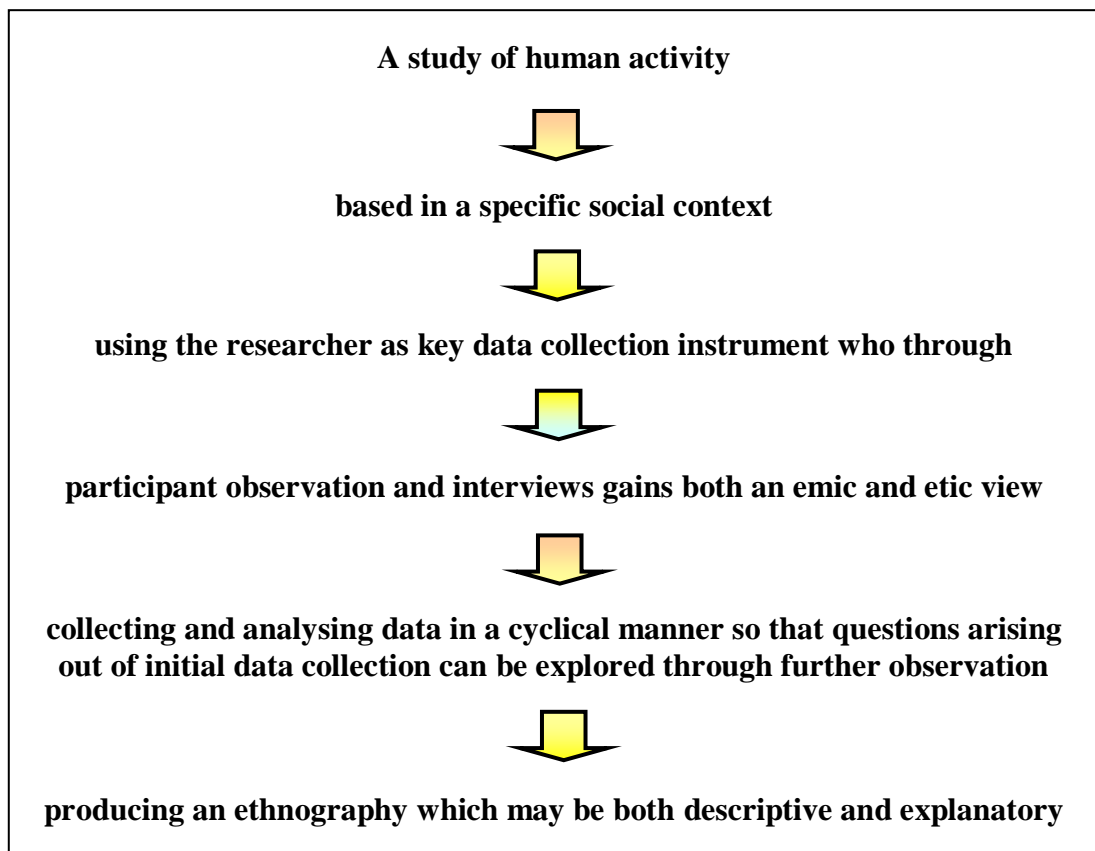
Conclusions derived from personal reflection of experience gained in this study indicate that the researcher's perceptions present an added dimension for thematic analysis. In this study, engagement between the researcher and participants in reflective discussion may be seen as enhancing the capacity to see the situation in its entirety.

Boyle (1994) identifies four main characteristics of ethnography. Firstly, she suggests that it is holistic and contextual in nature. In order to achieve this, data collected via fieldwork is located within the wider theoretical framework and social context. Secondly, she identifies the reflexive nature of ethnography resulting from the reality that the researcher becomes part of the culture under investigation, thereby influencing both researcher and researched. Thirdly, the use of emic and etic data is a typical characteristic. Holloway (1997: 53) suggests that the emic perspective is the view of the insider or 'native', whereas etic is the view of the outsider, i.e. the researcher. Dreher (1994: 158) however argues that these definitions are frequently misused and suggests a theory that emic is what people say they do, their espoused theories, and etic is what they are seen to do, their theories in use. Boyle's (1994) final category is the end product of ethnography. She questions whether some ethnography is merely descriptive of the findings, or whether they do indeed suggest a cultural explanation, the latter of which according to Gosby (2001: 53) 'can provide knowledge that is applicable to the culture as a vehicle for change'. Boyle (1994: 169) concludes that 'the value of ethnography or even ethnographic methods ... lies in the pragmatic outcomes for both theory and practice'. Gosby (2001: 54) suggests that this viewpoint 'demonstrates a reconstruction of ethnography'. Originally it was regarded as a descriptive account of social worlds, however nowadays it is increasingly acceptable to employ ethnography in an applied manner. Noting the difference between conventional

and critical ethnography, Thomas (1993: 4) suggests that the purpose of the former is to describe a culture, whereas the purpose of the latter is to change it.

While it was not the intention of the researcher to undertake critical ethnography for the purposes of this study, it was however expected that this study, with its emphasis on culture and identity, would therefore generate findings of relevance for HRM in the hospitality industry. The main purpose of this study was to conceptualise how the occupational identity and culture of chefs is constructed and maintained through both work and social interaction. Yet, a secondary purpose was to also consider the implications of the occupational identity and culture of chefs in relation to the enduring practical issues of training and the recruitment and retention of chefs. The research therefore had pragmatic outcomes for both theory and practice. The characteristics of ethnography are summarised in Figure 6.4.

Figure 6.4: Characteristics of ethnography



Source: Gosby (2001: 54)

Ethnographic studies, involving the direct observation of events, note-taking, conversations, on-the-spot interviews, reflective interviews and personal reflection, were carried out in four different Michelin-starred kitchens, including: A small hotel; a large hotel; a rural stand alone restaurant; and an urban (i.e. London) stand alone restaurant. Participant observation was conducted in each kitchen for twenty days, sixteen hours a day, eighty hours a week, over a period of thirty days on average. Recorded reflective interviews after each field session allowed for accounts of experiences to be made while they were still fresh in the minds of both researcher and participants. Interviews (including conversations, on-the-spot interviews, and in-depth interviews) were carried out with all forty-six members of every kitchen brigade, including 'key informants' in every kitchen (see Whyte, 1943; Agar, 1980; Mars and Nicod, 1984; Wolcott, 1990; Robson, 1993; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). According to Wolcott (1990: 195) a 'key informant' is 'an individual in whom one invests a disproportionate amount of time because the individual appears particularly well informed, articulate, approachable or available'. The interviews varied in length, extending anywhere from eleven minutes to four hours and thirty-two minutes cumulatively. The average interview time however was one hour and forty minutes.

RESEARCH METHODS: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

The method of participant observation encompasses a diversity of approaches to data generation, including whether it is covert or overt and the nature of the role(s) adopted by the observer. Becker and Geer (1957: 28) define participant observation as:

...that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, either openly in the role of researcher or covertly in some disguised role, observing things that happen, listening to what is said, and questioning people, over some length of time.

Although various roles are available to the participant observer (Gold, 1958; Junker, 1960), the two most significant ones are those of covert versus overt observation (Bulmer, 1980; Cassell, 1980; Cassell and Wax, 1980). The decision to function as an unknown or known observer is determined by both what one hopes to discover and the

nature of the group which one hopes to discover something about. Objections to covert observation are essentially ethical in nature (Lofland, 1971; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), although disadvantages may concern the practicalities of, for example, dedicating attention to the 'real' role assumed in the group to the detriment of one's research interests (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975; Denzin, 1978; Gans, 1982; Pollner and Emerson, 1983), which can lead to over-involvement and the problem of 'going native' (i.e. developing an over-rapport with the research subjects) (Pelto and Pelto, 1978; Adler and Adler, 1987; Foster, 1996; Fielding, 2001; Gill and Johnson, 2002; Fontana and Frey, 2005). Besides, it is clearly impractical in situations (like the current one) in which the real roles in the group require particular skills; unless one is 'really' a chef (or has real ambitions to become one), 'one has no way of meshing quietly into the fabric of ongoing interaction' (Mast, 1980: 35). Indeed, one would soon be exposed as an impostor, not least by one's obvious unfamiliarity with a knife!

The known observer nonetheless confronts a different range of difficulties (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975; Patton, 1990). Firstly, the researcher must obtain entry to the field settings in which they would like to carry out their research, and, once 'inside', they must gain the cooperation and trust of all the participants, especially those who were not party to the decision to admit the researcher. Prior to commencing the research formal permission was obtained from the individual head chefs of the restaurants where the studies were to be conducted. Formal consent allowed progress past the high level 'gatekeepers', but members of the kitchen brigade also needed to consent to the researcher's presence and participation. Gans (1968: 313) suggests that 'the participant-observer also functions like an actor, for he [*sic*] lives a role rather than his own life, and his participation is always, at least to some extent, a performance'. Thus, 'impression management' (Goffman, 1959) is as much a concern of the researcher as it is of those whom he or she studies.

Conducting in-depth interviews and participant observation, involving getting as close to respondents as was viable, has proven vital in attempts to surface respondent meanings. Data were collected in context, while in-depth interviews, especially in the early stages of fieldwork, allowed for the exploration of emergent issues. This eased the researcher into the subject's rationality and allowed for the communication of meanings from respondent to researcher.

Much of the research presented here is partly based on data gathered by participant observation. Gill and Johnson (1991: 109) describe this as an attempt to ‘participate fully in the lives and activities of subjects ... [enabling] ... the researcher to share their experiences by not merely observing what is happening but also feeling it’. The word ‘feeling’ as noted by Gill and Johnson (1991: 109) has resonance with this research, while Delbridge and Kirkpatrick’s (1994: 37) talk of ‘immersion’ in the research setting, ‘with the objectives of sharing in people’s lives’ also resounds strongly. Immersion in the research context helped to gain an understanding of participants’ meaning and to experience at first hand the emotions of those being studied, which subsequently informed later research questions.

Indeed, the aims of the researcher – to understand, observe and record the social world of chefs and their kitchen brigades inside their natural working environment, i.e. the kitchen – clearly invited the use of ethnographic research methods. Undertaking participant observation enabled the researcher to develop a rapport with the members of the kitchen brigade and be an informal part of the scenery over a relatively long period of time, which helped the researcher to experience and understand at first hand the reality of working inside a kitchen. It is extremely unlikely that other more formal and inflexible methods of qualitative data collection would have permitted the researcher to gain access and penetrate the previously secret ‘backstage’ (Goffman, 1959) of this hidden occupational working culture.

Spradley (1980) relates participant observation to the behaviour of an individual when entering a new environment. He highlights that initially the individual observes what others do and takes cues from them to then copy their behaviour. This enables them to fit into the new culture and is characteristic of the behaviour observed in this research when participants entered a new kitchen environment.

Field and Morse (1985: 76-7) identify four approaches to participant observation: Complete participant; participant as observer; observer as participant, and complete observer (see also Gold’s (1958) now classic study of the four possible roles for an ethnographer).

A ‘participant as observer’ role was selected as the only practical research method that would provide the requisite data for the purposes of this research study. Becker (1970: 25) points out that:

The participant observer gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organisation he [sic] studies. He watches the people he is studying to see what situations they ordinarily meet and how they behave in them. He enters into conversation with some or all of the participants in these situations and discovers their interpretations of the events he has observed.

The role of 'participant as observer' was chosen in order to enter the culture as much as possible. With the exception of being a 'complete participant', this was considered to allow for the collection of more data than the other roles. The latter may however be deemed to be unethical as participants would be unaware of the observer's role. The roles of 'complete observer' or 'observer as participant' were adopted on occasions where personal [professional] proficiency did not permit participation.

Spradley (1980: 54-8) identifies significant differences in the behaviour of an ordinary observer and that of a participant observer, as follows: Dual purpose; explicit awareness; wide angle lens; insider/outsider experience; introspection; and record keeping.

In this study the dual purpose of participant observation was to engage in 'being a chef' while observing 'kitchen life'. In order to prevent information overload an ordinary observer develops selective awareness. This was a characteristic that had to be overcome. The role of 'complete observer' was adopted at times during fieldwork to enable observation of detail to occur. At times such behaviour was overt, with the members of the kitchen brigade aware of what was occurring. To ensure that potential learning opportunities were identified for discussion during reflective interviews concise notes would be recorded at such times. At other times it was done inconspicuously, for example, performing a task such as *mise en place*, thus appearing busy but being able to observe. Insider experience was obtained by active participation, whereas outsider experience was through adopting the 'complete observer' role. Introspection concerns the use of the observer as a research instrument. The reflective approach in this study allowed introspection to occur and findings to be confirmed by the participant(s) who had shared the experience. The immediacy of conducting reflective interviews facilitated such introspection. A record of these interviews was kept in various formats, i.e. a digital recording, a transcription and through personal field notes.

Throughout data collection field notes were written immediately and from the outset the researcher followed Spradley's (1980: 69-72) suggested format of four separate sets of field notes, summarised as follows:

1. The condensed account, consisting of short notes taken during or immediately after the fieldwork.
2. The expanded account, involving filling in the details and recalling things that were not recorded on the spot, made as soon as possible after each field session.
3. A fieldwork journal containing a record of the personal experiences arising during the fieldwork.
4. A record of ongoing analysis and interpretation (abridged from Spradley, 1980: 69-72).

In making these condensed notes the researcher drew on Spradley's (1980: 65-9) three important principles regarding an ethnographic record of events: The language identification principle; the verbatim principle; and the concrete principle.

The language identification principle concerns the necessity (given that language is the key to cultural meanings) to include the identity of the speaker in each recording of spoken events. The verbatim principle concerns the significance of writing down what people actually say rather than summarising or restating their words because 'the words informants spoke held one key to their culture' (Spradley, 1980: 67). This was initially quite a difficult task in the fieldwork setting, although the researcher soon became adept at writing a *partial* verbatim record of what was said, capturing the phrases and key words used, thus ensuring that the subsequent expanded field notes contained rich clues to the cultural context. The concrete principle concerns the significance of using concrete (rather than abstract) language for describing particular events. Spradley (1980: 69) advises therefore to begin descriptions with 'concrete facts that you see, hear, taste, smell and feel'. As much of the researcher's observations were concerned with social interactions, recording the *communication* (both non-verbal and verbal) between the various actors was a significant aspect of the field notes data.

The expanded notes would be made when the researcher left the field, in most cases immediately after each field session. This would involve developing the brief notes

made in the field, attempting to bring in as much context to the event as possible. In addition to describing interactions and events in the field, the researcher's notes also contain detailed descriptions of other observed phenomena, such as the demeanour and appearance of those involved and the setting. Spradley's (1980: 78) checklist of the 'nine major dimensions of every social situation' (as used during participant observation) was a useful reminder to include the context within which period of observation occurred and was kept in the front of the researcher's field notes folder, as follows:

1. *Space*: the physical place or places
2. *Actor*: the people involved
3. *Activity*: a set of related acts people do
4. *Object*: the physical things that are present
5. *Act*: single actions that people do
6. *Event*: a set of related activities that people carry out
7. *Time*: the sequencing that takes place over time
8. *Goal*: the things that people are trying to accomplish
9. *Feeling*: the emotions felt and expressed

Besides, reflective interviews were conducted as they enabled immediate collection of data and limited note writing during fieldwork thus enabling participation. Initially participants would be asked to 'talk about what happened during the day', exploring issues as they brought them up. When they began to dry up the researcher would use the notes recorded during the day to remind them of noteworthy incidents. Open-ended questions were used, such as: 'What do you think/feel about..?' The questions posed were open-ended to encourage the respondents to tell personal narratives and to digress into recollections. Besides, some themes that arose occasionally led to specific, directive, questions being posed.

Rubin and Rubin (1995: 129-39) identify 'seven stages of qualitative interviewing', as follows:

1. Creating a natural environment
2. Encouraging conversational competence

3. Showing understanding
4. Getting facts and basic descriptions
5. Asking difficult questions
6. Toning down the emotional level
7. Closing while maintaining contact

The interviews took place in the vicinity of the kitchen environment, usually outside the back door entrance to the kitchen. Tactics employed to encourage conversation included acting in a reassuring manner, showing empathy and sharing personal perceptions of what had been occurring. Getting the facts and asking difficult questions were handled by restating what the participant had said, asking probing questions to obtain further information and trying to be aware of when respondents were avoiding talking about a subject. In the case of the latter the researcher would try rephrasing questions or asking them what they thought/felt about the matter. Usually if emotional responses were made explicit it was possible to move on and discuss the matter more factually. On occasions where emotional responses were disagreeable the researcher attempted to moderate these by reassuring the respondent that their feelings were a normal response. Interviews usually came to a close when the respondent ran out of topics to talk about. The researcher however left an opening for further dialogue by suggesting that if they thought of anything else they could let the researcher know.

LEAVING THE FIELD

Ultimately, the decision to leave the field is usually necessary for pragmatic reasons to do with costs, especially time and money or the fact that theoretical saturation has occurred (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998; Seidman, 1991; Charmaz, 2000).

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) point out that leaving the field can sometimes be an emotional and traumatic experience. Taylor and Bogdan (1984: 67) highlight that it may often prove painful, 'it means breaking attachments and sometimes even offending those one has studied, leaving them feeling betrayed and used'. Jorgensen (1989) suggests that sensations of joy and relief may be intermingled with feelings of sadness and regret. A number of authors recommend that the researcher 'eases

out' or 'drifts off' without concluding relations too abruptly. Any negative impact on informants may be diminished by maintaining contact – even to the point of inviting feedback on interview transcripts or feeding data or findings back to them – and keeping them informed about any publications resulting from the research (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Fielding, 2001; Waddington, 2004). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995:122) further note that the researcher often 'leaves the field with mixed feelings, but sometimes with not a little relief'.

TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed verbatim (with the exception of 'ums' and 'ahs') in order to facilitate analysis (Jennings, 2005). To ensure a thorough and consistent approach was achieved across all interview transcripts all the interviews were professionally transcribed. Nevertheless, the process of transcribing interview material is not simply a technical detail prior to the analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Charmaz, 2002). The production and use of transcripts are fundamentally 'research activities' and may be viewed as the first stage of the analysis process. This activity entails the repeated listening to of recordings in the production of textual data. Heritage (1984: 238) suggests that:

...the use of recorded data is an essential corrective to the limitations of intuition and recollection. In enabling repeated and detailed examination ... the use of recording extends the range and precision of the observations which can be made ... because the data are available in 'raw' form they can be reused in a variety of investigations and can be re-examined in the context of new findings.

In addition, this also enables others to view the data contained in the transcripts in differing ways, using different analyses, therefore presenting the opportunity for complementary, or even divergent, interpretations.

Kvale (1996) and Poland (2002) point out that the research interview is a socially produced interaction framed by the specific context in which it occurs. It can be argued therefore that a qualitative approach to interviewing which recognises context, interaction, interpretation and the fluidity of conversation, as is the case in this research,

is more suitable than a quasi-positivistic view of the transcript as providing supposed 'factual' data about the respondent which is frozen in time. This demonstrates that it is impossible as well as undesirable to consider practical methodological issues such as the transcription process as separate from one's theoretical stance.

The type of transcription of qualitative data is determined by the purpose of the interviews and the research aims. Poland (2002) notes that transcription can vary from a full verbatim transcription to a note based or even memory based transcription. While it is recognised that a verbatim based strategy is undoubtedly the most time consuming method of transcription, it is considered necessary in this study due to the nature of the research questions and the methods of analysis applied to the interview data. It was also decided that there should be no editing of the interview matter during the transcribing process, as full, detailed accounts should be used for analysis. Fielding and Thomas (2001) suggest that familiarity with and a full immersion in the data by the researcher is an advantage of full transcription.

DATA ANALYSIS

As numerous authors have highlighted there are many possible approaches to analysing qualitative data. Coffey and Atkinson (1996: 3) suggest that these approaches are united by 'a central concern with transforming and interpreting qualitative data – in a rigorous and scholarly way – in order to capture the complexities of the social worlds we seek to understand'. While conversant with the various computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) packages (such as NVivo and The Ethnograph) and their usefulness in providing audit trails of coding (Lee and Fielding, 1991; Kelle, 1995; Fielding and Lee, 1998; Fielding, 2002; Fielding, 2007 [2001]), for the purposes of this study the decision was made to refrain from using such software as from the outset the researcher's intention was to immerse himself thoroughly in and engage with the data in order to capture their meaning (Coffey *et al.*, 1996).

Authors concerned with the analysis of ethnographic data frequently comment that analysis is not a distinct stage in the research process, rather that it is a reflexive activity that commences as the research question is formulated and continues (and underpins) the collection of data and the writing-up stage (see Miles and Huberman, 1994; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Coffey and Atkinson, 1996).

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Drawing upon the work of Miles and Huberman (1994), Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), Coffey and Atkinson (1996) and Savage (2000), the chosen method of data analysis was 'thematic analysis'. According to Savage (2000: 1493) thematic analysis is consistent with a realist approach in that it is 'assumed that there will be some fit between the outcome of the data analysis and some external or overarching reality'. The aim of the thematic analysis was to identify key patterns and themes in the data using a process of coding, thereby developing categories from clusters of codes, in turn generating themes from these categories. Coffey and Atkinson (1996: 26) suggest that coding refers to 'assigning tags or labels to the data, based on our concepts. Essentially ... condensing the bulk of our data sets into analysable units by creating categories with and from our data'. They further state that coding procedures involve establishing links between the raw data and particular ideas or concepts about those data; therefore codes, as well as being organisational labels, are also 'links between locations in the data and sets of concepts or ideas' (p.27).

Coffey and Atkinson (1996: 30) go on to suggest that this dual purpose of coding typically includes both data reduction – 'breaking up and segmenting the data into simpler, general categories' – and data compilation – in that it is used to 'expand and tease out the data, in order to formulate new questions and levels of interpretation'. They further note that the latter aspect of coding is its principal analytic purpose in as much as 'coding should be thought of as essentially heuristic, providing ways of interacting with and thinking about the data. Those processes of reflection are more important ultimately than the precise procedures and representations that are employed'.

As noted previously, analysis of the data commenced in the very early stages of the research process. In line with Miles and Huberman (1994) codes were applied in the early stages of the fieldwork and were subsequently used to inform later interview questions. In coding the raw data, the codes and categories came from a variety of sources. Some came from particular theoretical ideas derived from the literature review, while others emerged from the data, deriving from the terms and language used by the participants.

The initial coding was done using a highlighter pen with annotations written in the margins as interview transcriptions, field notes, reflective journal and analytic memos

were read and re-read. Having grouped these codes into categories and ultimately into themes, the data was then revisited to ensure that all the initial codes were encompassed into these themes. A new computer file was created for each theme and the coded data was 'copied and pasted' into its pertaining file, thereby, while the data were now thematically 'ordered', they still retained their original context.

Drawing upon the work of Silverman (2001), the researcher was also careful to identify and bring to the fore 'deviant' or negative cases in the data. In this instance, deviant refers to discrepancies in the data where the examples do not fit in with original suppositions.

Having arranged the data into categories and themes, the final stage was to re-read it in order to identify patterns and connections and thereby attempt to interpret its meaning. It is important to note however that 'interpretation of meaning' was also ongoing from the early coding stages (it can even be argued that interpreting meaning commenced while interviewing and observing) where one is reflexive about one's ideas and reactions to the data.

A reflexive stance was continuously maintained throughout the analysis while remaining aware of the influence of various factors in the field, including social interactions between the researcher and participants and of the researcher's own assumptions on the interpretation of the data.

WRITING-UP DATA

The process of writing-up interview data brings together the analysis and presents it in a coherent manner. According to Gillham (2000: 74) the aim of writing-up interview data 'is to weave a narrative which is interpolated with illustrative quotes. Your task is essentially to allow the interviewees to speak for themselves...'. The amount of quotations presented is the personal choice of the researcher. Those provided however must be representative and express the range and diversity of the responses given. In order to give an honest overall picture of respondents' views, any comments made by respondents which differ significantly must also be reported.

CREDIBILITY, TRANSFERABILITY, DEPENDABILITY AND CONFIRMABILITY

Holloway and Wheeler (1996: 162) argue against using the terms validity and reliability, as they are normally related to quantitative research and as such have specific meanings in that context. They suggest instead the use of the term trustworthiness (as identified by Lincoln and Guba, 1985) which relates more appropriately to 'when the findings of a qualitative study resemble reality'. Other suggested alternatives are the terms credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Koch, 1994).

Credibility may be regarded as referring to the internal validity of the research where the participants recognise the truth of the researcher's findings. Furthermore, transferability relates to external validity, where readers recognise the truth of the research in relation to social contexts familiar to them. Holloway (1997) remarks that this arises from 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) included in accounts of qualitative research. This enables the reader to shape their own opinions and compare them to the conclusions of the researcher.

Moreover, dependability may be deemed to equate to reliability. Davies (1999: 87) in her discussion of reliability, asserts that 'given the inherently high degree of reflexivity of ethnographic fieldwork, it is important to begin by recognising that no ethnographic study is repeatable, either by another ethnographer or even by the same ethnographer at another time'. She does however suggest that there should be 'a degree of overlap or agreement' between different researchers.

A number of methodologists emphasise the importance of laying an audit trail. Streubert and Carpenter (1995) point out that this is one way in which qualitative research may be replicated. They suggest that other researchers would be able to undertake research in similar settings, using similar strategies and thereby achieve similar results. This conclusion could be argued with on the basis that the environment in question is so dynamic and exists only at that particular moment in time. It is however reasonable to suggest that others may read this research and 'recognise' situations as being similar to their own experiences. Their personal judgements, on the 'fitness' of conclusions in this research, is what will make it reliable.

The audit trail maintained for this research enables others to follow the decision trail and in turn draw their own conclusions. The value of keeping an audit trail, an account of how the researcher has gathered and interpreted data and made decisions with regard to this, is highlighted by Koch (1994: 977). She notes that ‘one way of increasing self-awareness is to keep a journal in which the content and the process of interactions are noted, including reactions to various events.’ A ‘reflective’ journal was maintained throughout this study which provided such an account, in addition to hard (paper) copies of all transcribed interviews, the process of analysis and the original digital recordings.

Moreover, confirmability is concerned with the objectivity of the research. While the participation in, and the recording of the social settings within which people interact is a key principle of ethnographic research, it is important not to lose sight of the need to remain objective during the period of observation. Taking this into account triangulation, or multiple methods (Denzin, 1970; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998), is necessary if reliable data is to be collected for analysis. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 230-1) state that:

...data-source triangulation involves the comparison of data relating to the same phenomenon but deriving from different phases of the fieldwork ... besides providing a validity check, it also gives added depth to the description of the social meanings involved in a setting.

In addition, they suggest that respondent validation is also a form of triangulation since it entails ‘the checking of inferences drawn from one set of data sources by collecting data from others’ (p.230). Bloor (1997: 49) however argues that neither of these methods can be considered as useful tests for validity since ‘the very methodological frailties that lead sociologists to search for validating evidence are also present in the generation of that validating evidence’. However, a number of authors recommend the use of reflexive triangulation as an alternative strategy (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Walsh, 1998). Hammersley (1990: 57) suggests that validity refers to ‘the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers’. Thus, a reflexive approach, which makes explicit the researcher’s assumptions and acknowledges the relationship between the researcher and participants,

is more likely to produce an accurate representation of these phenomena (Hammersley, 1990; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Coffey, 1999; Davies, 1999). Triangulation therefore compares data generated from different sources, including through different methods of collection.

This study is by nature multi-method, including participant observation and interviewing. The audit trail once again allows readers to access the data and decision-making process and thereby determine its objectivity. By utilising a reflexive approach an attempt is made to expose known bias and account for personal influence on the findings. Mason (1996) highlights the importance of ensuring that data is not misinterpreted. The use of thick description once again allows readers to access original data and draw their own conclusions.

The adopted research approach for this study has high 'ecological validity' (Gill and Johnson, 1991) as it benefits from studying social phenomena within context. Although it can be argued that observer bias threatens this, as such the researcher has purposefully attempted to control this by using, where appropriate, 'informant verification', a simple process requiring some participants to reflect on the research findings thus ensuring a degree of triangulation in confirming its emic status (Saunders *et al.* 2003). This is an attempt to ensure that the characteristics of the culture or phenomenon have been described accurately prior to making further interpretation of findings.

The preliminary analysis from this study was shared, where appropriate, with certain participants who were asked to comment on the findings. Their response confirmed the analysis made and assisted in the preparation of the second stage of this study. During the second stage of this study preliminary analysis was shared, where appropriate, with certain participants as the study progressed.

This study is ultimately a personal interpretation of the data collected. Readers must ascertain for themselves if the account is credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable on the basis of the evidence produced. Robson (1993) points out research accounts which are supported by evidence tend to be open, unbiased and honest. He suggests that common causes of unreliability are subject [participant] bias and observer error. This study includes as much evidence as is appropriate to open up the research to the reader.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In keeping with other forms of research that involve human subjects, qualitative interviewing requires that the ethical dimensions of research are considered by the researcher (De Laine, 2000; Bulmer, 2001; Kong *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, a number of authors have highlighted that ethnography presents researchers with particular ethical dilemmas (Johnson, 1992; Gerrish, 2003; Merrell and Williams, 1994). Walsh (1998: 232) suggests that ‘the fact that ethnographic research depends on building relations of rapport and trust with people in the field, whilst using this to generate data from them, raise issues of manipulation, exploitation and secrecy... also affect publication of research’.

The main ethical issues identified by the researcher in conducting the research study in question are informed consent, respect for privacy, confidentiality, and reciprocity (Bryman, 1998, 2001; Bulmer, 2001). Bryman (2001) suggests that informed consent is a necessary pre-requisite to interview research carried out in an overt and ethical manner. Furthermore, the question of informed consent in ethnography is not straightforward and raises a number of issues (Merrell and Williams, 1994; Gerrish, 2003).

In order to set up and arrange the requisite interviews and participant observation studies the researcher contacted potential respondents by email/letter (see Appendix I). This was followed up by a telephone conversation with potentially willing respondents. Verbal consent was deemed to be adequate at this stage as written replies would have been an unrealistic expectation and could potentially restrict respondent participation. The researcher was favoured inasmuch as after arrangements of times and dates had been confirmed with potentially willing respondents, all such arrangements were adhered to, again reaffirming that those respondents initially willing to partake continued to do so. All interviews were conducted at the restaurant of the particular chef involved, thereby ensuring a relaxed interview setting for the interviewee, while permitting the researcher access to their workplace.

The use of a digital recorder is a necessity for the interviewing approach adopted in this research (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). It is also essential to the intended methods of analyses (Heritage, 1984). All respondents were asked at the outset of the interview if the interview could be recorded. Thus, in this respect informed consent

was also obtained. At the end of the interview, formal written consent to identify the names of respondents and their restaurants was also obtained (see Appendix J). Norris (1987: 257) highlights that adherence to the principle of informed consent implies that two important conditions are met. Firstly, 'that the research subjects are made aware of and understand the nature and purposes of the research'. And, secondly, 'that, from a position of knowledge, they can freely give their consent to participating in the research'. He suggests that 'the explanations which one constructs for one's research are always conditional upon the audience which one is addressing'. This is particularly true when conducting ethnographic research 'where one has only a vague sense of what one is looking for'. For the purposes of this study, the researcher, like others, constructed an account of his research which was serviceable. Norris points out that 'such accounts are not untrue but they are veiled. They construct the research role so as to make it understandable and acceptable to the subjects' (p.258). He further argues that the research act of participant observation is, inevitably, interactionally deceitful. In so doing, it is a necessary requisite of the researcher to cultivate informants and lessen the distance between themselves and those that they are studying. To that end, the aims of the researcher are to ensure that the research role is invisible in the field and to emphasise similarity at the expense of difference.

Prior to commencing the research, formal permission was obtained from the individual head chefs of the restaurants where the studies were to be conducted. Formal consent allowed progress past the high level 'gatekeepers', but members of the kitchen brigade also needed to consent to the researcher's presence and participation. Hammersley (1992: 147) suggests that:

When (as is common) an ethnographer negotiates access to a setting via a gatekeeper who is at the top of an authority hierarchy within the setting, people lower down that hierarchy may feel pressure to cooperate lest they suffer sanctions from the gatekeeper.

The researcher made it clear that he would seek permission and informed consent from each member of the kitchen brigade that he interviewed. Furthermore, while conducting participant observation the researcher would constantly reiterate that

nothing he saw or heard would be reported back to the head chef or other members of the kitchen brigade and that confidentiality and anonymity would be safeguarded.

Besides, according to Bulmer (2001) respect for privacy is a complex area of ethical debate. Furthermore, Di Domenico (2003: 114) suggests that ‘the extent to which the researcher can “intrude” into areas deemed private by the subject is not a simple issue to deal with as definitions of what constitute private domains vary from individual to individual...’. Therefore, with regard to this study, questions pertaining to aspects of the subjects’ private life, social connections and networks for example, may be deemed to fall within this grey area. This potentially delicate matter was given due consideration by the researcher prior to embarking on the interviewing process, particularly with regard to ascertaining information as to matters of a more sensitive nature. Owing to the nature of the research, it was thus decided that empathy could be developed with the respondent during the course of the interview process and, if need be, information of a more sensitive nature could be ascertained toward the end of the interview session (if it had not already been acquired during the course of the discussion) once a certain rapport or trust had been established.

Nevertheless, any concerns the researcher had over a lack of openness on the part of the respondents were soon forgotten as all respondents talked freely. In fact, many respondents went on to use the interview encounter as a means to convey their views in great depth. It may be argued that this is due to the adopted method of research inquiry, namely the unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interview involving human interaction, and, as such, is further corroborative evidence in support of the appropriateness of the use of this technique for the purpose of this study.

Besides, as Bryman (1998) suggests the issue of confidentiality had to be considered by the researcher. It was therefore decided that in order to safeguard respondent confidentiality and anonymity when referring to interview accounts a system of number identification would be used for reference purposes. Thus, the labels ‘Chef 1’ through to ‘Chef 50’²⁰ is used to refer to the interviews conducted with respondents. Furthermore, the researcher had to consider whether such particulars as the names referred to by the respondents should be anonymised for the purposes of illustrative quotes. It was

²⁰ Whilst interviews were conducted with fifty-four Michelin-starred chefs, only fifty are directly quoted in the research findings.

therefore decided after due consideration that such an approach was indeed warranted in certain instances where matters of a more sensitive nature were divulged.

It may also be argued that the methodological/ontological 'fit' is high in ethical rigour in terms of the manner in which the data is collected, analysed and the way in which findings are reported. Since the findings are based on emergent interpretations grounded in the data itself with a rejection of *a priori* classifications, the approach therefore remains faithful to the self-expressed opinions of the respondents. Therefore, it is argued along with other commentators that this is the strength of qualitative research. In addition, context is appreciated and reported thereby demonstrating the researcher's attempt to similarly avoid dehumanising the individual while ensuring that confidentiality is safeguarded. Warren (2002: 91) notes that in this respect qualitative interviewing differs markedly from other types of research since it presents 'the unfolding social contexts of the interview as data, not as something that, under ideal conditions, can be eliminated from the interview process'.

Moreover, Bryman (2001) suggests that reciprocity can be regarded as providing a rationale for the adopted interview approach. Di Domenico (2003: 115) states that 'as is part of the interactionist orientation, the interview encounter is part of social interaction'. It was thus considered to be not only ontologically and methodologically fitting but also ethically apt to engage with the respondents by divulging characteristics of the researcher's own persona. The purpose of this is to allay any perceived obstacles to communication by increasing the comfort of the respondent, while ensuring that overtly 'leading' expressions of opinion are avoided as much as possible. According to Kong *et al.* (2002: 252-3) it is ethically important 'that the interviewer constructs an empathic, emotional orientation during the interview process. ...the respondents need to know that the interviewer will be open to their lived experiences...'. Thus, empathetic neutrality can be ensured. It is therefore argued along with other commentators that the notion of the researcher as 'research instrument' is indeed apt.

Di Domenico (2003: 116) highlights that while carrying out qualitative research it is important to engage in a continual process of reflective practice 'by considering the interaction between one's ethical approach and conceptual orientation'. Drawing upon the work of De Laine (2000), she argues that this can be achieved 'by considering the researcher's role as influenced by the tenets of symbolic interactionism' as in the case of

the research in question. This is referred to as adopting a ‘script and staging the self’ (De Laine, 2000). She further suggests that ‘as a qualitative interviewer one needs to adopt a certain script by giving the impression of authenticity as a researcher to instill confidence in those being interviewed’.

ADDENDUM

As previously highlighted, whilst the principal research instrument utilised in this study was the unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interview, much of the research presented here is partly based on data gathered by participant observation. While it was not the intention of the researcher to write an ethnographic account of ‘kitchen life’ *per se*, the aims of the researcher – to understand, observe and record the social world of chefs and their kitchen brigades inside their natural working environment, i.e. the kitchen – clearly invited the use of ethnographic research methods. Indeed, undertaking participant observation enabled the researcher to develop a rapport with the members of the kitchen brigade and be an informal part of the scenery over a relatively long period of time, which helped the researcher to experience and understand at first hand the reality of working inside a kitchen. It is extremely unlikely that other more formal and inflexible methods of qualitative data collection would have permitted the researcher to gain access and penetrate the previously secret ‘backstage’ (Goffman, 1959) of this hidden occupational working culture. Combining unstructured, in-depth interviews with overt participant observation may therefore prompt a richer picture into the culture of chefs and the process of identity formation, as the information given by chefs about their own behaviour in interviews can be compared with observation of samples of their actual behaviour. Indeed, immersion in the research context helped the researcher to gain an understanding of participants’ meaning and to experience at first hand the emotions of those being studied, which subsequently informed later interview questions. In effect, ethnography enabled the researcher to go beyond what the chefs said about themselves (in the face-to-face interviews) and penetrate the ‘back region’ (Goffman, 1959) of the chefs’ world, and witness and identify the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths) that constitute the culture of kitchens. It is evident that such ‘kitchen behaviour’ could not be accounted for without direct observation, hence the imperative need to conduct ethnography in order to create

a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) and rich situational analysis of kitchen culture (see Van Maanen, 1988; Alasuutari, 1995; Vidich and Lyman, 2003).

In summary, it is clear that both the use of unstructured, in-depth interviews and overt participant observation are apposite to the research, although the strengths of each method help to meet different facets of the research objectives. Whilst both research methods are suitable to examine the culture of chefs and the process of chef identity formation, unstructured, in-depth interviews are seemingly more adequate to investigate the chef's self-concept and explore how chefs construct their own reality on the basis of a personal framework of beliefs, attitudes and values. Yet, the clear advantages that overt participant observation has over unstructured, in-depth interviews, due to the synergic use of both emic and etic data, are clearly evident. Indeed, whilst immersed into the culture of chefs, the researcher was better equipped to acquire a contextual and holistic understanding of chefs' social behaviour and to uncover unexpected and taken-for-granted social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen 'ideology', symbols, rituals, rites and myths) that are inherent to the process of chef identity formation.

Furthermore, whilst both unstructured, in-depth interviews and overt participant observation present some limitations, it is argued that the systematic use of reflexivity, together with the combination of both methods for respondent validation and triangulation purposes, help to offset issues of reactivity and observer bias, and generate a more valid and reliable set of data.

7. Research Findings/Discussion

As previously highlighted, despite the lengthiness of the review of the occupational identity of chefs (see Chapter 5), it is necessary to reiterate the paucity of studies addressing the culture and identity of chefs, in any systematic manner, notably in the UK. Whilst the piecemeal nature of the body of literature has called for a chronological approach to the review, the main insights derived about the occupational culture and identity of chefs will now be summarised thematically, and conceptualised in light of theories of identity and culture formation (see Chapters 2, 3, 4).

As highlighted in Chapter 2, the identity of chefs is, first and foremost, rooted in social interaction and derived from the socio-cultural practices of their occupational group (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Bourdieu, 1990; Burkitt, 1994). Their occupational identity is formed through the dialectic of internal-external identification, as conceptualised by Jenkins (2004). Their identity is therefore influenced both by their occupational peer group, who constitute ‘significant others’, and by the views and attitudes of ‘others’ (non-chefs), towards them in the ‘outside world’ (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Goffman, 1959; Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1972; Saunders, 1981a). The outside world is the wider audience of society at large, all of whom look upon the world of chefs through the window provided by the media. In this respect, the media and the general public comprise the chefs’ ‘generalised other’ (Mead, 1934). Yet, chefs are also compelled to build a sense of identity by drawing from the existing meanings and ways of doing things that have informed and characterised the occupation of chef for many generations (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). Therefore, in order to examine the occupational identity and culture of chefs, it was particularly interesting to identify chefs’ perceptions of the status and standing of the occupation and of chefs themselves, as they perceive it to be viewed through the eyes of the outside world. Finally, chefs’ multiple social identities, based on social class, gender, sexuality or race/ethnicity, are also likely to influence the occupational identity and culture of chefs, and need to be taken into consideration during the collection and analysis of the research findings.

This chapter will highlight and discuss the main research findings with regard to the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and

myths) which underpin the creation and maintenance of the occupational identity and culture of chefs and help to perpetuate a sense of cohesion, identity and belonging that defines ‘being a chef’.

EXTERNAL RECOGNITION TO IDENTITY – WHAT THE ‘OUTSIDE WORLD’ THINKS OF CHEFS

This section will look at the outside world’s perception of chefs by considering the origins of the occupation and of gastronomic culture in Great Britain and Ireland. It will also look at the reasons behind society’s negative perceptions of the kitchen environment as well as the nature of the occupation in the modern media age, while comparing and contrasting the research findings with the findings of the existing body of work.

Firstly, fieldwork discussions with the chefs brought to the fore the centuries-old lack of status and standing attributed to the occupation in Great Britain and Ireland. According to the chefs interviewed, this can be traced back to the servile origins of the occupation where the chef was merely a servant cooking for the house. The servile origins of chefs is summarised by Chef 19: ‘Maybe it’s because Britain was what Britain was back in the day when the chefs are servants aren’t they. You’d just be a servant. You’d cook for the house and stuff like that’ (Chef 19, 21: 7-10). Similarly, the upstairs-downstairs culture that chefs came from and the lack of status and standing afforded the occupation is highlighted by Chef 29 in the following:

The hotel industry in Britain came from an upstairs-downstairs culture. And all this French cooking, it became a whole new ball game. But 25 years ago, this industry was in an upstairs–downstairs culture, living exactly what you see on the telly as upstairs–downstairs with Mrs Bridges. That was the culture. And that again has been one of the barriers against why the industry has not really been seen to have that great a standing. (Chef 29, 44: 4-8)

In direct contrast, the fieldwork discussions also revealed the widely differing status and standing afforded the occupation in other European countries, such as France, Italy and Spain, where being a chef is held in high esteem and perceived as being a highly revered profession thereby bringing respect and recognition to chefs themselves. Chef 39 makes the point: ‘Chefs are not celebrated in the British Isles like they are in mainland Europe, as simple as that. ... People have more respect’ (Chef 39, 3: 18-20). The professional status of the occupation and near God-like status afforded elite chefs on the Continent is illustrated in the following:

I think in Europe it’s completely different, I think. ... Chefs are very highly regarded. For me, it seems like it’s on the same lines as a real professional career, like in accountancy, or law, or something like that, and chefs seem to be in that bracket, if not higher. The three-starred chefs over there have almost got God-like status, I think. (Chef 6, 3-4: 18-10)

You see it in Spain or France – the big chefs, like Paul Bocuse, he’s 80, he’s still wearing the uniform. He’s highly celebrated, respected, because he’s done his time, he’s a chef, the French love him, he’s part of their culture. (Chef 39, 41: 15-20)

Furthermore, the cultural disparities that evidently exist between the social status and standing of the occupation in Great Britain and Ireland, in direct contrast to Continental Europe, is highlighted by Chef 15 in the following terms:

For hundreds of years, catering has really been the lowest ranking in the service industry. We’ve got to understand we’re talking about a subculture of England here, and England is not Europe – not at all. It’s a microclimate – it’s a particular culture, and chefs, in the past in England – until the great Escoffier [Georges Auguste Escoffier 1846-1935] came along – had no status whatsoever. Even chefs who cooked for great houses had no status. ... If you happened to be in that part of the service industry as such, you were basically nothing, you were a servant, and a servant with all the status – or the lack of it – which goes

about being a servant. ... Your work really was unrewarded as well, because you also happened to be in an industry which had never evolved, which had remained frozen within its own lack of status, lack of creativity. To be a chef, you had to have a frontal lobotomy, and you had to be a social outcast, and an academic failure; and then you would enter this industry, that grey world of neon light, and white tiles and aluminium, and no creativity was needed. ... Gastronomy did not really exist in Great Britain, apart from a few tiny little dots. It was just the purpose of feeding people. (Chef 15, 1-2: 20-18)

As highlighted in Chapters 2 and 3, occupational identity is also built in relation to *others* in the 'outside world' (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1972), and notably with reference to the image of the occupation in the eyes of the public (Hughes, 1958; Gold, 1964; Saunders, 1981a, 1981b). The 'chef' literature has highlighted the low status conferred on professional cooking (see Gross, 1958; Chivers, 1972, 1973; Saunders, 1981a; Gabriel, 1988; Fine, 1996a; Mennell, 1996; Trubek, 2000) which has persistently affected chefs' sense of identity and self-worth (Fine, 1996a). Therefore, the research findings concur with the findings of the existing body of work as regards the status and standing attributed to the occupation in Great Britain and Ireland.

The fact that up until circa 30 years ago, gastronomy did not really exist in Great Britain and Ireland, where food, cooking and eating was merely perceived as a means of sustenance, in direct contrast to Continental Europe, where food, cooking and eating has always been perceived as being part of the daily fabric of life, in turn reflects the social status and standing in which the occupation is held from country to country. Chef 39 illustrates the point:

It all depends what culture you're in. Like the French, Spanish will celebrate their chefs; chefs will be looked upon as an asset to the community, as a key element, part of the whole thing of life, they live to eat. Food for them is a major part of their fabric – the person who cooks is basically a hero actually, a hero, I think. Where, here, Ireland, England, America, we're looked upon as

people who under-achieved academically – usually, you very rarely see a third-level educated chef, I assume – people in our country, and I think in England too, eat to live. It's looked upon as a kind of working class job, I think. And definitely we don't get celebrated as much. We're looked upon as working class guys. ... We don't get the same backslap at all. I'd much prefer to be a chef in France. ... Different ball game completely. ... They're like kings – kings. ... They're just kings in their own area. (Chef 39, 1: 7-21)

The widely differing cultural attitudes of 'eat to live' in Great Britain and Ireland, in direct contrast to 'live to eat' on the Continent, clearly illustrate the fact that attitudes towards the role and function of food, cooking and eating in society are culturally determined. The perception of chefs as 'kings' on the Continent, in direct contrast to that of servants in Great Britain and Ireland, clearly reflects the subsequent status and standing afforded the occupation from one country to another. It is evident that whilst socio-cultural attitudes towards the role and function of food, cooking and eating in society on the Continent determine the occupation to be held in high esteem and perceived as a highly revered profession, in direct contrast, the same socio-cultural attitudes, albeit diametrically opposed, in Great Britain and Ireland, determine the relatively low status and standing of the occupation, in turn, perhaps inevitably, preventing the occupation from being perceived as a profession.

Drawing upon the work of occupational sociologist Hughes (1971), Fine (1996a) shows that chefs and cooks are compelled to develop strategies to cope with these public attitudes and regain a sense of pride and identity from their work. One of these strategies involves the *aesthetisation* of their work (Fine, 1987a, 1992, 1995), as chefs and cooks (regardless of the standing and market niche of their establishments) consistently apply aesthetical principles to the creation and production of dishes, in accordance with what they have been taught during occupational socialisation and in trade schools in particular (Fine, 1985). Fine's observations are also echoed in other studies which similarly demonstrate the centrality of aesthetic sensitivities to chefs'/cooks' occupational identity (Mennell, 1996; Peterson and Birg, 1988; Wood, 2000).

According to Fine (1996a, 1996b), however, chefs and cooks do not solely rely on aesthetics to cope with negative public attitudes, since the varied nature of their tasks

provide them with a large repertoire of discursive resources from which they are able to describe themselves as being either professional, or artist, or businessman, or manual workers. According to Fine, such occupational *rhetorics* help chefs and cooks find sufficient worth in their work to derive personal identity from it.

Nevertheless, the literature has highlighted two phenomena responsible for raising the status of chefs in the eyes of the public: Firstly, the advent of *nouvelle cuisine* (in the late 1960's and early 1970's) which elevated the social standing of chefs by giving vent to chefs' artistry and creativity (Levy, 1986; Fischler, 1990; Wood, 1991; Ladenis, 1997; Ferguson and Zukin, 1998; Rao *et al.*, 2005) and emphasising values of individualism, risk and entrepreneurship (Wood, 1991; Gillespie, 1994; Ferguson, 1998); and, more recently, the emergence of celebrity chefs which has been shown to imprint a certain glamour onto the occupation, attract newcomers (Wood, 2000; Pratten, 2003a), and redefine the status of UK chefs 'to a much enhanced role of chef/entrepreneur, expert and intellectual; a kind of modern-day renaissance man' (Randall, 1999: 49), or even to that of professionals (Trubek, 2000; Cameron, 2004) evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted below).

Nevertheless, the status and standing of the occupation and in turn the respect and recognition afforded chefs themselves was somewhat elevated in the 1970's with the advent of *nouvelle cuisine*. The ensuing emancipation of the chef and subsequent notion of the chef as an 'artist' performing like a 'star' for his [*sic*] public is summarised by Chef 11 in the following terms:

How historically it worked was, years ago the *maitre d'* was the king. He was the daddy. ... In the 70s, *nouvelle cuisine* kicked in, everything became plated. Plated service killed the waiter. He became a plate carrier. The kudos went. The kudos went up to the chef as an artist. The chef would dribble around a few raspberries on a steak and build a tower and everyone was like, "Wow, this guy's a genius." The chef took over. Unfortunately, that was to the detriment of the waiting staff, because the waiting staff used to take all glory, the chef was the guy in the back doing the graft. Now the chef's a star, the waiting staff are plate carriers. (Chef 11, 46: 17-25)

The ensuing emergence of Michelin-starred chefs such as the Roux brothers Albert and Michel Roux sr., Nico Ladenis, Raymond Blanc and Pierre Koffman thereafter undisputedly had a significant influence on cuisine in Great Britain and Ireland. However, it was the arrival on the restaurant scene in the late 1980s of a disciple of theirs, Marco Pierre White, which undoubtedly changed the face of modern British cooking and the perceived reality of the occupation and the image of chefs. According to the chefs interviewed, Marco Pierre White seemingly portrayed the occupation and the image of chefs as being cool and Rock ‘n’ Roll, thereby inspiring a generation of chefs and cooks and their quest for Michelin stars. The irrefutable impact of Marco Pierre White on the occupation and on the image of chefs is clearly illustrated in the following:

You get a chef like Marco [Marco Pierre White]. He’s inspired a generation of cooks. His book *White Heat* will probably go down as the greatest cookery book ever written. Not so much for content, but for what it inspired – a generation of cooks. (Chef 44, 7: 14-6)

If it wasn’t for Marco Pierre White, there wouldn’t be many 35-year-old chefs around, because that’s the sort of person that made them go, “Fucking hell, we can get Michelin stars.” *White Heat* is *the* most influential cookery book ever by a long way. ... Without *White Heat* being that cookery book, without the photos by Bob Carlos Clarke, without that book, there would not be as many chefs doing this job. Half the people that you’ve interviewed for this wouldn’t be doing it. I still look at that book now. You still look at it. ... You have a flick through it, you look at those photographs and you go, “Fucking – this is what it’s about. This is why you do it; this is why it’s done.” ... The photographs in that book show *kitchen life*. (Chef 3, 60: 4-15)

It made me leave home. I left home because of *White Heat*. I went to work in a kitchen and I loved the fucking atmosphere – for all the wrong reasons I went into catering. And most chefs are the same. You got into the business for the sport of it, for the fucking hell of it and the thrill of it, and the pressure and

everything else. ... My mum bought me *White Heat* and I read it and fucking left home and went to London. I wanted to go to London. I wanted to be Rock n' Roll. Because Marco [Marco Pierre White] had that fucking long hair, and it just looked so exciting, the kitchen looked fucking mad. (Chef 14, 65-6: 14-13)

Having identified the centuries-old lack of status and standing attributed to the occupation and the servile origins of chefs, and thereafter the influence of *nouvelle cuisine* and in turn Marco Pierre White on the occupation and on the image of chefs, it was interesting to note the previously highlighted chefs' perceptions of the type of person typically entering the catering industry. As alluded to in previous quotes, it is evident that the distinctly low status and standing attributed to the occupation in turn had a knock-on effect in terms of the archetypal person drawn towards the industry, thereby virtually pre-determining the social class and backgrounds of those entering into the occupation. According to the chefs interviewed, the archetypal person entering into the occupation was perceived as being a social outcast and/or an academic under-achiever, whilst the occupation itself was perceived as being demeaning and stigmatised, nothing more than a trade, like a builder, or a mechanic, far removed from the previously highlighted professional status afforded the occupation in Continental Europe. The perceived stigmatisation of the occupation and the social class that chefs and cooks came from is clearly illustrated in the following:

Most chefs also come from working class backgrounds. ... A middle to an upper-middle class family are not going to have their son or daughter go into a kitchen to work as a chef. It ain't going to happen. It would be stigma. There would be a stigma to it. All the chefs I know are working class backgrounds. (Chef 39, 66-7: 20-4)

When I did it, it was very much a working class, it was a trade, it was hard work, the social class that cooks came from it was very much working class, if not underclass. There was a definite upstairs-downstairs about it. They weren't academics; they weren't going to do well at school. (Chef 47, 64: 19-22)

Having identified the stigma attached to the occupation and the predominantly working class, if not underclass, backgrounds of chefs, it was interesting to note chefs' perceptions of their underlying motives for entering into the occupation. According to the chefs interviewed, the occupation was perceived as being a refuge for dropouts, almost a last resort, something you fell into if you were deemed at school to be a bit thick and/or somewhat wayward or difficult. Chef 50 makes the point: 'When I first started, it was a job that people fell into because they couldn't do anything else. That was the perception when I was younger' (Chef 50, 49-50: 25-3). Similarly, Chef 47 notes: 'I remember, even at school, you had the army careers guy come round, and if you didn't join the army, then you were going to do a building course, or you were going to join a catering course. ... It certainly wasn't a career' (Chef 47, 2: 3-7). Indeed, throughout the course of the fieldwork, these sentiments were reiterated, perhaps unsurprisingly, as being the norm. The seemingly inevitable gravitation of uneducated youths and social misfits subsequently drawn towards the catering industry is clearly illustrated in the following:

And at school, they said to you, "... you haven't done very well at school, you'd better go into the catering industry." And that's how it was perceived. If you weren't any good at anything else, "Oh, it'll be all right, you'll get a job in hospitality, you can be a cook." That was how it was thought of in those days. It was thought of, "If you're a bit thick, go into the catering industry." (Chef 23, 29: 3-5)

Up until recently I think it hasn't been an industry; it's been something you've been thrown into when you're at a younger age. People who haven't done well at school go into the catering industry. When I was a kid, your teacher would say to you, "What do you want to do?" You'd say, "I don't know." He'll say, "Oh, well, go and be a chef, then." It was for all the dropouts. Everyone that ever makes it in this industry is a dropout, that's for sure. You don't get posh boys walking into a kitchen that can do 90 hours a week – it's just not going to happen. (Chef 40, 1: 5-11)

Having previously identified the predominantly working class, if not underclass, backgrounds of chefs, it was also interesting to note that a re-occurring theme throughout the course of the fieldwork was the perception that the archetypal person entering into the occupation was most likely to come from a council estate background and/or a domestic broken home. The domestic background and social make-up of the archetypal person entering into the occupation is clearly illustrated by Chef 48 in the following:

When I was at school, all the people that were somewhat wayward or difficult anyway, they got put in two channels – building trades or catering. Because quite frankly, you go back 20-odd years ago, catering was something that was done by old people with no brains and no skills. ... That was just a job for plebs, to be honest. And I know when I went in – I remember going on a sort of YTS [Youth Training Scheme] training scheme, and if I actually look at it, the people that were in there were just the absolute dregs of society: there were people from council estates, broken homes, people with learning difficulties, people who had no other skills to offer other than a pair of hands. ... So I think the perception a long time ago was that cheffing was a very menial job that was done effectively by people with low intelligence, low self-esteem, and very poor social skills. (Chef 48, 1: 13-25)

Nevertheless, no matter how demeaning and stigmatised the occupation was perceived as being in previous decades, and notwithstanding the influence of *nouvelle cuisine* and in turn Marco Pierre White, the influence of the media in the last decade or so, coupled with the modern day culture of celebrity, seemingly captured the outside world's interest in food, cooking and eating, subsequently elevating the status and standing of the occupation thereby bringing respect and recognition to chefs themselves. The subsequent transition and transformation of the occupation from demeaning stigmatised trade to aspirational vocation and perhaps even quasi-profession is clearly illustrated in the following:

I think the word “Chef” has changed dramatically in the last ten years, even. Whereas once when you left school, going to be a chef was almost a last resort,

it's because you'd flunked everything else so what was left for you to do? "Oh, well, go and try and learn to be a chef." But that's changed now and maybe Joe Public's opinions have changed as well, and we have become – depending on how well you do your job – quite respected figures, perhaps. (Chef 36, 1: 5-10)

It wasn't so long ago where it was a dirty word to become a chef. It was sort of, "Oh, I know why you're becoming a chef, because you've cocked up everything else, so it's the only industry that would look at you." The dregs of society were chefs years ago. And now, due to the likes of Jamie Oliver and due to the massive turnaround on television of cooking, it's actually an in-vogue profession to go into. (Chef 36, 26: 5-9)

According to the chefs interviewed, the influence of the media and the culture of celebrity seemingly glamourised the occupation and the image of chefs, portraying the image as being hip, sexy, the new Rock 'n' Roll and chefs as celebrities. Chef 8 makes the point: 'People see chefs as celebrities; they see them as rock star-esque, on a pedestal' (Chef 8, 1: 5-6). Similarly, Chef 10 states: 'I think people really look up to chefs these days. It's become kind of the new Rock 'n' Roll, with your Jamie Olivers, your Gordon Ramsays (Chef 10, 1: 5-6). The following quotes further make the point:

I think the perception of chefs has changed a lot, and that's probably driven by the media culture and the fascination of food currently, and I think that people are seeing perhaps the image of a chef now being slightly more Rock 'n' Roll, more fashionable, perhaps even to the point where it almost glamorises the industry. (Chef 20, 1: 5-8)

It's changed now slightly in the fact that I think because of the whole kind of media attention that are on chefs, it's more attractive now. It's a bit kind of sexy, Rock 'n' Roll, and you get middle class, if there is such a thing nowadays, that kids are saying, "Well, I will give it a go." It's not as demeaning as it used to be. ... When I joined it did have a stigma. It doesn't anymore, at all. ... The

perception of the profession now has totally changed in this country. (Chef 47, 64-5: 24-20)

I think the perception of chefs has changed dramatically, actually. I think ten years ago – or maybe a little bit more – it was always thought of as a trade for people that weren't so bright, they weren't so quick, they weren't such an intelligent breed, chefs. ... The perception has changed dramatically, from manual, hard, back-of-house, grunting workers, to guys that are imaginative, innovative, hard-working, but, they're thought of more as business-minded. And I think as well, the advent of the change of British cuisine has shown that we've got artistic flair; we're probably thought of as being sometimes a little bit too caring, we can get a little bit too upset and a little bit too precious about our food and what goes on the plate. And so from people thinking of us as sort of cavemen, now we're being thought of as prima donnas and ballerinas. I think it's really shifted to the other extreme, and people think of us now as artists. And when a conversation goes round to, "What do you do for a living?" "I'm a chef." "Oh, how exciting", and "Oh, I'd love to be a chef." Not that the reality is as glamorous as people's perception of what it is, but, a much better opinion of us as professionals now. (Chef 1, 1-2: 5-11)

Furthermore, the media and celebrity culture seemingly glorified the occupation and the image of chefs, portraying the occupation as mystical and chefs as culinary magicians, thereby capturing the outside world's new found fascination with food, cooking and eating, subsequently elevating the status and standing of the occupation bringing reverence and recognition to chefs themselves. Chef 40 makes the point: 'The difference is it's glorified now. It's been glorified, and it looks like a fun thing to do (Chef 40, 56: 13-4). The following quotes further illustrate the point:

It's almost become quite a sort of hip thing to do. ... I think there's a certain amount of mystique about it. ... I think there's now a sort of a slightly glossy side to it too; people see it as a great thing to do. (Chef 16, 22-3: 20-1)

I think today they kind of almost have this sorcerer's view of chefs, I think. I think for a couple of reasons: I think we're definitely living in a culture of celebrity where chefs now have a profile, and I think just due to the fact that the general public in the UK, especially now, has an interest in food, and people just don't cook. ... And I get it here with people: they ask me to sign autographs and menus. I don't get it, I have to say. I see it as a career and as a job. It's almost a vocation, I think. ... I just don't understand their awe sometimes of the job that we do. (Chef 47, 1: 5-22)

In light of theories on occupational identity formation (Hughes, 1958; Gold, 1964; Saunders, 1981a) (see Chapter 3), it can therefore be argued that the image change brought about by the rise of *nouvelle cuisine* in the 1970's (Wood, 1991; Rao *et al.*, 2003, 2005) and celebrity chefs in the last decade or so (Fattorini, 1994; Gillespie, 1994; Wood, 2000; Ashley *et al.*, 2004), is therefore likely to have positively affected the occupational identity of chefs, whilst incorporating notions of artistry, individual merit and entrepreneurship into the occupational ideology of chefs, notably for chef-owners/entrepreneurs in the haute cuisine sector (Balazs, 2001; Ashley *et al.*, 2004; Johnson *et al.*, 2005; Leschziner, 2007) evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below).

Having identified the glamourisation and glorification of the occupation as viewed through the media lens and subsequent perception of the outside world of the occupation and the image of chefs as the new Rock 'n' Roll and chefs as celebrities, it was interesting to note the previously highlighted chefs' perceptions of the present day status of the occupation as a profession. In the words of Chef 20: 'Chefs are now coming to prominence. We are now becoming a part of society. And I think that happened 20 years ago in France, and maybe Italy and Spain. And it's become a profession and seen as that' (Chef 20, 3: 20-2). The evidently contrasting perceptions of the professional status of the occupation of chef are clearly illustrated in the following:

Go back a generation or two cooking was not something that was seen as anything remotely either cool or ambitious; it wasn't a respected profession, catering, full stop. Quite a lot of the recruitment at the bottom level into colleges

was young people; a lot of them hadn't completed their education; it was a cop-out profession, so it was sort of full of quite a lot of – I'm not trying to be sort of harsh here – but quite a lot of riff-raff. ... Although it is changing, it is now a respected profession, an admired profession – not everywhere, but certainly the front line of it is – and so it's attracting a lot of people who might not otherwise have given it a second thought, and now think, "God, actually I love cooking, and actually, yeah, it's a great profession, and I'm going to go into it." (Chef 16, 1: 12-25)

I think attitudes are changing and people being so interested in food that the chef is seen as a positive role within society – maybe not like a doctor or anything like that – but it's something that people aspire to now, and respect a little bit more than they used to. (Chef 10, 41: 18-21)

If you're a chef in France, you're not a celebrity as such; you're up there with lawyers and doctors. I think that in the past seven to ten years, the public can see it now more as a profession. ... It's not just necessarily a job that you fall into when you leave school at 15. But it takes time; you just can't walk into the hospital, put on a white jacket and say you're a doctor. When it gets to that stage here, then we're going down the right path; it'll take a few more years. If you go to France people will say, "Look, you should go into that profession." (Chef 22, 44-3: 4-15)

However, despite the evident elevation of the status and standing of the occupation and the new found respect and recognition afforded chefs themselves, the influence of the media and celebrity culture and the subsequent perception of the outside world with regard to the image of chefs and the occupation in general is not necessarily perceived as being altogether positive and beneficial from the chefs' point of view. Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, the media and celebrity and television chefs (TV chefs) tend to portray a false image of the professional chef, blurring the boundaries between reality and entertainment in the eyes of the outside world and distorting the reality of professional cooking and what 'being a chef' actually means.

In the words of Chef 48: ‘These guys in some respects almost devalue the product, the craftsmanship’ (Chef 48, 3: 3). The following quotes clearly make the point:

I actually don’t like clowns like that betraying my profession like that. ... In a way, the television and the celebrity chef, and the superstars on telly have done a little bit of good for bringing the profession into the public eye, but in the main, look how it’s been bought. Instead of it becoming a serious, interesting, fascinating profession, it’s almost like a fucking soap opera. (Chef 28, 19-20: 25-7)

It’s maybe the term “Chef” that I have a problem with – a celebrity chef and a TV chef. Calling Ainsley Harriott a chef to me is an absolute insult. He’s not a chef at all. He doesn’t deserve to be called a chef. He hasn’t earned his stripes and he’s not a good cook. ... I wouldn’t demean my profession by doing that. (Chef 47, 11-2: 22-2)

I would give a working chef much more respect than I give, say, Antony Worrall Thompson. I would, genuinely I would, because I know what they go through, what they’ve got to do to achieve where they are. Gordon Ramsay’s very popular among chefs because everyone knows he was a working chef – and he was a working chef once upon a time. And he put his hours in, his time, he did his time. That’s the word, “Doing your time,” is helluva important. (Chef 39, 36: 8-14)

The above quotes are particularly interesting for a myriad of reasons, not least as they clearly illustrate the perceived lack of credibility and subsequent disdain in which celebrity chefs and TV chefs are held by their occupational peer group, or in other words, ‘significant others’. It is interesting to note how ‘working’ chefs actively seek to distance themselves from celebrity chefs and TV chefs, who they evidently perceive as making a mockery of and devaluing the craft thereby demeaning the occupation. In order to differentiate themselves from celebrity chefs and TV chefs ‘working’ chefs highlight their superior technical abilities, or in other words, ‘the knowledge’, thereby distinguishing themselves as those who can and do cook well, in contrast to those who cannot and do not, thus identifying themselves as proper chefs.

It is also interesting to note the frequently cited mantra of the ‘significant others’, that in order to be perceived as being a proper chef, a fundamental precursor to gaining ‘the knowledge’ is ‘doing your time’ and the military induced term ‘earn your stripes’, in effect earning the right to wear the chef’s uniform of chef whites and the right to be called ‘chef’. Chef 29 makes the point: ‘Gordon [Ramsay] had a hard paper round, and he did the craft right. He’s not a celebrity through being a celebrity. He’s done the paper round. He’s put the graft in. He’s not somebody who’s just on the TV bullshitting’ (Chef 29, 52: 6-9).

Indeed, interestingly, Michelin-starred and ‘celebrity’ chefs’ propensity to distance themselves from celebrity and TV chefs (Ashley *et al.*, 2004) seems to suggest that the chef’s identity is only deemed legitimate when enacted in front of other incumbents or ‘significant others’ (Mead, 1934) (i.e. their occupational peer group) within the boundaries of the occupational culture, in accordance with the expected roles and formal norms of behaviour which define ‘being a chef’ (Goffman, 1959).

Nevertheless, throughout the course of the fieldwork, discussions with the chefs revealed that some TV chefs, or in other words, ‘celebrity cooks’, are held in relatively high regard by chefs themselves. Indeed, despite not necessarily having gained ‘the knowledge’, nor having ‘earned their stripes’, some ‘celebrity cooks’, such as Delia Smith, Keith Floyd [1943-2009], Rick Stein, Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fernley-Whittingstall, were deemed to be informative and educational, encouraging people to source and cook using fresh ingredients and therefore worthy of respect. That aside, and more importantly for the purposes of this study, it is particularly interesting to note that none of the aforementioned TV chefs seemingly perceive themselves to be, nor refer to themselves as, ‘chef’, nor indeed do they wear the chef’s uniform, thereby distinguishing them from most other celebrity chefs or TV chefs who portray themselves as chefs by wearing the chef’s uniform and refer to themselves as ‘chef’. This therefore contradicts the accepted wisdom (as demonstrated in the existing literature) to a certain extent, in the sense that not all Michelin-starred chefs distance themselves from celebrity and TV chefs who have not achieved legitimacy via the approval of ‘significant others’ within the setting of a professional kitchen. The findings demonstrate that while this is true to a certain extent, this attitude is not applied to all

celebrity and TV chefs with certain individuals (noted above) referred to as ‘celebrity cooks’ being singled out and spoken about in positive terms by the chefs interviewed.

According to Chivers (1973) in his study on the proletarianisation of a service worker, in the UK context, the term ‘cook’ has historically been associated with both subordinate women in the world of public cooking and women cooking in the home (see Chapter 5). However, it is also particularly interesting to note that the symbolically charged nomenclatures of ‘chef’ and ‘cook’ seemingly present an interesting conundrum. Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, in the upper echelons of cooking, to be called a ‘cook’ is not perceived as a derogatory term between chefs, but rather an underlying compliment, a form of respect. In the words of Chef 44: ‘I think a lot of chefs like to think they’re cooks. Like, “I’m a cook.” And in some ways, it’s sort of like they’re understating themselves. It’s like an understatement, “I’m a cook”’ (Chef 44, 62: 13-5). Similarly, Chef 25 states: I think a lot of chefs will say they’re cooks, to be fair. ... That’s almost sort of in another way, another badge of honour. (Chef 25, 53: 6-9). The following quotes further make the point:

To be called “a good cook” is a compliment because that’s what you do. ... To say the words, “He’s a fucking good cook,” it goes back to the organics of it: your touch, and your feeling, and your understanding, and you know the product. ... So if somebody says, “He’s a fucking good cook,” that’s a big compliment. (Chef 3, 128-9: 20-20)

If you were to say someone’s a good cook, that kind of does take it a bit further, I think, and maybe it’s something to do with the fact that Marco [Marco Pierre White], used to say, “Well, I’m a cook and not a chef,” kind of thing – maybe it’s that kind of underlying compliment there. (Chef 6, 79: 22-5)

Besides, it is interesting to note that having earned the right to wear the chef’s uniform and the right to be called ‘chef’, some chefs subsequently distinguish themselves by understating their status. The unequivocal impact of Marco Pierre White on the occupation and the image of chefs are further illustrated by Chef 32 in the following:

He [Marco Pierre White] didn't like being "Chef". If you called him "Chef", you had a right slating. Whether it was one of his trademarks at the beginning, because Marco was all about sort of rebelling against the way the industry was at the time. Before people like Marco came to prominence, the master chefs in this country were people like the big hotel chefs. ... They were the big chefs of their day with their white aprons down to the floor, big tall hats, neckerchiefs. Marco wanted to rebel against all that, didn't he. And that's why he's there in the blue striped apron and a white T-shirt, long straggly hair, no hat. I can only assume that's why he rebelled against being called "Chef." But I don't think Gordon [Gordon Ramsay] likes being called "Chef", or he didn't. Now I guess he might have changed, but I know back in his *Aubergine* days, everyone called him "Gordon". For me, it's something I always worked at to achieve. The minute you get people calling you "Chef" in the kitchen, in a way, it's sort of a sign you are achieving, and you're getting where you want to go. (Chef 32, 44-6: 20-7)

Indeed, to be called 'chef' is also perceived as being a mark of respect between chefs. Chef 29 makes the point: 'My chef when I was at *Gleneagles*, I still call him "Chef" today. And I still respect him today and I haven't worked for him for 27 years, because I know what he gave me' (Chef 29, 38: 15-9). Similarly, Chef 20 states: 'There's a huge amount of respect. I still call Raymond Blanc "Chef". I still see him as my chef' (Chef 20, 24: 19-20). The following quotes clearly further illustrate the point:

If I phone Simon Gueller who I worked for 12 years ago, I still call him "Chef": "Alright chef, how's it going?" ... But it's all out of respect. ... The thing is, really, Simon's a very good friend of mine. I worked with him for four years. We used to go fishing together, but the thing is, we go out to the pub together, and I still call him "Chef". (Chef 40, 23-4: 17-2)

I call Steve "Chef," I don't call him Steve. ... It's respect, I suppose, isn't it. ... If I go out, I call "Chef," "Chef", even if we go out for a drink. ... It's respect, I suppose. And it's not intentional; it's just what I call him. I don't think about it when I ring him up, I say, "Alright Chef". When we spoke after I got the star,

he rang me up, and he said, “Hello Chef.” And I thought, “Ah.” I just thought that’s really nice of you to say that, because it’s a note of saying, “Well done.” He calls me *Anonymous*, but it’s almost like, you’ve become “Chef,” now. (Chef 21, 41-2: 3-10)

Besides, while chefs are not the only occupation to base their self-assessment on attributes such as technical abilities, place of work and external recognition, the above quotes however clearly illustrate the existence of what are in effect internal validating mechanisms, internal to chefs that is, for determining the basis upon which self-worth and self-identity are to be formed. Such validating mechanisms, even if informally applied, are important in terms of legitimating identity, in effect earning the right to be called ‘chef’.

Furthermore, respect and recognition in the eyes of the outside world towards the occupation and chefs themselves is also linked with the status and standing of the actual place of work, in other words, the category of establishment. Therefore, perhaps unsurprisingly, restaurants where the technical abilities of chefs are deemed to be high are considered to be more worthy of respect and recognition than those where they are deemed to be low. Furthermore, subsequent external measures of success, such as the accreditation of Michelin stars, further increase the status and standing of the restaurant and indeed chefs themselves. Chef 11 makes the point: ‘They say, “Where?” and you tell them, and they fucking change. Their whole character changes in front of you. Because they realise you’re a Michelin-starred chef, or you’ve got a Michelin-starred restaurant’ (Chef 11, 11: 6-10). Chef 26 states: ‘If you get a star, the respect you’re then shown is quite scary. ... The respect that you get from people who have not even been here, never eaten my food, but, “You’ve got a Michelin star!”’ (Chef 26, 4: 9-14). The following quotes further make the point:

If they ask you where you work, and if you’re a Michelin-starred chef, for example, or you work in a famous establishment, then people are curious and interested, and then suddenly you’re up there. If you were to say that you work in a bistro or in a fast food operation or anything like that, it’s almost like they cut you off instantly. (Chef 34, 1-2: 25-7)

As soon as you say you've got a Michelin star, there's a different way of thinking, the conversation changes straightaway. It's that respect, I think, of having it, and I don't know why, it just changes people's sort of outlook on you if you say you've got a Michelin star. If you say you own a pub and they're like, "Ohh," people are like that. Then when you say you're one of those foodie pubs and we've got a star, they take interest straightaway. It changes their way of thinking straightaway. (Chef 46, 50: 19-4)

With regards to the external process of identification (Jenkins, 2004), from the literature, it is clear (although not acknowledged by the authors) that the Michelin Guide plays a key role in defining the identity of chefs and providing them with a sense of self-worth (Johns and Menzel, 1999; Rao *et al.*, 2003; Surlemont and Johnson, 2005), whilst diffusing the values of consistency, perfectionism, culinary rigour and creativity in the culture of elite chefs in the haute cuisine community (Balazs, 2001; Surlemont and Johnson, 2005; Durand *et al.*, 2007; Ottenbacher and Harrington, 2007; Stierand and Lynch, 2008).

However, such judgements are not just confined to the outside world since chefs also categorise themselves based upon their actual place of work and external measures of success, such as the accreditation of Michelin stars. In the words of Chef 10: 'I think some people define themselves by their Michelin stars' (Chef 10, 56: 4-5). The following quotes illustrate the point:

Most chefs who work here want to work here because they perceive here as one of the best. ... So these guys and girls want to work in places doing good food; they want to be proud of it. They want to go out with their buddies tomorrow night and say, "Where do you work?" "Oh, I work at *Anonymous*." "Oh, wow, good man." That's what they want. They want that. They don't want them to say, "That shit hole? What are you working there for?" So that's their star bit. So it's got the kudos for them. (Chef 39, 58: 3-14)

I always wanted to get a star. I want to get two Michelin stars. ... You want a star because it's recognition of the level you're at. ... It was my ultimate goal,

and it's something, you're very proud of, because if somebody says, "Oh, what do you do, then?" "I'm a chef." "Oh, right, where do you work?" "Jack's Restaurant in Newport", or "*Anonymous*, we've got a Michelin star," you do instantly think, "Oh, right, he's at that level." (Chef 32, 28-9: 5-6)

THE CHEF'S SELF-IDENTITY – DERIVING IDENTITY FROM WORK

This section will look at the way in which chefs derive their sense of identity from the work that they do and look the stereotypical dominant personality of the chef. It will also look at the nature of the occupation as a vocation to which these chefs are called as well as the nature of the occupational community that exists in the restaurant industry, while comparing and contrasting the research findings with the findings of the existing body of work.

Throughout the course of the fieldwork, discussions with the chefs revealed the main characteristics of the chefs' identity from the chefs' point of view, in other words, how chefs' perceive themselves, that is to say, the chefs' self-identity or self-concept (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934) (see Chapter 2). The fieldwork discussions frequently brought to the fore the feelings of insecurity that chefs often experience on a daily basis and their subsequent need for praise and recognition to satisfy their egos in turn validating their sense of self-worth and self-identity. Chef 50 makes the point: 'A lot of chefs are probably a little bit insecure because they want that recognition. ... You're constantly being judged, and you're only as good as your last plate. ... That is what drives you' (Chef 50, 2-3: 15-4). Similarly, Chef 25 further suggests: 'I think quite a lot of chefs are insecure. ... At the end of the day, you are judged on what you cook, and that makes you quite fragile. ... We're both the most egotistical and the most fragile' (Chef 25, 44-5: 21-17). Furthermore, Chef 28 states: 'You're open to criticism like no other profession might be. And most of the criticism we get is from people who have no idea' (Chef 28: 9, 22-3). These points are neatly illustrated in the following:

The only thing that upsets me is criticism of my food on the plate. That is the only thing that will upset me. That upsets me more than anything else in the

world. That upsets me more than having a row with my husband, because that food on that plate is me, and I put a lot of me into that, and if it's wrong, then I'm upset with myself because I haven't performed properly, but if it's right, then that's good because that's the best thing I can do. It is me on a plate. It's inside me. It's what I am. (Chef 37, 23: 13-21)

It's me. This is my palate. This is a reflection of me. When people say it's all wrong, it's a personal attack, and they make it personal. ... It's like the old line Marco [Marco Pierre White] used, why he retired. He got tired of people making comment on him and his food with less knowledge than him, which just about sums it up in a nutshell. (Chef 8, 21: 12-23).

The *personality on the plate* is more I think to do with their need to display their technical skills, or their need to impress their peers, or their guidebook critiques. I think one thing you'll find amongst chefs is that very few of them will talk about impressing the customer, or making the customer happy. ... They're cooking for themselves, and the customer doesn't really understand what they're getting, and all that. (Chef 9, 24: 5-12)

Because do you cook for customers? ... It's a very selfish fucking business, this. You are cooking for yourself. You do what you want to do. Michelin: is it fucking important? Yes, it's important to your ego. ... I do believe you're doing it for yourself. (Chef 40, 10-1: 21-2)

Moreover, as alluded to in previous quotes, it is interesting to note that a seemingly fundamental prerequisite of the chef's demeanour is the necessity to be in control. Chef 11 makes the point: 'Ultimately, a lot of chefs are control freaks' (Chef 11, 14: 7). Furthermore, Chef 22 notes: 'Chefs don't really like to be told what to do by other people – not when you get to a certain level' (Chef 22, 53: 19-20). The following quotes make the point:

Chefs as a breed of people like to have freedom. ... We're the kind of people who need a certain amount of freedom. ... Most chefs don't want to be told what to do. Because we just want to get on and do what we think we're good at. (Chef 29, 48-9: 24-12)

I don't like being told what to do now by anybody, really. ... I think being a chef-proprietor for me is vital, vital, I think. I'm a control freak, I am. I think a lot of chefs are, I think. I think a lot of chefs are control freaks. I think you have to be. I really do. (Chef 6, 39-41: 15-8)

Besides, the subsequent need for praise and recognition in order to satisfy their egos in turn validating their sense of self-worth and self-identity is further elaborated upon by Chef 28: 'Egos – everyone wants to be recognised as the best in their field and chefs are the worst. Anybody that's doing art, has an artistic job, has an insecurity' (Chef 28, 26: 12-3). The following quotes clearly further illustrate the point:

All chefs live in their own little world, I think, and they all like to be praised, otherwise I don't really see why you would work so hard not to be praised. I think you're being praised by guide books, food critics, customers, the praise might come in repeat custom, it might come in reviews, it might come in Michelin stars – all chefs have got massive egos, I think. Some more than others, but I think they have. I don't think there's any doubt there – that and control freaks are the two most important ingredients. (Chef 6, 53-4: 23-4)

Part of it's ego as well. There's no doubt about it. And chefs have big fucking egos. And at the end of the day, there's no better way to have your ego massaged than being really good at what you do. And it becomes their identities, and it becomes part of who they are, and becomes, for some of them, their *raison d'être*. ... There is a subservient part of it as well, I think. ... It's part of the masochism, the subservient, there to please. And it's pumped up then by the ego and the achievement, or whatever. ... I suppose it enhances your sense of importance, and your standing within society, and who you are. (Chef 13, 7: 1-23)

The above quote is particularly interesting for a myriad of reasons, not least as it clearly illustrates an interesting characteristic of the chefs' identity that is the chefs' subservient demeanour. Throughout the course of the fieldwork, discussions with the chefs brought to the fore their desire to please people and their need to be liked. The very nature of chefs' work, cooking for and feeding people, enables chefs to display their technical abilities working with the high quality ingredients they handle. This in turn gratifies their desire to please and need to be liked, subsequently bringing praise and recognition, thereby enhancing their sense of self-worth and self-identity. The following quote makes the point:

I think all chefs are born with a natural element to want to please people, and that's not just customers, that's people in general. It's a real strange thing. I don't like to use the word, but it's almost like a subservient demeanour you have in your character, and that's everywhere – *I'd like to please people*. Whether that's restaurant critics, whether that's customers, whether that's my mum and dad, I don't like to upset anybody, I like to please everybody, but when you're a chef and you're passionate about your food, chefs are a businessman's worst frigging nightmare because you want to please people. If that means I have to give an extra slab of foie gras on a piece of pigeon because that customer thinks it's better, then fuck it, I'll do it, because I want that customer to walk away from *Anonymous* and go, "God, wow, that was great," because that makes me feel better, and it makes me feel like I'm doing my job better, and it makes me feel more worthy as a person. (Chef 30, 3: 10-21)

As alluded to in previous quotes, it is evident that respect and recognition towards chefs is based on their ability to do something out of the ordinary, something that not everyone can do. This in turn has implications for social mobility, as the ability to do something out of the ordinary, something that not everyone can do, can alter the way in which an individual is perceived by both 'self' and 'other' in relation to a society's notion of what constitutes a worthwhile and hence proper job. Besides, according to the chefs interviewed, being a chef is much more than just a job, it is a vocation, seemingly perhaps even a calling. Chef 45 makes the point: 'I think it's such a job

which your life is dedicated to. It is a vocation; it's not just a job' (Chef 45, 4: 10-1). Chef 30 states: 'I don't consider it a job, it's a lifestyle. This is not a job to me, it's an absolute lifestyle. ... It is a passion. It's a way of life' (Chef 30, 30: 5-8). The altruistic nature of chefs and the gratification of the quasi-religious notion of feeding people, subsequently affording praise and recognition, thereby enhancing their sense of self-worth and self-identity, are illustrated in the following:

At this level, and harder levels, it's a vocation. Everyone goes on about nurses and the hours that doctors work. My two sisters are doctors. They don't work anywhere near as many hours as we work. They talk about vocational nursing jobs – well, they come into the kitchen fresh out of school with or without O-levels, 16, 17 years old, and they say goodbye to their Saturday nights, goodbye to their mates, goodbye to their girlfriends, goodbye to their birthdays, goodbye to Christmas, goodbye to Easter, goodbye to sunshine, because we can only be off when everybody else is working, and we have to be there when everyone else is off, because we have to perform. It's a hospitality business. (Chef 28, 3: 16-23)

There's something more within hospitality – not just being a chef, but I suppose within hospitality – that attracts a certain person, which is a little bit more than, say, just a job. And I guess the analogy that you could draw that to would be perhaps people who see themselves working as teacher professional, even within the NHS [National Health Service], where they say, it's not about the money, it's about that we feel we're empowered to help people, and in a way cheffing's a little bit like that, where we get a huge amount of pleasure in being creative, and working within a pressured environment, but at the same time, there are elements about cooking which you do get that personal satisfaction, you do get that feedback, and equally, you also get that instant feedback, because you feed somebody, they're happy about it, and you get that straightaway. (Chef 20, 1-2: 17-1)

It would appear that the need for praise and recognition in order to satisfy their egos and validate their sense of self-worth and self-identity seemingly provides chefs with the necessary drive and determination to succeed. Indeed, accreditation from the internationally recognised Michelin Guide in particular is perceived as being aspirational and provides chefs with the necessary praise and recognition and subsequent status and standing they seek and constantly strive for. In the words of Chef 30: ‘Any chef who wants to do this style of cooking has naturally got an ego, because they want to show you what they can do. ... We have our egos, and we want to win a Michelin star’ (Chef 30, 50: 16-20). Chef 50 further makes the point: ‘You strive for that recognition in the guide. That’s one of the other things that drives you, is that you want that recognition from the guides which then makes you stand out’ (Chef 50, 15: 15-7). Chef 50 further states: ‘You strive for it, and it’s the highest accolade you can get’ (Chef 50, 78: 24). Chef 26 further suggests: ‘I think it’s the guide that any chef, at the level that you’re talking about – *haute cuisine* – is what you aspire to have’ (Chef 26, 4: 8-9). The following quotes make the point:

Every chef I think will tell you it’s the Oscar of the food industry, and it makes a tremendous difference. It’s instant recognition. ... There’s so many guides, and so many people who are rating the industry, but Michelin is seen as the one that counts. It’s like the Oscar, and once you’ve got that, it makes a big difference. ... It sets you apart. (Chef 34, 1: 9-19)

It’s the pinnacle. ... If you compare it to football, if you’re a young footballer you want to play in the Champions’ League or the Premiership – and I think that’s a good comparison to cooking if you’re a chef. Most chefs when they’re young – or Europe anyway – aspire to get a Michelin star. ... It’s the pinnacle of the career. To achieve three stars is worldwide fame within the food circles. (Chef 10, 52: 11-8)

I think any chef who’s got two stars wants three stars. Any chef who’s got one star wants two stars. ... It comes back to your own ego. I think you want three

stars for your own ego. ... And for your own ego, you're part of the 50 best chefs in the world. (Chef 41, 28: 16-25)

Furthermore, the quest for Michelin stars and the subsequent praise and recognition and status and standing it affords can seemingly become an obsession for some chefs. Chef 10: makes the point: 'People are just totally self-obsessed by the guides. That's it. That's their goal. They want to achieve two or three stars – they'll do anything to get it' (Chef 10, 53: 13-5). Chef 42 further states: 'For a lot of chefs, that's the be all and end all of it. It's the gold medal, it's the gong, it's the prestige that it brings' (Chef 42, 12: 9-10). Chef 46 makes the point:

Before I got it, it was the be all and end all. I was bloody obsessed with trying to get one. ... And once you got it, you think, "Fucking hell," I couldn't believe it. I think I did actually shed a tear or two. ... And probably more so I think in the early days, you're obsessed with the whole thing. ... I wouldn't want to lose it. (Chef 46, 50: 5-13)

However, it is interesting to note that although being awarded a Michelin star seemingly furnishes chefs with the necessary praise and recognition and subsequent status and standing they seek and constantly strive for, the fieldwork discussions also highlighted the subsequent pressure that the quest for Michelin stars and subsequently retaining them can bring to bear. The following quotes clearly illustrate the point:

When I got my first star, I broke down in tears. I sat outside, and my head was fucked for two-and-a-half months – fucked to bits, absolutely to bits, because all my goals as a kid, for like 12 years of my job, all my goals had arrived at once, and I was so lost because I thought to myself, "Right, what am I going to do now? What do I aim for now? I'll never get two stars." It must be like Alex Ferguson winning the Champions' League, and he's sitting there and he's thinking to himself, "Right, ok, what's next?" But I couldn't think of what's next because the pressure that I'd been in to get – and you put yourself under that pressure, and it's no-one else, it's yourself: it's not the customers, it's not

your staff, it's yourself, thinking to yourself, "Oh, I want to get a star, I want to get a star." (Chef 40, 5-6: 21-5)

When I got two stars, it was a roller coaster again. It was that feeling of, "Fuck me, I can't believe this. I really can't believe I've got to two stars." ... And the thing is, my biggest fear is now, what do I do when I achieve three stars? What's fucking left? I don't know. And that's the thing that's really wrecking my life. I've decided what I'm going to do: I'm getting out. I'm going to get out. I'm going to get three stars and get out. Because it's not worth it, because then you're going to live in fear of losing it. You're at the top of your game. Getting the phone call to go up to two is fantastic, can you imagine getting the phone call going down? It's heart-wrenching. ... All of your ambitions have just flown out the window. (Chef 40, 10: 1-21)

When I got the third Michelin star, I was – "Wow!" A mixture of over the moon, and shit scared. It was just literally, patted on the back and kneed in the groin, at the same time. ... And actually, as it turned out, every year it comes up, and there's this two months now – we're in the period of waiting for it now – I think, "God!" I just wish it didn't happen. The Michelin Guide's different. ... And there's pressure, there's pressure to get the third star – to maintain it. ... Once I felt comfortable with the third star – because I didn't want it – that was my first reaction. After going, "Wow!" I thought, "I actually don't want this, because what happens if I lose it, and I'd rather not have it, than having it and then..." ... It took me probably two years to actually come to terms with. ... Michelin is the bastion of food guides. (Chef 33, 9-10: 14-15)

Furthermore, fieldwork discussions also revealed that the need for respect and recognition and subsequent status and standing chefs seek and constantly strive for also manifests itself in the form of acknowledgement and acceptance from their occupational peer group, or in other words, 'significant others'. Chef 50 makes the point: 'You want recognition from your peers, or from people that you've worked for, or from other chefs within the trade' (Chef 50, 2: 11-2). Chef 39 states: 'The

only thing about a star for me is peer respect. Respect. Like, “He’s got a star,” so it does kind of put you a bit up’ (Chef 39, 4: 20-1). The standing of chefs rated through the Michelin Guide is clearly illustrated in the following:

That is almost like the Bible of all guide books. It’s *the* authority. ... Because the chefs hold that elusive three-star, and achieving one, two, and three in such high esteem, that the whole credibility of chefs is through that red ‘M’. (Chef 20, 4-5: 25-8)

Michelin *is* the best thing that ever happened to cooking. Why? Because it makes chefs drive really hard – push. There’s no other industry in the world, I don’t believe, where people drive so hard for a goal where there’s no payment at the end of it. Michelin don’t come to you and say, “Look, John, you’re a fantastic chef, there’s your two Michelin stars and there’s a cheque for a hundred grand.” You get fuck all. You get a nice little picture in a book with two stars and that’s it. It’s a standing against your peers, that’s what it is. It’s a standing against your peers. When you’re all stood in a line, or whatever, you can say that, “Yes, I set out, now I’m in that top bracket of chefs in the world,” and it’s knowing that you have had that dedication and that ability to do that. (Chef 30, 45-6: 19-4)

Furthermore, as highlighted in previous quotes, it is interesting to note that chefs not only compare themselves to ‘significant others’ nationally, but also internationally. According to Chef 13:

I think it’s important because it’s the only international standard. ... Because it’s the only way you can compare yourself to your international colleagues. I think that’s its major driving force – personally. I can say, “Well, I’m one star, and so and so in Spain is one star. I’m at that level.” ... It’s a common currency of comparison. (Chef 13, 50-1: 23-8)

What is more, winning a Michelin star brings respect and recognition from within the industry and a status and standing amongst ‘significant others’ at both national and international levels. In the words of Chef 46: ‘It’s just a different level altogether, and you become a lot more accepted I think in the industry because you’re obviously serious about what you do. ... It’s massively respected’ (Chef 46, 50-1: 24-6). Chef 46 further elaborates the point:

You have that respect straightaway if you’ve got a Michelin star. ... But once you’ve got it, then you certainly don’t want to lose it. ... And it’s so well known within Europe and more so now, they’re coming into America and things, and different areas they’re going to expand to. You just become in a way a bit more into that sort of club. (Chef 46, 49: 14-22)

Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, winning a Michelin star is likened to being part of a clan affording membership to an elite club. Chef 20 makes the point: ‘You’ll be one of an elite band of few. ... So you become very elite. ... You do become a very elite band of talented chefs that all have one thing in common. And that is they can cook’ (Chef 20, 12: 14-8). Chef 18 states: ‘You become part of an elite club. It gives you street cred. If you’ve got a star, you’ve got street cred’ (Chef 18, 24: 15-8). Chef 30 suggests: ‘When you finally break into that bubble and you’re accepted, it’s almost like a Mafia. You’re accepted by that group of people’ (Chef 30, 4: 12-3). What is more, according to Chef 46:

Once you win it, you definitely don’t want to lose it, so it makes you stronger to do better and better and better all the time. ... Once you’ve won it then it’s a whole new level again, and you become a lot more accepted again, but in another higher circle. ... Straightaway you’re accepted. (Chef 46, 53-4: 24-17)

Having won a Michelin star, the subsequent feeling of acceptance, of fitting in, of belonging, of being part of something, is clearly evident as Chef 21 notes: ‘I think it’s a badge of honour. ... I guess it’s a level of understanding that doesn’t need to be sort of spoken about. Once you know that person’s done it – it’s just there’ (Chef 21,

74: 18-25). Moreover, according to Chef 3: ‘One of the better things in this business is winning the Michelin star, but the worst thing that can happen would be losing it’ (Chef 3, 32: 16-7). The distinctly contrasting emotions of losing a Michelin star and subsequent feeling of loss of respect and recognition within the industry and status and standing amongst ‘significant others’ is clearly illustrated by Chef 17 in the following:

Losing the star a couple of years ago and not having any hurt enormously. ... I think you lose some position or some ranking somewhere along the line in your industry, maybe some of your reputation you lose, and that hurts a bit. ... I suppose for me to say that I’m not working at that level probably hurts me a bit – it hurts me a lot probably. ... I think within your peer group, probably people would look at you slightly different. ... I think the Michelin thing is a bit about standing within your own peers, and part of that success. (Chef 17, 17-9: 21-10)

Moreover, fieldwork discussions also revealed that chefs are more than just a group of people; they are a group of people with something in common with each other which distinguishes them from other groups. In other words, they are a community of common minded individuals. As the internal validating mechanisms highlighted earlier clearly illustrate, membership of the chef community is based upon a shared understanding of the criteria for membership, in other words, they speak the same language. It is evident that having ‘done their time’ and ‘earned their stripes’ and the subsequent right to be called ‘chef’, chefs share a common bond between them, a shared feeling of understanding, an affinity with one another, a sense of camaraderie and a feeling of mutual respect. As Chef 29 suggests: ‘They talk the same language’ (Chef 29, 39: 16). According to Chef 11: ‘When you get to Michelin status, you then start meeting people at that top level in all walks of their careers, and you have this affinity with them that they understand’ (Chef 11, 13: 8-10). The evident sense of communality amongst chefs is clearly further illustrated in the following:

There is a community of chefs, and there is a community of chefs at various levels. ... When France *was* gastronomy, everything and everyone was just slightly looked down upon. But there is now this thing that, actually, it’s not

just France anymore, it's international. So, the chefs that I'm most friendly with, actually, they're at an international level. (Chef 33, 21: 1-13)

Most of the chefs at the top end have got a good respect for each other, and good comradeship. We all know how hard it is to achieve a high standard, and the more you achieve in your career, the more elite you become, then actually the more respect you get. (Chef 20, 26: 9-2)

When you hit this Michelin standard, then there's a respect there, I think. Once you get into the higher echelons of achieving, then, from other places of similar achievement, there seems to be a respect, I think. I wouldn't think twice about phoning just about anybody from a starred restaurant, or hotel, or whatever to speak to another chef. You've earned your stripes, I think. And you do get a respect from other chefs, definitely. (Chef 36, 20-1: 23-12)

It's a very small network. ... Between those restaurants, there is a feeling of understanding. You speak the common language. I think it's more about having an understanding. And also, the results of one's achievements. You know that to get the Michelin star, you know what they've had to go through. (Chef 45, 33-4: 17-19)

As highlighted in previous quotes, it is evident that membership of the chef community is based on the ability to do the job. If you can do the job, then you are accepted into the family. What is more, cultural acceptance amongst chefs is global and transcends social class and race/ethnicity, as the following quotes clearly illustrate:

A lot of the chefs know each other, and the ones that don't know each other, if you phoned any of them up, they would help each other. ... We all go through the same thing every single day. ... We have a common bond. ... We've all been through this big mill, this tough paper round! That's the common link: it doesn't matter whether you go to any country in the world. All these people, they've all had one common bond: they've all done the graft, they've all been

there all night sometimes having to get themselves out the shit; they've all done all these kind of things. There's a common link. And it doesn't matter if they're Indian or African or whatever, they've grafted away. And take that a step further, the black and the white, and the pink and the green, whatever colour your skin, chefs to a big degree don't have any of that. The guy could be as black as the ace of spades, or as white as – he could be French, he could be Italian, but there's a common bond. (Chef 29, 52-3: 22-18)

There is a big catering family. If I ever go to people's restaurants in Spain or France, if there's even the weakest of links, or the most tenuous of links where I know somebody who knows somebody who knows – and they know I've a restaurant, you're treated like a king. ... All over the world. All over the world. There isn't an industry like that in the world. ... It's maybe kind of like convicts from one country to the next, "Oh, you're a con, I'm a con." I think people who have ever spent periods of time in the catering industry, they appreciate how hard it is, and I think there's almost a sense of we're – not second-class citizens – but we don't have a normal life as in the rest of the world knows it. We spend long hours working under stressful conditions, and it's like the fucking underdogs: you always stick together. It's almost like the plight of the victim: you all stick together. We're all in this together. That's the way I'd describe it. The empathy for one another – it's amazing, you've no idea. I can walk into places in Spain and Italy tomorrow and I would know somebody who rings somebody and you're treated like kings. And they come to me, and I look after them. It's the unwritten rule. ... People feel close in the restaurant world. There's a bond – there's an amazing bond. ... They'll look out for you; they'll look after you – a bond. (Chef 13, 23-4: 2-7)

As the previous quote suggests, chefs not only see themselves as a community, but as a community that is very different from and largely misunderstood by the outside world. Chef 13 makes the point: 'I think there's kind of an idea that people who go into catering, they're somewhat dysfunctional, or certainly they're out of the mainstream – they're different' (Chef 13, 29: 6-7). Furthermore, Chef 50 suggests:

‘You’ve got to be crazy really to do it I suppose, to do the hours, no social life. ... The outside world probably can’t relate to it and can’t understand it, to a certain degree, I think’ (Chef 50, 1: 14-9). The sense of not quite fitting in, of being slightly out of step with the outside world and the sense of exclusion, perhaps even self-alienation, of chefs from society and the subsequent feeling of ‘us’ and ‘them’ and ‘our’ world and ‘their’ world, is clearly illustrated in the following:

We just work on a completely different plane to everyone else and I think at a certain point, we live on a completely different plane to everyone else. The guys, their social life starts at midnight. The guys are up until five in the morning doing whatever they do. ... When they do have days off, they’re generally exhausted. I just think they live in a kind of parallel universe sometimes. What we do is so different, and at a different time of day to everybody else. And a lot of guys they cotton on to it fairly early, they just think they’re missing out on life. With relationships and the normal things in life, it passes them by. I think you have to buy into that at a very early age, and that’s really what I try and get across to young chefs is that, “Your life is never going to be the same again, you need to understand that.” Your relationships will not work. You have to be a little bit off- kilter, I think, to kind of accept that and enjoy that, and endure that for the length of time. (Chef 47, 39: 6-17)

I think for a lot of chefs, they think they live in this special little world in the kitchen, which is fairly much in a bubble. ... I think that’s probably one of the key things about people that work in kitchens: there is a lack of reality. For a lot of us, we start early in the morning, you come in in the morning, you don’t see a lot of people, and they leave at night. You can easily get into a compartment where it’s a bit of a bubble. They’re either working, or they’re off and they’re sleeping or going to the pub. The actual life part of it misses them out a bit. (Chef 29, 6: 9-17)

You’re in a bubble. ... You lose all sort of track of the outside world. You really do. I think you resent the outside world sometimes, maybe – as part of

that. Some chefs do. They resent the people that are going out on Saturday, and Friday night, enjoying themselves, and having fun. You resent the customer sometimes because they're having fun in the restaurant – to a certain extent. There's a lot of resentment, I think – that sort of thing. (Chef 19, 93-4: 23-25)

From the literature, it also becomes clear that the collective identity of chefs is formed in relation to what they are not, that is in relation to the non-chef community (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). In social anthropologist Barth's (1969) terms, chefs' are able to negotiate their sense of identity in the course of social interaction with other groups in the 'outside world' (i.e. at the boundary) where cultural differences are particularly noticeable (see Chapter 2).

This phenomenon has been identified in the literature in relation to the romanticised and sanitised media representations of kitchen work which chefs perceive as distorting the reality of professional cooking and alienating them (Fattorini, 1994).

Nevertheless, in addition to generating resentment, it can be argued that such misrepresentations may in fact reinforce a sense of identity and belongingness amongst the occupational members who are able to define themselves in relation to the non-chef community (i.e. amateurs and customers) (Barth, 1969; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). A similar phenomenon is also at play whenever chefs are faced with customer demands which restrain their creative and artistic freedom (White, 1990; Fattorini, 1994; Ladenis, 1997; Wood, 2000; Leschziner, 2007), therefore leading the chef community to resent customers and to become aware of their forming an occupational group and sharing an identity evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below).

It is evident from the above quotes that the psychological boundaries of the chef community are constructed by the nature of the work and the routines and tasks associated with being a chef. The nature of the work defines the worldview, the value system of the chef community. Belonging is therefore established on the basis of a shared culture, as the following quotes clearly illustrate:

The only friends I've got are in the industry, I've got no friends outside the industry, I've got nobody that's a painter, or this, or this, or this, I don't know anyone from where I grew up; all I know is chefs. If you look through my phone

and my mobile, they're all chefs. Chefs or waiters – that's it – or suppliers. And you just think about it, and you think to yourself, "Why haven't I got any proper friends?" Proper friends wouldn't understand what I do." I can't have a fucking Saturday night off. ... And to be honest with you, I wouldn't know what to talk about with them. I don't know what to talk to normal people about, because all I know is food. (Chef 40, 25-6: 17-3)

What you'll find is most of our friends are chefs, because of the nature of the business, really, because of the long hours. If I want to speak to somebody at midnight, unless it's a chef, there's nobody else about – I've got one friend who's not a chef – one friend. As a general rule, most people's mates are chefs. It's because of the anti-social nature of the job that most chefs know other chefs. (Chef 48, 88-9: 25-12)

If I want to phone up and say, "Fucking hell, what a cunt he was today," there's no point me talking to my wife about it. Because nobody else can understand what you've gone through in that day. "Oh, yes, we got fucking humped tonight. We did 70 for dinner. They all came in within an hour." If I told my wife that, she'd go, "Well, so what?" And that's the way it is. Not an awful lot of people would understand what you're going through, so I think it's just being able to relate to it. (Chef 48, 90-1: 25-9)

Furthermore, due to the long and unsocial hours, the working environment spills over into the social arena, thereby reinforcing belonging, as the following quotes further illustrate:

You become so immersed in your world. You spend so much time at work that maybe a few people that you hang around with are caterers, the people you socialise with are caterers – it becomes like one big huge family. It's amazing. It's like a circus. (Chef 13, 33: 22-4)

It's a subculture, isn't it, that they've never heard of – it's an underbelly, isn't it, it is a subculture – we work in basements, and we work when everybody else is off. ... We're at work when everybody else is off, so they don't know who we are. We know barmen, we know taxi drivers, we know nightclub bouncers. We don't necessarily know Civvy Street, so that makes us very intriguing, I think, to the outside world. And also chefs have a very pack mentality. There is a culture to that as well, because who else do you know, you only know cooks, it's bound to be a little bit cliquey. (Chef 14, 2: 2-10)

The above quotes are interesting for a myriad of reasons, not least as they clearly illustrate the sense of peripherality, of being on the margins of society, of being slightly out of step with the outside world. Peripherality in this instance is a state of mind supporting a state of being.

Drawing upon the work social anthropologist Anthony P. Cohen (1982, 1985, 1986) (see Chapter 2), it is at the edge, i.e. at the periphery, that individuals become consciously aware of belonging to a culture. Understanding where the boundary lies between 'us' and 'them' between 'our' world and 'their' world is important for establishing a sense of belonging, for consciously recognising similarity and difference.

Conversely, it is evident that the sense of communal togetherness, of belonging and being part of something, seemingly provides chefs with a kind of security blanket with which to protect themselves from the outside world, a world in which they feel slightly out of step, they do not belong, they do not quite fit in. In the words of Chef 40: 'In my environment I feel like I'm the king of it, but outside my environment, I'm very soft, and I don't ask questions, and I get very nervous. And it's the kitchen that's done that' (Chef 40, 11: 22-4). The following quotes clearly further illustrate the point:

Most chefs like to be in a kitchen, that's their domain, that's where they're king. And take them out of it, and I think a lot of them are actually quite uncomfortable. But in the kitchen, the chef is king, whatever he says goes. (Chef 34, 7: 7-9)

There's one thing you'll find from talking to chefs is they're so fucking self-important, and they're so self-opinionated, and they're so egocentric; they

really need stroking. And then, get them out of the chef's whites out of their kitchen environment; they're complete fucking social misfits. They haven't got a clue. (Chef 28, 18: 1-4)

They spend so much time in the kitchen and they know it, it's like their friend. It's like, "The kitchen won't fucking betray me. I can control everything in my kitchen." But they're shit in the outside world. They just are lost. And they'll run back into the fucking warmth and security of what they know and what they love, which is their kitchen. (Chef 13, 7: 5-9)

It's more like a comfort blanket, sort of thing. You're in the kitchen and you're in your own safe environment, and more times than not, I'd rather be in the kitchen than at home, definitely, because you're safe with that, familiar surroundings, sort of thing, and there's that buzz, that sort of work going on all the time, the hustle and bustle of things. ... And a lot of people say that, once they – I wouldn't say retire – but take a back step, they miss that – the camaraderie, the banter, the kitchen, the warmth of the whole thing; it's like you come in out of the cold, it feels nice and cosy. (Chef 46, 73-4: 17-1)

CHEFS AND THEIR KITCHEN BRIGADES

This section will look at the way in which chefs relate to their kitchen brigades. It will also look at the kitchen from the point of view of familial relationships as well as how members of the kitchen brigade move between kitchens and gain their knowledge via this. It will then go on to look at the social network of chefs, while comparing and contrasting the research findings with the findings of the existing body of work.

As with other service industries, the image projected to the outside world is not the image familiar to members of the occupation. In the case of the restaurant industry this delta between internal and external perceptions is especially marked. One specific area that is often under appreciated by external observers is that of the nature of the relationship that exists between chefs and their kitchen brigades. Chef 20 makes the point in the following:

When people look at the outside of the business, the facade, the restaurant, the image of a chef, I don't think they fully understand the environment and culture that goes on and exists behind, within a kitchen. I think also there's a lot of misconception – that everyone thinks that it's a very hostile and very highly tense environment. It is at times, but also at other times, there is this very strong camaraderie going on between the chefs, and we kind of empower people to work for us. There's a huge amount of loyalty building up in those kitchens, and a great deep element of respect, and that does lead to an abusive culture in some kitchens, but in my kitchen it's not, the focus is really about respecting the individual and developing them so that they can all achieve within their own personal ambitions. ... I suppose really the perception of the industry is one thing and what we do day to day. (Chef 20, 2: 10-24)

What is more, according to Chef 20: 'Becoming part of their mentor makes you also a parent to them. ... It's like a family' (Chef 20, 51-2: 25-10). Likewise, Chef 31 further suggests: 'You're a teacher. It's kind of like being a dad, and kind of looking after your kids. ... You have to nurture people, and you look after them' (Chef 31, 22: 9-4). Similarly, Chef 13 points out: 'You're trying to impart your knowledge, you're trying to be a leader, you're trying to be a teacher, you're a disciplinarian, but you're also like their father to some of them' (Chef 13, 3: 12-4). The strong sense of familial kinship ties in the chefs' world is clearly further illustrated by Chef 23 in the following:

It's like a family. Your kitchen is like having a family. I'm always saying, "I'm like a bloody school teacher. I'm the headmaster." It is like having a bunch of school kids sometimes. You're looking after them. ... And it is very much a sort of a family unit. ... I've still got boys who keep in contact with me. ... You sort of track these boys for the rest of their careers – well, I do. I sort of keep my eye on the good boys that you have had, that you make sure they're going in the right direction and they ring me up and ask me advice, "What do you think I should do next?" It's almost like a fatherly figure in a way. (Chef 23, 6: 3-25)

The aforementioned notion of father figure and feeling of parental guidance, of looking after and caring for, of nurturing and being a teacher, and the subsequent affinity between chefs and the members of their kitchen brigades is further highlighted by Chef 29 in the following:

There's always that feeling that, at the end of the day, the chef will always look after us. ... When they're ready for promotion, he's going to help them find a new job – all this kind of stuff that comes into life. And I think chefs have always had that sort of parental looking after. ... We actually bring them into being men for a lot of them. ... So they grow up with you, and then there's a certain affinity, and for some of them they go away, you send them away – I've got two boys and a girl in Dubai – and they come back, or you send them to Australia, or you send them to France or Switzerland and they come back to you. I suppose it's quite tribal or whatever. (Chef 29, 10-1: 11-1)

This is all very much what we do: we take somebody on, we've got an apprentice, and then, "OK, you've been here for two or three years, you've done your apprenticeship, then go and work for this chef, or that chef." There's a strong sort of family in the chefs' world. (Chef 34, 13: 13-6)

As the previous quotes suggest, the time-honoured customary tradition of the occupation whereby members of the kitchen brigade are actively encouraged to 'move on' as part of their personal development and culinary training is subsequently resultant in the transient, nomadic and tribal nature of the chef community, which in turn serves to reinforce a sense of identity and belongingness amongst the occupational members. Indeed, having completed their apprenticeship and/or the requisite two year stint, members of the kitchen brigade, most notably in their formative years, are actively encouraged under the guidance of their chef to 'move on' to another 'house' in order to gain 'the knowledge' as part of their culinary training, as the following quotes make clear:

I think there comes a point where, Darko for example, he's been here for three years. He's been round all the sections. He understands my style of food totally. He now needs to go and experience something else. He needs to experience a different kitchen; he needs to experience different people; he needs to go and experience living somewhere else; he needs to go and experience a different style of cooking. He'll get a couple of years out of that and then he should go and move and do something else again. And that's encouraged. (Chef 47, 31-2: 25-4)

The idea is that they work for one chef, and then they should work for another chef who's got a different philosophy about cooking, and then another one who is again different – maybe different cooking, different way of running the kitchen, so they get a broad view of it all, and then in the end, you can make up your own repertoire. This is then me. Like, when you go in somebody's kitchen, if they say, "I want it done like that," that's how you do it, even if you don't agree. Later on, when you're a chef yourself, you can say, "OK, I've picked the best from here, the best from there, the best from there, this I combine, this I do my way," sort of creating your own style. (Chef 34, 63: 11-9)

As highlighted in the previous quote, it is particularly interesting to note the significant emphasis chefs' place on their ability to develop their own individual cooking philosophy. Indeed, at the high-end level of professional cooking, it is deemed not only to be aspirational, but imperative, for a chef to strive to develop their own distinctly unique and subsequently identifiable culinary style. Chef 28 makes the point: 'Whether it's in England, whether it's Europe, wherever, take the top ten per cent chefs, they'll have one thread in common: they're all driven, they all have an identifiable style, they all have an inherent madness' (Chef 28, 11: 5-7). Chef 30 further elaborates the argument in the following:

You have to make sure that you develop your own style – it's paramount, absolute paramount you develop your own style. It has to happen. It's all part of being that restaurateur/chef we talk about. You've got to develop your own

style. The biggest compliment is when someone looks at a dish and says, “That’s *Anonymous’s* food.” They don’t even have to taste it. They can look at it and say, “That’s *Anonymous’s* food.” ... Now Michelin are almost like chefs because they eat out lunch and dinner five days a week, they eat all over the world, they’re eat chefs’ food, and they also say that at three-star level, they should be able to shut their eyes, eat the food and know what chef has cooked that food – their best inspectors are allegedly are able to do that. So that’s what you have to aspire to. (Chef 30, 44: 10-21)

What is more, according to the chefs interviewed, the nature of a chef’s work at the high-end level of professional cooking is deemed to be extremely emotional and of an intimate and personal nature, analogous to that of an artist, such as a composer, or a painter, who, just like chefs, produce an art form that elicits an emotional response. Chef 28 argues the point:

If you’re looking at Michelin, for example – one, two, and three Michelin-starred level, highly respected cooks, what makes them different to 80% of the rest of the people producing food is that they have an identifiable style. Whether you like that style as a customer or a food critic or not is of no importance at all; but you’ve gone past the stage of learning your craft, you’ve gone past the science, and you’ve now been able to stamp and imprint your own style into your food. It’s very much like an artist: at that level, if you’ve got an art critic in this room today and you put up eight pictures, that guy should be able to identify each of the artists that painted the picture. Similarly in food, if you’ve got eight respected cooks – I don’t care where they’re from – with their one, two, three Michelin stars and you gave them a chicken, the guy that really knows his job would identify the finished chicken plate as being mine, as being his, as being – whether it is Spain, whether it is France, whether it was London, and that’s the difference on the level that we go for, because you have a different approach. You’ve have had your experience, you’ve moved around, you’ve been an apprentice, you’ve been a *commis*, you’ve been a *chef de partie*, you’ve been a *sous-chef*, you’ve been a head chef, you take a

little bit here, you take a little bit there, you take a little bit here, and then off you go. And over a period of time, you develop your own style. That's key. That's key. ... I will sit down before I've cooked a bloody thing and I'll draw the picture of the finished dish. I'll know instinctively over considerable experience what the two textures, or three textures coming together on the plate are, and I'll know what flavour I'm looking for before I've even put anything in the pan. Yes, you'll have disasters, the same as a painter will have an idea about what he's going to paint, start putting it down, and for whatever reason, it's very emotional and it's very personal, it didn't work, you bin it, you go on, and you do something else. That's the art. (Chef 28, 1-2: 17-18)

As previously highlighted, having completed their apprenticeship and/or requisite two year stint, members of the kitchen brigade are actively encouraged under the guidance of their chef to 'move on' to another 'house' and work for another chef with a different philosophy of cooking in order to gain 'the knowledge' as part of their culinary training, as Chef 3 further explains:

You can only learn so much from one chef. I haven't learned to cook what I've done from one person. There are probably four, five influential chefs in your career by the time you get to 30; there are probably four or five people that you've worked for. ... And you're a culmination of all these bits, and then you put your own personality on top of it. You try and make it your own thing. They've spent two years with you, "Well, go and see something else, go and have a little look. Go and have a look at that. Go and see that. Gain some knowledge off someone else. There's only so much you can get off me. Spend your two years with me, and then fucking go somewhere else." ... And eventually, when you're 30 years old – I'm saying 30 just as a figure not as a you shouldn't be a head chef until you're 30, you can be a head chef at any age – but to have experienced enough of those things, and to have enough knowledge to draw upon for yourself, I think it's important for you to go and visit these places and see people. (Chef 3, 134: 4-18)

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that a fundamental precursor to ‘moving on’ is the prerequisite of ‘moving on’ to a ‘house’ that is deemed to be of at least equal, if not higher standing than before. Chef 24 makes the point: ‘The most important thing is that they should be going to a house that’s better than yours. That’s very important, and it’s very disappointing and heartbreaking when they go they don’t’ (Chef 24, 15: 12-4). Furthermore, Chef 7 states: ‘If they do a good stint for you, and they’re loyal, I’m only too pleased. I want to see them succeed’ (Chef 7, 25: 4-5). The following quotes further elaborate the point:

I think a head chef, if that person’s done a good job for them, I think you actually want to see them progress in life. And I think the great majority – I’d suspect that 98, 99% – would say the same thing, is that they’d like them to move on and feel that you’ve added a little bit to their career and try and assist them in moving to somewhere else. I think what you don’t like, is actually, somebody who’s done really well for you and then perhaps going to somewhere you deem as a lesser place. (Chef 17, 23: 16-21)

One day whenever, it’s for maybe your own pride to say you did have him under your wings and you pushed him on the right direction. ... Because you never put someone who’s leaving with you somewhere which is easier than yours. You always put them somewhere not harder, but they will learn even more. And learning even more maybe means a bit harder kitchen, or something like that. (Chef 41, 13: 2-13)

Having noted the personal and professional pride chefs feel when members of their kitchen brigade ‘move on’ to a ‘house’ that is deemed to be of at least equal, if not higher standing than before, it is interesting to note how chefs then perceive their own personal and professional reputation to be on the line. The following quote further elaborates the point:

It’s very important that the people you choose to go there are not going to mess it up. That is very important. When you go someplace, they’re not just representing

themselves; they're representing the place that they came from also. That's very important. (Chef 24, 17: 4-7)

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that when members of the kitchen brigade 'move on' to a 'house' of at least equal, if not higher standing than before in order to gain 'the knowledge', it is quite common for new members of the kitchen brigade to assume a lower standing in the kitchen hierarchy than previously held. Chef 42 makes the point:

Not only do they need to be able to do that job, they need to be able to do the job so well, that I can pick them up and plop them in *The Waterside* [*The Waterside Inn*], in at *Le Manoir* [*Le Manoir Aux Quat' Saisons*], in at some of the other fine-dining restaurants in the UK or around the world there, and they'll be able to keep the same position, which is another quite unusual thing, because nine times out of ten, normally you'll find a senior *sous-chef* will leave one kitchen and go to another kitchen as a junior *sous*, or he'll leave as a *chef de partie*, and go to another fine-dining kitchen as a *demi-chef de partie*. ... Basically, they're holding *Anonymous* and ultimately my reputation on their shoulders. I don't want them going to somewhere else and going, "What the fuck? He was a *sous-chef* there? Fuck, what were they doing down there?" (Chef 42, 17: 2-21)

Conversely, having gained 'the knowledge' former members of the kitchen brigade are frequently welcomed back into the fold at a later stage in their careers, most often at a higher standing in the kitchen hierarchy than previously held. Indeed, the age-old practice of 'moving on' members of the kitchen brigade is considered to be mutually beneficial for all parties concerned, as the following quotes clearly illustrate:

Everybody has their own little sort of network or circle of friends. We all sort of help each other, when we're looking for staff, or when we want to pass staff on. It's always in our interests – with certain chefs certainly – to stay in contact and watch their progress, and see how they develop in their career. Because you never know, things change all the time, and some people come back, they

go off and maybe come back at a later stage in a higher position. It's nice to see people develop, and grow, and when they've done their time, send them somewhere else, and then somewhere else, and you follow them. It's lovely to see when you hear that they have had some success, or they became well-known in their own right. It is nice. It's a little family. (Chef 34, 45-6: 21-4)

I had a guy in Scotland last week for a four-day *stage* – we've had four this year already, through chefs networking. So there will be a chef, “*Anonymous*, can I send someone down for a day?” “Yes, tell him to come down.” ... That's where the close-knit community comes in. Because I can ring up nearly any chef now and say, “Can I send one of my lads over?” and they normally say yes. ... One of the lad's in there has just spent a year with us now, but the year before we sent him to *Northcote Manor* at Blackburn. He did a year there. Then he came back – so he did eight months with us, sent him there for a year, now he's done a year with us now. And ultimately, we're looking to send him abroad. ... John's been to New York, Madrid, Denmark, so he's done his little tour. And that's a great way of developing your team. ... It keeps loyalty into the guy. And if he does a year at *Midsummer* [*Midsummer House*], because they come back to you, he's going to have new skills, so it will raise your kitchen standard. So ultimately, it's about raising standards, and also allowing the guys that have put their time in with you to leave under your guidance, rather than have negative fallout after an investment of your time. Because the downside of it, it takes so long to invest and train someone. (Chef 11, 30-2: 10-12)

As highlighted in previous quotes, it is interesting to note the oft cited terms *stage* and *stagiaire*. Ordinarily, a *stagiaire* (trainee/intern) in the restaurant industry is someone who undertakes to work for free, be it for a day, a week, a month, a year, sometimes even longer, in order to gain ‘the knowledge’, whilst the time spent working as a *stagiaire* is known as a *stage*. This could be seen as analogous with a trainee/intern in other professions. However, the terms *stage* and *stagiaire* are frequently used interchangeably, most notably with regard to someone working for two or three days, sometimes a week, as part of a job trial. Indeed, it is common practice for members of

the kitchen brigade to undertake *stages* when looking to ‘move on’, the idea being that you work for two or three days in the hope of impressing and a position becoming available. The commonality of *stages* in the restaurant industry is neatly illustrated in the following:

A lot of young chefs are so dedicated, they’ll have two weeks’ holiday, they’re so into their jobs, they’ll say, “Oh, Chef, I’m going on holiday for a week with my mum or whatever to chill out, and now I want to go and do a week’s *stage*.” And that’s classed as holiday to them. So I’ll phone up a top restaurant and say, “Look, I’d like to send one of my guys to you for a week,” and I’ll probably help with his flights, accommodation, and then he’ll go, because it benefits me, and he’ll go there and work for a week for free, to help his experience. It’s a very unusual trade for that: I mean, so many people in our industry are willing to work for free in people’s restaurants for a week, two weeks, two months, whatever, just to gain experience and knowledge. ... And by doing that you’re store banking as much knowledge as you possibly can get your hands on, and that happens from the age of 18 to 30, so it’s like a doctor – Gordon [Gordon Ramsay] calls it “doctor training.” You spend ten years learning your trade on shit pay, no sleep, long hours, too much caffeine, and then all of a sudden, you turn 30, and then you start making good money, you start becoming a restaurateur. (Chef 30, 15-6: 6-1)

As previously highlighted, in order to gain ‘the knowledge’ and in turn ultimately earn the right to be called ‘chef’, members of the kitchen brigade spend in the region of 12 years, ordinarily from the age of 18 to 30, working in ‘houses’ of high-standing under the guidance of accomplished chefs as part of their culinary training. As highlighted in the previous quote, it is particularly interesting to note that the significant number of years spent by members of the kitchen brigade gaining ‘the knowledge’ is likened to that of the medical profession and referred to accordingly by chefs as ‘doctor training’. Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, the ‘doctor years’ spent gaining ‘the knowledge’ in ‘houses’ of high-standing under the guidance of accomplished chefs is analogous to the years spent at university/learning in the field by other

professions, such as a doctor, or a lawyer, who, just like chefs, also spend a significant number of years training for their profession. Chef 48 makes the point:

I worked for Raymond Blanc for four-and-a-half years. ... That four-and-a-half years was like me going to university, and that gave me an understanding of sales, marketing, motivation, team playing, attention to detail, criticism, and bloody old hard work. That four-and-a-half years, that would be like me going to university, and that was my university, and I came out of it with ability to run my own restaurant; my ability to motivate a team; my ability to engage sponsors; my ability to relate to the public, from spending four-and-a-half years with Raymond Blanc. It's not just I went to learn to cook: I learnt so much more than just cooking, because cooking was one part of it. (Chef 48, 13-4: 7-7)

As previously highlighted, the 'doctor years' spent gaining 'the knowledge' in 'houses' of high-standing under the guidance of accomplished chefs is subsequently resultant in the transient, nomadic and tribal nature of the chef community. However, it is particularly interesting to note that the transient, nomadic and tribal nature of the close-knit community of chefs in Great Britain and Ireland can in fact be traced in a culinary family tree through six degrees of separation most notably back to a select few 'houses' of high-standing and significantly influential chefs. Indeed, as previously highlighted, the significant influence of Michelin-starred chefs such as the Roux brothers Albert and Michel Roux sr., Nico Ladenis, Raymond Blanc, Pierre Koffman and Marco Pierre White on the restaurant industry and in particular the culinary lineage of chefs in Great Britain and Ireland is undeniable. Chef 10 makes the point:

Within cooking, you've got the *Gavroche*-style [*Le Gavroche*] family tree, which you've got your Marcos [Marco Pierre White] come down, you've got Pierre Koffman from *La Tante Claire*, then Nico [Nico Ladenis], and then kind of Gordon's [Gordon Ramsay] filtered through Marco, and then you've got Raymond Blanc's side of it. So there's like three or four big family trees filtering down, and everybody's worked within that family tree. ... And you can all kind of trace each other back to these places. (Chef 10, 15: 12-8)

Indeed, according to Chef 23: ‘It’s quite a small family like that within the catering industry’ (Chef 23, 7: 17). Chef 4 further states: ‘There is a kind of close-knit kind of community, as such’ (Chef 4, 6: 21). The dispersion of disciples emanating from a select few ‘houses’ of high standing and significantly influential chefs is neatly illustrated using a sample of the chefs interviewed in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: The culinary lineage of chefs in Great Britain and Ireland

Respondent’s Name * = worked for	Albert / Michel Roux sr.	Nico Ladenis	Raymond Blanc	Pierre Koffman	Marco Pierre White
Adam Simmonds	*		*		*
Alain Roux	*				
Alan Murchison			*		
Allan Pickett	*	*			*
Anthony Demetre			*	*	*
Chris Horridge			*		
Daniel Clifford					*
Eric Chavot		*	*	*	*
Heston Blumenthal OBE			*		
Hywel Jones		*			*
Jason Atherton		*		*	*
John Burton-Race			*		
Kevin Mangeolles				*	
Mark Raffan	*				
Martin Wishart	*				*
Michael Caines MBE			*		
Paul Heathcote MBE			*		
Philip Howard	*				*
Simon Gueller					*
Simon Rogan					*
Steve Drake		*			*
Tom Aikens				*	
Warren Geraghty		*			*

Moreover, it is interesting to note that the transient, nomadic and tribal nature of the somewhat incestuous chef community subsequently manifests itself in a close-knit network of chefs in turn perpetuating the mutually beneficial communal practice of ‘moving on’ members of the kitchen brigade as part of their culinary training.

Chef 47 makes the point: ‘I think through travel – it’s a very incestuous industry – we talk to each other. Through working in kitchens with each other, then people will disperse throughout the country, but I think there’s a huge camaraderie there’ (Chef 47, 24: 7-9). The following quote further illustrates the point:

There’s a lot of networking goes on – a hell of a lot of networking. It’s a very sort of nice feeling – I get some of the lads that have worked for me in the past who are just now getting to their first senior positions and head chefs, and they’ll phone up for advice and stuff. In a way it feels like to me, it’s like *déjà vu*. ... But, it’s just natural progression. Within the industry it’s massive – networking. ... It could be people you’ve worked for, it could be people that’s worked for you. ... A big reason for networking as well is staff. If some of the lads in the kitchen come to me now, “Right, what’s my next move?” ... And I’ll say, “Look, why don’t we send you there?” So I might phone up such and such. ... It works both ways. It helps me as well. Sometimes they’ll come and they’ll say, “I want to work there, that specific restaurant,” say for example, it’s *Champignon Sauvage* [*Le Champignon Sauvage*] in Cheltenham – “I want to work there” – I’ll phone up David, I’ll say, “Right, I’ve got a lad, brilliant, but when the next position comes up can you bear me in mind?” And everyone’s pretty much always looking for good staff, so he’ll give me a call back. That way, it means I’m looking after my guy, he’s not going to suddenly walk out the door on me with four weeks’ notice; it helps David out because he’ll have his next person, and it’s all swings and roundabouts. He might phone me back and say, “Look, I’m going to have somebody in the next couple of months who wants to move.” And you actually quite rely on that, because you’re always looking for staff. (Chef 32, 23-5: 6-10)

Furthermore, as highlighted in previous quotes, members of the kitchen brigade are often sent abroad to work as part of their further personal development and culinary training. Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, this two-year stint spent working abroad, ordinarily the last two years of a chef’s training, may be likened to that of a finishing school. Chef 30 makes the point: ‘A finishing school, I like to look

at it as' (Chef 30, 7: 25). What is more, it is interesting to note that the transient, nomadic and tribal nature of the close-knit chef community subsequently manifests itself in an international network of chefs, as the following quote further illustrates:

It makes a framework, because I'll see wee Jimmy coming up and I'll say to him "Right, I think you need to move now, and there you go, you're at the *Burj Al Arab* in Dubai, it's allegedly six stars, best hotel in the world, I'll get you a job there." So you send him there. And it works in a few ways: one, there's people that work there and they're working with wee Jimmy and they say, "Fucking hell, he's a good worker." So they say, "Well, where did you work before?" "Oh, *Anonymous* in Edinburgh." So, when they're thinking of a change there, they'll apply to me and come here. And the other side of it is that wee Jimmy will say "I was a *commis* at *Anonymous*, I'm going to speak to the chef and see if I can go back as a *chef de partie* – at a higher level." And it's a small industry. ... If I phoned the chef at *The Dorchester* now and said "Look, I've got a boy, he's been with me for five years, he wants to come to London, have you got a job for him?" the chef at *The Dorchester* will say, "Yeah, no problem, what's his name? Tell him to give me a phone." And he'd get a job, because *Anonymous* had said that this boy was kosher. And that's also part which keeps the framework going, that by the same token, if the chef at *The Dorchester* phoned me and said, "I've got this boy Jimmy, and he worked with you for three years, what do you think?" "Good luck. He went right off the fucking rails mate. He started doing this, let me down with that, let me down with that." He wouldn't get a sniff. To highlight that, for a boy, he would prefer to have a recommendation from the chef at *The Lanesborough*, *Anonymous*, than have a City & Guilds certificate or a thing like that. If he worked for Marco Pierre White and he had a certificate from Marco saying, "I worked a year with you," for this young boy would be more important than having a City & Guilds, a university degree of cookery, or whatever; that this chef, who was renowned, had said this was a good boy. And that's the other thing that keeps the framework in place. (Chef 29, 22-3: 21-17)

From the literature, it also becomes clear that chefs and cooks present many of the characteristics of an occupational *community* in the sense proposed by Salaman (1974) and later Van Maanen and Barley (1984) (see Chapter 3), to the extent that they are likely to develop an identity from their occupational role. Thus, to Chivers (1972), chefs' and cooks' dedication to task and genuine interest in their work generate occupational solidarity, whilst the nature of hotel and catering work (notably the unsociable hours) encourages patterns of friendship within the trade. Chivers further argues that chefs and cooks develop cosmopolitan occupational communities because of high occupational mobility, but also because the clearly demarcated career structures available to chefs and cooks in the hospitality industry (see also Bowey, 1976; Wood, 1997; Cameron, 2004) make them more likely to develop and maintain social networks. Chefs' and cooks' propensity to derive meaning from their work has also been repeatedly commented upon with reference to their deriving higher satisfaction from their jobs than other hospitality workers (Corcoran and Johnson, 1974, Ellis, 1981; Snow, 1981; HCTB, 1989), notably because of the 'closeness of articulation' of kitchen work activities (Gross, 1958).

The literature nevertheless points to the heterogeneity of the occupational group, due to significant status differences linked to the variety of market niches within the hospitality industry (Chivers, 1972; Fine, 1996a; Ferguson and Zukin, 1998). Although such economic heterogeneity led Fine (1996a) to deny the existence of a pan-industry occupational culture, there is evidence in the work of Cameron (2001, 2004) to suggest that chefs exist as a distinctive occupational culture and show more allegiance to the occupational group than to the (hotel) organisation for which they work, insofar as issues of 'opportunity, reputation, occupational worth, hard work, long hours and skills' (2004: 271) are salient to their identity. Similarly, Ferguson and Zukin (1998) argue that the economic factors mentioned by Fine (1996a) as inhibitors to the development of an occupational community are in fact countered by the existence of social networks transcending individual workplaces. Although the traditional apprenticeship system of training make these personal and professional connections relevant to chefs from all type of establishments (Ferguson and Zukin, 1998), the saliency of these social networks to elite chefs in the haute cuisine sector is nevertheless acknowledged (see also Gillespie, 1994). Therefore, the research findings concur with

the majority of the findings of the existing body of work as regards that chefs and cooks form an occupational community/culture (in the sense advocated by Salaman [1974] and Rothman [1998 [1987]]) (see Chapters 3 and 4) which transcends individual kitchen workplaces and refutes the findings of sociologist Gary Alan Fine (1996: 227) who in his study on US kitchen culture (based on fieldwork carried out in the 1980's) refutes the existence of a (pan-industry) occupational (sub)culture binding all chefs and cooks together and transcending individual workplaces, which he argues 'makes the establishment of a tightly knit community somewhat doubtful' (see Chapter 5).

'KITCHEN LIFE'

This section will look at life inside the kitchen by considering the means by which members of the kitchen brigade relate to each other. It will then go on to look at the different management styles used in kitchens as well as some of the less savoury aspects of kitchen life, while comparing and contrasting the research findings with the findings of the existing body of work.

What is more, the close-knit community that pervades throughout the occupation manifests itself at various levels, not least throughout the kitchen brigade. As previously highlighted, the sense of communal togetherness, of acceptance, of fitting in, of belonging and being part of something, is significantly important to members of the occupational community. Chef 17 makes the point: 'That feeling of community, that feeling of belonging, that feeling of being part of something, is quite important to chefs' (Chef 17, 25: 10-1). Chef 17 further suggests: 'You tend to have a very close community' (Chef 17, 9: 24). Likewise, Chef 27 states: 'It is a family. You spend so much time together. And it's a unit. It's a community – a very small community' (Chef 27, 41: 8-9). The feeling of community and strong sense of familial kinship ties amongst the members of the kitchen brigade is further illustrated in the following:

You have to understand, you have no family life, you have no private life outside of this community, because it is a community: you stay with chefs, you

go out with chefs, you talk to chefs. ... Because we are not in the same world.
(Chef 41, 15: 4-7)

They come in sometimes on their days off, just to see the boys, that kind of thing. It's home to them, they feel it. They might come in on their days off to see the guys and have a bit of communication, and patter. But really it's just that feeling of being at home and bonding, and feeling part of it, and all that kind of stuff. This is part of their home. This is their house. This is their life. (Chef 29, 56-7: 19-4)

Indeed, the strong sense of familial kinship ties that binds the members of the occupation together manifests itself throughout the kitchen brigade. Chef 47 makes the point: 'It's a very kind of unique environment, and there is that kind of camaraderie, bonding, mutual respect. ... There is an absolute respect' (Chef 47, 63: 15-8). Chef 6 further suggests: 'There are quite strong bonds made, I think, because you're working such long hours together. ... It almost feels like a bit of a family kind of environment' (Chef 6, 14-5: 24-7). Likewise, Chef 29 states: 'They become a bit of a family. ... There becomes a very strong bond between them, because they all rely on each other' (Chef 29, 7: 15-19). Similarly, Chef 32 points out: 'It's complete family. That lot in there, they'd walk over burning coal for each other' (Chef 32, 11: 16-7). These points are summarised in the following:

We spend more time with each other than anybody else in our lives. ... This builds a bond; this builds a marriage, a relationship, that's so powerful it's just incredible – absolutely incredible. It really is just bizarre. I'm sure that it's out there, but I haven't seen evidence of such a strong link of people – perhaps in the Army – but you rely on each other; you spend time with each other; you respect each other; you trust each other; and you would do anything for each other. (Chef 27, 39: 16-23)

They rely on each other a lot. And when they're 'in the shit', they feel it together. And when they've had a great night, a lot of the time they feel it together. And when things are going great, then they're all on a high together. They are quite

team orientated. ... There's a lot of bond and feeling between the chefs. ... And for most of them, they don't want to let each other down, and they don't want to let you down. Although chefs *can* be aggressive, or swear a lot, shout a lot, whatever you like to say, they actually have quite a respect for each other, and quite a feeling, and most of the respect is on performance. (Chef 29, 9-11: 25-5)

As previously highlighted, membership of the chef community is based upon a shared understanding of the criteria for membership, in other words, they speak the same language. The nature of the work and the routines and tasks associated with being a chef define the worldview, the value system of the chef community. Belonging is therefore established on the basis of a shared culture. Furthermore, membership of the chef community is based on the ability to do the job. Indeed, it may well be argued that the kitchen is a meritocracy. If you can do the job, then you are accepted into the family. Once accepted into the family, the individual joins a group with strong familial kinship ties based upon the customary traditions and shared culture that binds individual members together. This shared understanding of the means by which the title of 'chef' is earned, conferred and reinforced, creates a powerful bond between group members. The importance of the team and the sense of group solidarity and underlying camaraderie that exists between the members of the kitchen brigade are illustrated by the fact that they have to rely on each other to get the job done. Indeed, although individual skills are a necessity, it is teamwork that dictates success or failure on a daily basis. Thus, members of the kitchen brigade tend to develop strong bonds and are highly aware of the importance of their role and place within the team. This point is fundamentally important as it suggests that it is the importance of the team and the sense of group solidarity and underlying camaraderie that exists between members of the kitchen brigade that constitutes another social construct that defines and reinforces the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

As highlighted in Chapter 4, the social environment of chefs must be examined carefully since occupational groups tend to develop beliefs, values and attitudes in response to the social context of work (see for example Rothman, 1998 [1987]; Paoline, 2003). Applying British social anthropologist Mary Douglas's (1970, 1978, 1982) terminology (see Chapter 4), the literature has shown that the occupational

culture of chefs is characterised by a strong ‘group’ identity and a strong ‘grid’ dimension, insofar as the nature of the job calls for solidarity and cohesiveness between brigade members (Gross, 1958; CIR, 1971; Bowey 1976; ETAC, 1983; Gabriel 1988; Fine, 1996a; Balazs, 2001) in a military-inherited and rigidly hierarchical kitchen environment where individuals are expected to abide by the rules and behavioural norms of the group (Fine, 1996a; Mennell, 1996; Cooper, 1998; Balazs, 2001, 2002; Ferguson, 2004). As also highlighted in Chapter 4, this type of occupational culture is characteristic of tight work-groups and communities (which falls into the ‘wolf’ category in Mars’s [1982] terms) whereby group boundaries are strongly defined.

Applying Mary Douglas’s (1970, 1978, 1982) theory of ‘grid/group’ analysis to the present study, it can be argued that, taken as a whole, the occupational culture of chefs is characterised by a strong ‘group’ identity and strong ‘grid’ dimension characteristic of tight work-groups and communities (‘wolves’ in Mars’s [1982] terms) whereby group boundaries are strongly defined as evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below). Therefore, this study refutes the findings of Cameron (2001) who in his study of chefs and occupational culture in a hotel chain argues that chefs would be expected to fall under the ‘vulture’ category, with a weak grid and strong group. Cameron’s (2001) findings are, however, very specific to a given social context, therefore, little generalisation to the whole of the chef’s occupation can be inferred (see Chapter 4).

It is interesting to note that throughout the course of the fieldwork, discussions with the chefs revealed that members of the kitchen brigade rarely go sick so as not to let the team down. Likewise, they would rather carry on working through pain or injury for the very same reason. Such interdependence, group solidarity, bonding, camaraderie and feeling of mutual respect amongst members of the kitchen brigade are clearly illustrated in the following, as Chef 50 points out: ‘I suppose it’s an unwritten rule that you don’t take time off sick – unless you’re really bad. Unless you’re really bad. I suppose a lot of it is because you don’t want to let people down’ (Chef 50, 33: 4-6). Similarly, Chef 32 states: ‘You wouldn’t do it, out of respect for each other, and you don’t want to let anybody down. You don’t want to let the team

down' (Chef 32, 14: 3-5). Likewise, Chef 1 points out: 'Because it's the camaraderie thing. ... They don't want to let each other down. ... And that's why the team mentality definitely exists. There's a huge amount of that, because they wouldn't let each other down' (Chef 1, 41: 8-13). The following quotes further illustrate the point:

It's a bit of an unwritten rule that unless you're dying, or you've lost a leg, or lost both arms, that you will turn up for work, and it's for the chef to say, "Oh, fucking hell, yes, you are a bit ill. piss off home." You don't just phone up and say, "Oh, I'm ill today, I'm not coming in." ... Whether you're really on death's door or not, you turn up for work. You let them see that you're almost going to fall over, and then you get sent home. You turn up for work, no matter what. You need people to see that you are really not going to be of use to them at all that day. Because it's the camaraderie thing again. You know if you're not there, they're short, someone else has got to do your work, they're going to be 'in the shit.' (Chef 8, 67-8: 23-12)

It's a sort of a sense of team spirit and things like that. Not letting the other members of the team down. ... And because you feel like you've let yourself down as well in the rest of the brigade's eyes, because you're losing credibility as a team member. But all revolves around the same thing that basically other people are going to have to do your work if you're not there. ... And you wouldn't want that to happen to you, so you wouldn't do it, and it builds up this team spirit thing. (Chef 2, 62-3: 21-17)

As previously highlighted, members of the kitchen brigade would also rather carry on working through pain or injury so as not to let the team down. It is particularly interesting to note that a re-occurring theme throughout the course of the fieldwork was the oft cited chefs' mantra of *never show your weakness*. In the words of Chef 34: 'Some of them it's because of fear of not letting the team down, to push themselves, "I can do it, I am a macho man"' (Chef 34, 37: 22-3). Chef 10 makes the point: 'It's also not showing any weakness, wanting to push the pain barrier, because

we're always pushing the pain' (Chef 10, 30: 18-9). The following quotes further illustrate the point:

A lot of people that would just take a sickie, the general public – the chef wouldn't do that. They just get on with it. I've seen chefs who have cut their tendons and they've just wrapped a towel round, "Let's go, we'll just get on with this, we'll go to the hospital later." (Chef 22, 13-4: 25-2)

You feel you can't let anyone down. ... And even if they do say, "Go," you say, "No, I want to finish my section before I go." ... I suppose you don't want to appear weak as well, I guess, in front of the other chefs. (Chef 6, 28: 4-23)

I think it's letting the team down, probably. It's that sort of thing of giving in and sort of being weak. ... They don't want to let the team down and be found wanting, I suppose. ... If there's a gap or there's a chink in the armour then that's it, isn't it. (Chef 46, 58: 18-22)

Furthermore, it is also interesting to note that members of the kitchen brigade, most notably when they are younger and working their way up through the culinary ranks of the kitchen hierarchy, deliberately burn themselves as a mark of their occupational identity. Chef 39 makes the point: 'I think some of the guys actually burn themselves on purpose because it looks good. ... I think they do it on purpose because it looks good – war wounds' (Chef 39, 13-4: 21-1). Chef 35 states: 'I've known chefs where, "Oh, look at my arms, look how many burns I've got." ... Some people actually think, "Look how good a chef I am," by burning themselves' (Chef 35, 36: 2-15). The following quotes further elaborate the point:

All chefs go through that period when they think it's great to have a few burns on their wrists. ... I think you're quite proud to have the odd burn mark when you're young, because chefs are proud of what they do. They're proud that they cook, and it's a kind of showing what they do. (Chef 32, 55: 2-13)

When I was younger I used to quite like it. ... But when you're younger; I think it was a bit of a badge of honour, sort of thing, like, "Look how hard I work." There are guys with stripes up and down their arms. (Chef 1, 52: 8-12)

I suppose when you're younger, it's like battle scars, "Yeah, look at me." ... I suppose when you're young, it's definitely a strutting peacock thing. You've got your hair spiked, chef jacket on, burns on your arms; I suppose you've earned your stripes. (Chef 8, 69: 1-5)

What is more, it is interesting to note that fieldwork discussions revealed that the symbolically charged ritual of 'earning your stripes' is synonymous in modern day kitchen folklore with the unquestionably influential Marco Pierre White. The previously highlighted undisputable impact of Marco Pierre White on the occupation and kitchen culture is clearly further illustrated in the following:

Marco's [Marco Pierre White] got loads of scars on the top of his forearm, where at the *Gavroche* [*Le Gavroche*] the ovens were really deep, and when you chucked something in and shut the door, and sometimes it's right at the back, so they used to say you "earn your stripes" at *Gavroche*, because you'd have to put your hand right in the oven. But Marco just used to just fucking bang his arm on to earn another stripe. It's all part of the kudos of being in the SAS, or being hardcore. (Chef 9, 69: 12-9)

They have stripes like on an army uniform. They think it's, "Yeah, I'm hard." Chefs are always, "Oh, I can do this quicker than you," there's a little bit of a competition, "I'm harder than you," and everybody I think refers back to that quote from Marco [Marco Pierre White], the SAS, everybody wants to be in a tough kitchen, in a hard kitchen. ... Battle scars – that's what they are. They're like battle scars. "Oh, yes, I worked at *Anonymous*, look at my arms." ... Some people thought that was really cool to the extent that sometimes people would deliberately burn themselves. (Chef 10, 33-4: 1-15)

As previously highlighted, being a chef is much more than just a job, it is a vocation, a calling; it is sacred work involving sacrifice, pain and suffering, leaving a physical imprint upon the individual in the form of burns, scalds, cuts and scars. Such marks are the physical symbolic manifestation of chef culture. These cultural markers of chef identity illustrate the fact that being a chef has a physical as well as a psychological dimension to it. Being a chef involves physical pain, not just in terms of the long hours spent working in hot, confined spaces, but in terms of the burns, scalds, cuts and scars that are part and parcel of everyday kitchen life. Such physical demands influence the psychological mindset that supports the individual in being a chef. A chef's disciplinary stigmata symbolises the path taken to acquire 'the knowledge'. Such marks physically communicate the existence of a shared understanding of what being a chef actually entails. The combination of these dynamics – physical, cultural and psychological – supports the notion that the occupation of chef is more than just a job, it is sacred work.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that it would appear that the personality type of an individual has an influence over their choice to enter into the catering industry. This seems to be most pronounced at the high-end level of professional cooking, with strong willed, competitive and dominant individuals often seeing the most success. Chef 3 makes the point in the following terms:

A lot of chefs are alpha male-like chefs, because if you're not an alpha male-like chef, it is quite difficult to survive in Michelin-starred kitchens, because it is quite intense and quite hard. ... Because a lot of them are alpha male-like characters. They do need to be in control, they do need to be winners. Because those are the people that will strive to be winning Michelin stars. (Chef 3, 19: 5-20)

The 'Alpha Male' concept (a term originating from primatology's definition of the leader of a family of apes), in terms of a typical personality type of chefs, is further expanded upon with regard to the means by which members of the kitchen brigade relate to their head chef, as the following quote makes clear:

A lot of them are potential alpha male people. Like, compare it to a pack of gorillas. I could be the silverback, the one that's in fucking charge, the one that everyone will listen to, but there can still be two other blokes. You watch wildlife programmes, and there's two stronger males that are probably even stronger than the silverback because the silverback is a bit older or whatever else, but that's the one with the knowledge, and the two of them are going to fight over who's going to be his number two and eventually become... (Chef 3, 26-7: 21-1)

This 'Alpha Male' personality type can be seen as a prime cause of the competitive behaviour that occurs in professional kitchens. Chef 39 makes the point: 'It's a bit of competition among themselves. ... It's never mentioned or said. It's never mentioned or said, but it's underlying there, you can see it there' (Chef 39, 9-10: 19-9). Chef 44 further states: 'If you look at a lot of chefs, they're all competitive by nature; I think all of them are – every single one of them' (Chef 44, 69: 20-2). Furthermore, Chef 42 asserts: 'It's dog-eat-dog. It's big time dog-eat-dog, basically' (Chef 42, 89: 16). These points are further elaborated in the following:

It's like a competition, all the time, competition, competition. I think a chef's life is about competition. ... I've seen a case where they will seriously fuck you so they don't get a bollocking, so you get it first. ... If the chef is starting to fucking giving you a bit of grief, they will push the grief towards you more so they don't get the grief because they're 'in the shit.' ... Sometimes if something's burning or something's close to burning, they'll just fucking leave it there to teach him a lesson. They won't pull it off. They'll just say, "No, fuck it," or turn the stove up. I've seen people's fridges turned off at the end of the night. (Chef 40, 85-6: 19-19)

Other kitchens are dog-eat-dog because everyone wants to get the Brownie points and not get the shit off the chef, so everybody's trying to stitch everybody up. ... They don't want to be the one getting the shit, so they'll do their job to the best of their abilities, but they'll also try and stitch somebody else up at the same time. ... And also you get people doing shit like over salting your stuff – physically stitching you up – turning your gas rings off and stuff like that, and

turning your oven up. It's a smokescreen. The chef's too busy giving you shit because you've fucking burnt something, or whatever, to see what you're doing and give you shit. I have had it done to me loads of times. (Chef 14, 40-1: 23-19)

However, competition is often viewed as a healthy and desirable behaviour, often spoken about with reference to the highest achieving individuals. Chef 22 states: 'I think you put pressure on yourself to be the best you can. It's very competitive in these kitchens' (Chef 22, 4-5: 25-1). Chef 11 further suggests: 'You want to see how far you can go. All you're doing each time is testing yourself. You're really only ever in competition with yourself. ... You want to see how far you can go' (Chef 11, 6: 19-21). Chef 32 summarises the point:

You make the sacrifices. You sort of thrive off people. When you get into an environment where everyone's like-minded and everybody's going in the same direction, it doesn't become an issue anymore, because you're all in the same boat, it actually drives you on, because everybody wants the same as you, so it makes you competitive. ... When you get into sort of a team which is all dedicated and stuff, everybody wants the same, they always want to try and better themselves and they want to be better than the next person. And because then that becomes their world, you forget about what other people on the outside are doing, and you get so enthralled at trying to be better and being the best and get to the next level, that it's not a sacrifice anymore. (Chef 32, 9-10: 25-21)

Furthermore, the use of the term 'Alpha Male' seems to draw parallels between members of the kitchen brigade and other group dynamics that exist in nature. These naturally occurring familial relationships also seem to translate into the means by which members of the kitchen brigade relate to one another. Chef 13 makes the point:

What happens in the kitchen, people come in and they metamorphosise into a different world. ... And within that is rivalries, and banter, and slagging each other. Then when you spend so much time in people's faces, they become like family. ... It's like a family. ... Because there is element to catering that we're all

one big family. And it functions exactly like a family. There's dysfunctionality, arguing, sweat, blood, tears, rivalry, all that. (Chef 13, 22: 9-19)

As previously highlighted, the feeling of community and strong sense of familial kinship ties that binds members of the occupation together is significantly important in the chefs' world. Chef 18 makes the point: 'It's very family-like. ... It's very family-like. If you've got a normal family which falls in and out of love with each other over a period of time, then that's what it's like. It's very family-like' (Chef 18, 18: 14-23). Chef 2 states: 'In a strange way, it becomes closer than family' (Chef 2, 57: 7). Chef 44 further suggests 'That's probably why we are mates and why we do form a sort of bond in the team, in the family, because we've got no-one else, in some funny way' (Chef 44, 80: 5-7). Indeed, chefs not only see themselves as a community, but as a community that is very different from and largely misunderstood by the outside world. The sense of peripherality, of being on the margins of society, of being slightly out of step with the outside world and the sense of exclusion, perhaps even self-alienation, of chefs from society and the subsequent feeling of 'us' and 'them' and 'our' world and 'their' world is clearly evident. Conversely, it is further evident that the sense of communal togetherness, of belonging and being part of something, seemingly provides chefs with a kind of security blanket with which to protect themselves from the outside world, a world in which they feel slightly out of step, they do not belong, they do not quite fit in. Chef 19 further elaborates the argument in the following:

It is your world, because you're in it for so long. Chefs at a certain level understand each other, but are not necessarily understood by other people. ... In the kitchen world, I think it's made up of a lot of characters, usually people that have got a lot of energy. ... You usually find there are a lot of people that didn't get on well at school. I've had people in there, and I think there's people in my kitchen, they would probably be in jail if they didn't go in the kitchen, because it gives them that sort of support, and they're in there long enough in the day to sort of get rid of that energy. You get people that are just not accepted by anyone else, and you do get accepted. From a cultural point of view, I think

anyone's accepted in most kitchens. I think you could be black; white; fat; thin; stupid; bright; intelligent; it doesn't matter, you can get accepted in the kitchen. (Chef 19, 57-8: 15-14)

As previously highlighted, membership of the chef community is based on the ability to do the job. Indeed, it may well be argued that the kitchen is a meritocracy. If you can do the job, then you are accepted into the family. Furthermore, cultural acceptance amongst chefs is global and transcends social class, gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity. Chef 47 makes the point:

I genuinely feel it doesn't matter if you're black, white, yellow, female; they want to see that you're going to be there at the end of the night, you're going to see through a tough service, and that you can actually cook, you can hold your knife properly, you can dress properly, you have pride in what you do – because they do. And if you don't, then you're not going to last. They're not going to take you in, they're not going to help you, and you're very quickly going to fail. (Chef 47, 4: 14-9)

Moreover, it is the importance of the team and the sense of group solidarity and underlying camaraderie that exists between members of the kitchen brigade that defines and reinforces the occupational identity and culture of chefs. Chef 1 makes the point:

There is a big camaraderie in the kitchen. And every slot's filled. There's the strong characters, there's the weak characters, there's the guys that are good to take the piss out of because they can handle it and they think it's funny; there's the guys that they don't like having the piss taken out of them, so the guys don't, because it's not done in a malicious way, it's done in a fun way. I wouldn't say chefs are the most politically correct people, but it's never done in a malicious way. You might hear a racist comment, but not done nastily – done in a joking way. ... But it's just banter. If there was ever anything that was malicious, then it would get stamped out, not just by me, but by the other guys. Because there is a team mentality, there is, "If you're going to bully him, then everybody's going to

suffer.” So they sort of look out for each other. I think that’s very, very strong, actually, in kitchens – very strong. ... I’m sure it exists everywhere, building sites, and garages, and I’m sure there’s banter in every sort of group environment. Chefs are no different. They’re probably a little bit worse in some cases. (Chef 1, 19-20: 24-20)

Aside from the importance of the team and the sense of group solidarity and underlying camaraderie that defines and reinforces the occupational identity and culture of chefs, another social construct that characterises the occupational culture of chefs is that of ‘kitchen banter’. Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, the friendly banter and verbal insults and the teasing and mockery and the practical jokes and pranks that go on in the kitchen between members of the kitchen brigade are part and parcel of the everyday routine of kitchen life. The following quotes further elaborate the point:

There are not many other occupations, probably apart from the military services, that you get away with it, and things that we say and things that we do. ... It’s just not right, some of the things that you say and do. But they come out. You’re just in your own little world once you’re in there. You’re in there, and there might be racist comments, there could be sexist comments, and you’re swearing, but it’s not intentional, it’s just purely how you work. (Chef 46, 38: 4-10)

You could almost sort of think in something like a garage and mechanics, *but*, they wouldn’t accept the sort of homosexuality sort of point, because chefs don’t give a shit about that either. They pinch each others’ arses. ... Again, camaraderie; sort of the togetherness; you’re a group. ... I think it seriously does warp your mind being in a place for so long. It could either drive you round the bend and you leave, or you get on with it and you accept it and you become it as part of the industry. It becomes part of the industry, and it’s accepted. Stress; hot; pressure – what happens? There’s two ways. You either release it, or it just builds up and you explode. ... But that’s what they do. (Chef 19, 91-2: 20-25)

While largely characteristic of a community dominated primarily by young men working long and unsocial hours, in a hot, confined, highly pressurised and stressful environment, kitchen banter serves several functions. As well as being used to motivate members of the kitchen brigade and to maintain discipline, order, authority and control, it is a means of letting off steam and a way of initiating new recruits. Kitchen banter therefore becomes part and parcel of the team bonding process and the underlying camaraderie that exists between members of the kitchen brigade, in other words, the shared language of belonging, of acceptance, of fitting in, of being part of something. According to the chefs interviewed, whatever the function of kitchen banter there is a mutual understanding between members of the kitchen brigade as to how the circumstances of its use are to be interpreted and a mutual compliance as to the role and value of such kitchen banter in the occupational socialisation of members of the occupational community. The following quotes illustrate this, stereotypically male, behaviour:

It's like this cloth-whipping thing: you see two chefs in the kitchen whipping each other with tea towels; they'll have smiles, both of them, although they're getting hurt, they'll be laughing their heads off and smiling from ear to ear – a little bit of combat. ... But that's something that's not linked with discipline or anything like that, it's something that the lads, when they're cleaning down and what have you, they flick each other with the cloth, and one will get one guy, and then he'll get the other, and before you know it, they're all at it, but it's more a camaraderie thing. ... It's all done in good banter. If someone gets a really bad one and they've got a really bad welt on their arm that's bleeding or something, then they think that's great: "Oh, look at that." "Oh, bloody hell!" That goes on a lot. I know it sounds crazy, but on a good night, you'll get that, if they've have had a great service and the adrenalin's still flowing a bit. (Chef 9, 5: 5-19)

There's the whole Tom Aikens thing, wasn't there, where he got sacked from *Pied à Terre*, and he burnt some kid's hand with a palette knife. That was just something that obviously just went a tiny bit too far, because that kind of thing does go on a lot. People messing around with blow torches and hot knives, and

sharp knives, and there can be a lot of messing around, and sometimes it can go a little bit too far. You get this camaraderie going on and it can all get a little bit silly. ... People setting fire to each other's aprons. But not done in an aggressive way, but done in a humorous way. ... They used to get strips of paper and bits of Sellotape, and if there was someone new they used to get bits of paper and stick them to the back of people as they walked past without them knowing, and then they'd set fire to it. ... Pouring boiling hot water across the stove and it all goes, "Whoosh!" – when someone's working there – he'll be working away like this on the stove, and someone comes along and pours some water on, and you get all this steam goes everywhere. (Chef 6, 33-4: 16-8)

There's a lot of camaraderie, there's a lot of banter, there's a lot of play, there's lots of teasing. In fact, they need to be careful sometimes, when the new people come in, they tend to give them a hard time – they're testing them, pushing them a bit. And sometimes that's counterproductive because people say, "Oh, that's too tough for me, I'm not having that." (Chef 34, 30: 15-9)

From the literature, it is clear that amid difficult working conditions (i.e. time pressures, high noise levels and extreme heat in a cramped environment), banter and playful behaviour have also been highlighted as generating feelings of belongingness and camaraderie and diffusing tension (Balazs, 2001), whilst providing chefs and cooks with necessary mental breaks, either to rest after hectic periods or keep themselves motivated during slower periods (Fine, 1987a, 1996a) evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below).

As previously highlighted, as well as being part and parcel of the everyday routine of kitchen life, the friendly banter and verbal insults and the teasing and mockery and the practical jokes and pranks that go on in the kitchen between members of the kitchen brigade are also a way of initiating new recruits. Kitchen banter therefore becomes part and parcel of the team bonding process and the underlying camaraderie that exists between members of the kitchen brigade, in other words, the shared language of belonging, of acceptance, of fitting in, of being part of something. According to the chefs interviewed, such initiations do carry on to a certain extent, as they constitute a

way of testing new recruits before accepting them as a member of the group. Part of this initiation may involve what can be termed initiation rites, in other words, practical jokes or pranks, mainly at the expense of young trainees. Such rites or rituals serve to reinforce the social ties, the bonds between individuals. They reveal the mechanisms by which the social structure of a group is strengthened and perpetuated, as a result of a shared understanding as to the role and value of the ritual in the bonding process. Fieldwork discussions highlighted some of the initiation rites that take place in the kitchen, among which the most common examples include being asked to finely chop flour, or being sent for ‘a long wait’, a bucket of steam, a lobster gun, a soufflé pump, a tin of omelettes, or chicken lips. The role and value of such initiation rites in testing new recruits before accepting them as a member of the group is highlighted by Chef 35 in the following: ‘Tricks played on you, and things like that, is a way of initiation, and them accepting you, I suppose’ (Chef 35, 25: 21-2). The following quotes further make the point:

There’s all sorts of practical jokes. ... Lots and lots of practical jokes – lots of practical jokes. If you’ve got new ones in the kitchen, it also helps that one as well, it makes them feel almost accepted if they’ve been part of a prank which has been played on them. (Chef 36, 12: 12-23)

There’s loads of silly little things that people would go and say to an apprentice or something: “Go and ask the larder chef for a long wait for the terrine.” And, “Go and ask the meat chef for some chicken lips.” And, the lobster gun to kill the lobsters. ... But in a way, it was also like a bonding kind of thing as well. Like an initiation kind of thing, “Right, we’ve played a big joke on you now. Now we’ll leave you alone kind of thing.” (Chef 6, 34-5: 12-15)

Nevertheless, despite the occurrence of initiation rites, fieldwork discussions also revealed that such initiation rites are no longer common practice as they are perceived as being a waste of valuable time and as such they are considered to be a somewhat outdated practice with no place in today’s kitchens. Chef 13 makes the point:

That day's gone. Because, you'd plenty of labour force, and they didn't know what to fucking do with themselves to be honest. But now it's like, you get a guy on a section and you just hope and fucking pray that he survives, and you prop him up and you keep him going. There's none of this kind of joking around of like, "Oh, go out there and get a bucket of steam," or whatever the fuck it is. The day of making a guy's life harder than what it is for the mutual entertainment of the kitchen is fucking gone. (Chef 13, 58-9: 24-7)

As previously highlighted, while largely characteristic of a community dominated primarily by young men working long and unsocial hours, in a hot, confined, highly pressurised and stressful environment, the friendly banter and verbal insults and the teasing and mockery and the practical jokes and pranks that go on in the kitchen between members of the kitchen brigade are a means of letting off steam and a way of initiating new recruits. Kitchen banter therefore becomes part and parcel of the team bonding process and the underlying camaraderie that exists between members of the kitchen brigade and as such part and parcel of the everyday routine of kitchen life, as Chef 3 points out: 'As soon as you see an opportunity to have a laugh with someone, or a piss-take out of someone, it's seized upon straightaway. As soon as you show any sign that you can have it, it's done' (Chef 3, 92: 1-3). The following quotes further elaborate the point:

If you look at this [chef jacket], it is a straitjacket turned round! That's what it is. You turn it round the other way you can't get out of it. You're on your feet 16 hours a day. You work with the same people day in, day out, day in, day out. You look at the same things day in, day out, day in, day out. The same jokes. Can you imagine? Fucking Tuesday to Saturday – when you get to like Thursday and none of you have got to see the TV, none of you has read a paper, the fucking jokes that would come out on Tuesday start coming out on Thursday! You've got nothing else to talk about. I think you're a prisoner in your own environment, for sure. (Chef 40, 145: 4-20)

Because of the hours, that can make you depending on who you are, possibly, a bit socially inept. ... It can make you like that. I've met guys that kind of are like that, because they work such long hours, and because they're in an environment that's just so far removed from normal behaviour. Like anything goes, you can virtually do anything you want in a kitchen, say anything you want, do anything you want, within reason. (Chef 31, 16: 14-20)

Indeed, according to Chef 40: 'They talk about sex all day long' (Chef 40, 75: 16). Similarly, Chef 1 states: 'It's always sex, isn't it, in the kitchen. Ninety-nine times out of hundred, they're talking about women. Then it's probably football' (Chef 1, 22: 1-2). Of course, this behaviour is further evidence of 'Alpha Male' type behaviour, in the sense that this macho badinage and these misogynistic exchanges show members of the kitchen brigade engaging in one-upmanship in the stereotypically male domain of their sexual exploits. The following quotes further illustrate the point:

They talk about anal sex all day long. That's all they fucking talk. ... You imagine, this is my kitchen, that's the size of my kitchen, and you can have 12 boys working in that fucking environment, and they're in there 15 hours a day. And when they're finished they go home and they're too fucked; when they get up in the morning they don't see anyone, so all they're seeing is the same faces five days a week, day in, day out, day in, day out, day in, day out. (Chef 40, 79-80: 20-10)

If you get six blokes together in a kitchen, you talk about football and shagging, generally, and that's it. And I think that's six blokes in the kitchen, six blokes on a building site, six blokes in a shipyard, or wherever it is; I think that's the same anywhere. (Chef 3, 23: 18-21)

Furthermore, from a feminine perspective, Chef 35 states: 'If your entire conversation each and every day is about sex and about football, I just shut off and I carry on with my job. ... They're not going to say less eff and this and that' (Chef 35, 10-1: 15-2). Chef 47 further elaborates the point in the following terms:

In this day and age would you get away with – I don't know maybe it does exist – in an office environment where the guys are not going to tone their language down, they're not going to have the respect, and the fact that the female they might be offended by us talking about shagging our girlfriends last night – they don't give a shit. And I dare say it's like the army, if you're going to join the army, then you're doing an assault course, and we're not going to change our language because it might offend you. Same as not for anyone else, and they're not going to for a female either. It's probably just not a nice environment to be in if you're a female. Would that happen in any other environment? I don't know. A female mechanic, for example, on the shop floor, are they going to take the Page 3's down and not read *The Sun* and change their language because there is a female mechanic around? Probably not. It's the same thing in the kitchen. ... I think they're expected to just accept the fact that you're in a lads' culture. But I suppose it's the same in any shop floor. I'm sure in the City, a bunch of lads together are just as, if not more sexist and misogynist, than they are in the kitchen. I think probably, thinking about it, I think the physical aspect of it is probably the biggest drawback, because I don't think it's any more or less PC [politically correct] in the kitchen than it is on the City floor, for example. (Chef 47, 48-9: 1-15)

As highlighted in the previous quote, it is particularly interesting to note how issues of gender influence the occupational culture of chefs. Indeed, despite women's continuous involvement in domestic cooking and while both men and women train as chefs, the professional kitchen is still seen as a predominantly male preserve. Throughout the course of the fieldwork, discussions with the chefs revealed a number of reasons why women are still under-represented in the realm of professional cooking and in the *haute cuisine* sector in particular. Such reasons included the physical strength and stamina required of the job, (i.e. lifting heavy stockpots and standing on one's feet for fifteen to eighteen hours a day), the long and unsociable working hours that may to a certain extent put off some women and also the fact that women wanting children may find the job virtually impossible to deal with alongside family life. The total commitment required from the job, as well as the physical discomfort

it brings, could justify why so few women enter and remain in professional kitchens. However, it was also acknowledged that the world of chefs is very male-dominated where-in a masculine and macho ethos prevails and a large amount of testosterone-fuelled, playful sexual banter occurs, which can be an unpleasant and intimidating working environment for women. The fieldwork discussions also highlighted some of the overtly discriminatory practices that used to be commonplace a decade or so ago, and to a certain extent still are, as well as the sexist and chauvinistic attitudes that continue to prevail in professional kitchens. These points are further elaborated in the following:

Because the environment has been so male-driven, and so harsh, and so physically demanding, and very chauvinistic as well, that's something we'd love to change. It's not easy to change a whole subculture of abuse and so on – it's not easy. (Chef 15, 13: 13-5)

I think before it was a man's world, and even if women were good, they weren't shown any sort of path to progression, so to speak. You would think, "Oh, I won't push a woman in that position, she won't be able to handle it." (Chef 44, 44-5: 24-3)

Furthermore, from a feminine perspective, Chef 12 states:

It's really not very much different – though it is a bit more – than women architects, or women lawyers. We're behind. We are in a male-dominated industry. I think chefs is probably more male-dominated because there is a macho idea of lifting heavy sauce pans, staying up all night doing heavy service, shouting, tension, that sort of man's thing, but I think more and more it has gone away from its gender and into the realm of just how you are in your profession, so whether the women can do it. ... It's perceived as a tough job, both physically and I think that you can probably compare it to women on construction sites, or women plumbers, jobs that are just always associated with the male. (Chef 12, 2-3: 23-11)

You could put all the boring well done thoughts on that they've got to start a family, and unsociable hours, and expected to be at home, and maybe long-term relationships with boyfriends, and finishing late doesn't always sit well within... and I suspect there's certainly some grains of truth in that. Equally, I think we've got to look at ourselves within kitchens and say we're not creating the best environment for females, and it's probably not too dissimilar why you don't get too many female mechanics. It's just been historically part of that. I actually think it's changing a bit. For the first time, I actually think it's changing a bit. I certainly think that they get respect within the right environment; probably have got to prove themselves twice as hard as they have to in solicitors' and accountants' offices. They've got to work twice as hard almost to prove themselves as they have to in legal professions and other professions sometimes, but I do think it's changing. (Chef 17, 25-6: 25-11)

Likewise, Chef 40 asserts: 'I think a woman has got more to prove in a kitchen than a fucking bloke' (Chef 40, 135: 10-1). Chef 28 further elaborates the argument in the following:

In the world, there are six three-star Michelin cooks that are women, and there's no more than 25 one-star, two-star women chefs, and the reason for that is two-fold: one, it's a very physical job, and two, they do things like fall in love and have kids. That doesn't fit into a kitchen scenario. There are very few girls that can stand the pace of what's a very male-dominated world. ... Because it is such a male-dominated career, the ones that are there at the top are usually, in my experience, better than the blokes anyway, because however hard it's been for you, it's been a lot harder for them. And so when they come out of it at the other end, they usually are power houses. ... It's twice as hard for a girl in the kitchen – twice as hard. ... That's the reason why they are better than blokes. Because they have had to put up with all the prejudice to start with, and you know, there aren't many men anywhere that like taking orders from a woman. (Chef 28, 30-1: 11-7)

If you speak to my sisters and they're both doctors, they say the same, "It was much harder for us to achieve anything because we're female." Generally, it's harder for women. I think that's slowly changing, but not dramatically. ... It's a very aggressive workplace. There are only certain characters that are strong enough that will cope. Because it's so severe, they have managed to come out of it, and because they have had it harder than a bloke of the same age, they're usually better cooks, better people, better everything. (Chef 28, 31-2: 24-9)

Moreover, from a feminine perspective, Chef 5 argues:

A good cook is a good cook, and it has nothing to do with gender. You are either passionate about it or you're not. I have grave difficulty having women working in my kitchen, not because I have difficulty with women at all, it's because, in my experience, they bring too many outside influences to the job. So you do not employ just the person – I'm talking about young girls here who have to start somewhere – you employ the boyfriend, the mother, the father, the aunt, the uncle, grandma, grandad, and anybody who thinks they can put the spoke in. You employ a young boy, you employ him, and that's the difference. (Chef 5, 36: 5-14)

If I had a choice, to be perfectly honest, if I had two candidates and both had the same experience, would I go for a male before a female? I would probably choose a male before I would choose a female. ... It just works for me better with an all-male brigade. I prefer it, personally. I think the guys, given the option, would prefer it, and we have had the discussion, at various times throughout their careers they have worked with females in the kitchen, and they just would prefer that it's all male. Whether they think they can't rely on them, or someone's going to have to help them at some point because, it's physically demanding or whatever, I don't know. But I think they just think it's an even playing field with all guys; having a female in there: would it upset the balance? I think probably yes, it would, being frank and honest. ... I know in the army, they have that debate as well. If I'm going to the frontline, then I want

two guys around me rather than two females. I don't know, is it a weakness in our perception of females? (Chef 47, 61-2: 4-3)

As highlighted in the previous quotes, it is particularly interesting to note that males (and seemingly perhaps even females) are likely to reject women if they believe that the latter are unable to become full members of the group because of their inability/reluctance to do everything that men can (e.g. lifting heavy stockpots). What is more, it is also particularly interesting to note that the exclusion of women from the kitchen reinforces the gender role stereotype that they do not possess the traits necessary to perform the roles evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below).

The perdurability of sexist and chauvinistic attitudes in the haute cuisine sector, which is reflected in the opinions of a few UK Michelin-starred chefs (quoted in Gaskell, 1997; Rayner, 2004), was found to be reflective of the phenomenon described by Leidner (1991, 1993) in his discussion of gender-segregated service jobs whereby gender segregation reinforces the belief/assumption that non-traditional members (women in this instance) do not possess the traits necessary to perform the roles (see Chapter 5).

The following quotes clearly further illustrate how issues of gender influence the occupational culture of chefs:

The thing of obviously having that male dominance in the kitchen is not an easy thing, it's true. ... To be honest, there's something I kind of learned with the past, this is the experience here at *Anonymous*, that as much as three girls next to 15 guys is alright, and after that, it can become a problem of jealousy, too many girls working together, basically. It can go the other way round, basically. As we say in our world, they can become bitchy between each other. ... Each time it appeared that the mentality, the ambience of the people had changed. ... It might be different if it's the other way round, if it's like 15 or 17 ladies and only three or four boys. (Chef 49, 3-5: 19-4)

Furthermore, from a feminine perspective, Chef 12 argues:

Anonymous and I, if we don't have 50% women in the kitchen, we try and get it that way, because for us, we just see the mix being very, very important. The gender mix is important. If I do a shift and they're all boys, it's not great. If I do a shift and it's all girls, it's not great. It's much better to have men and women working together. There's just a dynamic that goes on when you have an all male-dominated kitchen. ... It's just good when it's mixed, I think in everything, it's the same thing as education, you just need that mix, I think. (Chef 12, 3-4: 18-5)

Once you've got a lot of girls in the kitchen, you do get that kind of more family feeling to it. When it's all boys, it's not. When it's all boys, it's team. It's like a sport. When you've got girls in the kitchen, it becomes much more family orientated, because you're less likely to be aggressive towards a girl, girls are more organised than men, so the kitchen becomes more organised, so it becomes a little bit more comfortable. It changes it for the better. ... And I found that helped because obviously the chefs were less likely to be fucking mean to women. I don't think they change their behaviour; they just won't be as aggressive towards a woman and because a woman is more organised, the more you've got of them, the more organised the kitchen will be, the less aggressive the atmosphere is, because it's more organised. You only get aggression through tension, and you only get a really tense kitchen when the kitchen's not organised. (Chef 14, 30-1: 18-16)

Furthermore, Chef 31 states: 'I like to have girls in the kitchen. It just kind of takes the edge off that testosterone ball that's ready to explode. It just kind of takes the edge off. It's nice to have a girl in the kitchen' (Chef 31, 27-8: 22-1). Similarly, Chef 44 suggests: 'I think it's very important that you do have women in the kitchen. It's good for the dynamics of the team as well. ... I think women sometimes just chill everything down a bit' (Chef 44, 45: 4-9). The following quotes further illustrate the point:

The dynamics of a kitchen change. Guys are an awful lot better behaved when there's a woman in the kitchen; they're less likely to talk about doing one of the

waitresses in the arse if they've got a girl standing beside them. ... They will adapt their behaviour if there's a woman in the kitchen. (Chef 48, 122: 11-22)

I wish there were more girls that were doing it, because they do kind of give it a bit of a softer edge. Because they are kind of all full of testosterone and sort of friction. Sometimes they are kind of a macho environment. ... It's hard for them; it's not easy, because of, I would say, the environment as a whole is mainly male-dominated. It's hard from them to come into that environment. ... It is hard. The way that kitchens are run, the vast majority of them are all male. It's hard for a girl to come in and it being all male, but in a way, they sometimes need to have as much or bigger balls than the men do. (Chef 4, 15-6: 22-16)

Sociologists and (feminist) historians have argued that the under-representation of female chefs in the realm of professional cooking and haute cuisine is best understood in relation to the *socially constructed* male/female divide that has characterised the culinary hierarchy throughout history (Banner, 1973; Goody, 1982; Mennell *et al.*, 1992; Mennell, 1996; Trubek, 2000; Swinbank, 2002; Ferguson, 2004). Such distancing by male chefs from (feminine) domestic cooking has also been shown to continue to be relevant to today's practices, as illustrated in the case of male TV chefs who endeavour to present cooking as a source of pleasure and entertainment (Ashley *et al.*, 2004). According to Trubek (2000: 126), this phenomenon is particularly well illustrated in the writings of French chef Georges Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935) in which the latter was keen to establish a 'male/female, professional/domestic, making-art/making-do division of culinary labour'.

It is also argued that the military-inherited traits that permeate the occupational identity and culture of chefs (Mennell, 1996; Cooper, 1998) may account for the perduring hierarchical structure and male management style that characterise modern professional kitchens (see Bourdain, 2000), whilst contributing to a masculine and macho ethos (characterised by misogynist talk, sexual joking and hazing) which continue to alienate women (Burrell *et al.*, 1997; Cooper, 1998; Swinbank, 2002) evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below).

Although the perpetuation of a macho culture in the realm of professional cooking, may be understood as a deliberate strategy to exclude women from the occupation (see Joan Acker's [1990, 1992] theory of gendered organisations) (see Chapter 5), ethnographic research undertaken by Fine (1987b) has shown that women *can* be accepted by male chefs and cooks, as long as they accept and mirror patterns of male bonding and behaviour. As Fine suggests, women (the minority) must embrace the occupational culture and identity of chefs and cooks in its masculine expression, or risk being seen as a threat to the group, due to women's potential to disrupt the patterns of male interaction which most contribute to building group solidarity and belongingness (i.e. joking, 'binging', 'hazing' and trust through full cooperation) evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below).

Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, this male-dominated, testosterone-fuelled, macho environment might be an unpleasant and intimidating working environment for women to fit in unless they are prepared to embrace the occupational culture in its masculine expression and accept and mirror patterns of male bonding and behaviour and become 'one of the boys'. This lack of willingness to allow female behavioural idioms within kitchen culture can be seen as a form of cultural conservatism. Rather than embrace the opportunity for enriching the culture of the occupation via the inclusion of female culture, women are instead compelled to conform to the stereotypically male behaviour patterns which already exist evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below). Therefore, the research findings concur with the findings of American sociologist Fine (1987b), as regards that women *can* be accepted by male chefs and cooks, as long as they accept and mirror patterns of male bonding and behaviour. Chef 9 makes the point: 'They've got to become one of the guys' (Chef 9, 65: 2). Similarly, Chef 46 suggests: 'To become accepted, then they do tend to go slightly the other way and become one of the boys' (Chef 46, 62: 20-1). Chef 48 further states: 'For a girl to get on in a kitchen, generally they have to be as aggressive, as bolshie – feisty' (Chef 48, 122: 3-4). The following quotes further elaborate the point:

And also it doesn't help, because it is such a male-dominated environment as well, and it can be a bit laddish at times as well, I don't think that helps and it's almost like girls have to become a bit butch to work in kitchens. ... The ones

that are any good do have to be quite aggressive and quite butch, almost to kind of get along, because it's such a male environment. (Chef 6, 59: 9-14)

You get some women that have got more bollocks than some of the boys though. ... It's a male-dominated industry. I think it's nice to see girls in the kitchen. ... I've worked with a few, and some of them have got more bollocks than us, but that's their way that they overcome all that. They can be more aggressive than some of the fellas. But then I think that's something to do with the environment that they're in. If they're in a calm kitchen, whatever, then they don't need to be like that. And it's like somebody being smaller, they shout louder to be heard – I'm presuming it's the same thing for them, because it's testosterone, and they have to be heard more so than the guy, so that's the way that they deal with it. (Chef 50, 34-5: 21-21)

Most of the females that I have worked with are bloody disgusting and as foul-mouthed as everyone else! I think most women in the kitchen know how to look after themselves, so I don't think it changes at all. Even then I think there's always jokes about women, and what they've been up to the night before, and like the women always go, "Oh, you guys." Well, certainly in my experience, they're not fazed by anything that a man's got to say. They're just as bad as the others. ... I think most women you find in the kitchen are as tough as nails. ... They are one of the boys. They become one of the boys, definitely without a doubt. They give as good as they get. (Chef 8, 66-7: 9-8)

Nevertheless, from a feminine perspective, Chef 35 argues:

Some things that they say you just laugh off and carry on, but you don't need to be exactly like them, and be part of their culture to be accepted. If you work in a decent enough kitchen, I think that you can prove that you're good at your job, they'll accept you for who you are outside work as well. You don't need to be and act like a boy. ... If you can stand up for yourself, and do your job just as good, if not better than one of the guys, they can't say anything. (Chef 35, 14: 10-22)

Generally, the *good* female chefs are like boys anyway. They're boisterous, they can look after themselves – when I say, “Look after themselves,” I mean they can handle themselves – if you're in a situation when it's quite high pressured, or someone's giving you shit, they don't start crying, and walk off, they can handle themselves as well. ... I've worked with some fantastic [female] chefs, and they can out cook a lot of the boys. This whole boy-girl thing – this comes down to the black and white and race thing, and all that as well – it doesn't matter. All that matters is if you've got the right attitude to be in that group of people, and they can cook as well, and enjoy it. You've got kitchens where there's a lot of female chefs, because usually the head chef's female, and she runs the kitchen in a different way. ... Somewhere like, *The Vineyard* [*The Vineyard at Stockcross*], or *L'Ortolan*, can you imagine being a woman in one of those kitchens? Like a nice, well spoken girl, who can cook very well, doesn't want to be putting up with that sort of shit. And is the chef, or the *sous* chef, going to risk saying to all the boys, “Oh, don't be like that with her.” It sort of shows weakness in a way, as being the *sous* chef, or the head chef, and you're being easy on her. As soon as they think that she's getting special treatment because she's a female – it's all done. They're not going to accept her are they. They're going to be like, “She gets special treatment. Fuck her. We're not going to help her. We're not going to do anything like that.” And that's what happens. Like a weak boy – it's like a weak girl. If she's not good enough, they go, as simple as that. And they'll either get bullied out, or they'll just leave, or they'll get sacked. (Chef 19, 116-8: 3-8)

Furthermore, Chef 13 states: ‘I find it's a meritocracy: a female comes in, if she can fucking do the job as well as a male, she's accepted straight away. ... A kitchen is about meritocracy. If somebody can do the job, they're accepted’ (Chef 13, 64: 9-19). Chef 46 further elaborates the point:

They don't get treated any differently at all, really. If anything, they probably get a bit of a harder time, I would think, because a girl is like testing them out to a certain extent. That, surely, is better for them in the long run, because, especially if they do it, then they've stood that test of time, and they've come through it and they are stronger people. ... I have seen some of the chefs put

them under pressure to see if she'll manage, and 99% of the time, she does, which is great, because I can see them – if it's the junior chefs just testing them out, basically, and pushing her, but it makes her a better person. She's stronger and then she's gained the respect of them. ... They'll see her getting busier, and then, "Hang on a second," and in a way, you're looking for her to crack, or break down. ... You can see how people do put them under pressure, the girls. But they cope. The good ones cope. You don't want any weaklings in the place – doesn't matter if they're boys or girls or whatever. (Chef 46, 63-4: 10-15)

What is more, from a feminine perspective, Chef 35 further states:

You've got to be tough-skinned; otherwise you're not going to make it. I have had my tears as well, but, never cry in front of them. You go home, you cry. That's what I believe. Because in England, it's very much a male-dominated thing. I had a kitchen where I worked, I was the only girl for about eight months, and there were about 15, 16 chefs per shift, and we were two shifts, so, 30-plus people in the kitchen, I'm the only girl, and a lot of the senior guys didn't speak a word to me until I started cooking meat, which is the 'sauce' section, which is the most difficult, and I could do it, and I could keep up with the pace. It's very much you earn respect. Until you've got that, a lot of them won't even speak to you. ... Until you earn it, nobody's going to speak to you. (Chef 35, 7-8: 18-5)

As highlighted in the previous quotes, it is particularly interesting to note that despite the previously highlighted gradual disappearance of initiation rites in the form of practical jokes or pranks, mainly at the expense of young trainees, initiation rites or rituals are still however common practice in today's kitchens, most noticeably with regard to the initiation of new recruits. Indeed, such kitchen rites or rituals do still carry on in today's kitchens as they constitute a way for existing members of the kitchen brigade to put new recruits to the test and see whether they can do the job, and having earned the respect of the kitchen brigade, whether they are likely to fit in and become accepted as part of the team. The customary practice of testing new

recruits as part of the occupational socialisation of members of the kitchen brigade is clearly further illustrated in the following:

Some of these chefs, it's their territory, you've got to prove yourself to them, that you can actually take the knocks, you're up to the grade. And because you're part of a team, if you let the team down, you're letting everyone else down. In a kitchen like that, sometimes it's not just you as an individual that's maybe punished, you're punishing everyone. I suppose it must be very similar to how the army is, or was. ... If you're a new boy, you walk into a London kitchen, for example, you've got to put in some time to be part of that team, you're not accepted straightaway. Those chefs want to see that you're capable of not only doing the job consistently, but you're there to support them as well; help them out, if they drop "into the shit", that you're able to pull them out of it as well, and that you want to be a part of that kitchen. A good kitchen team will always pull together and look out for each other, but at the same time, there's always going to be certain chefs that won't get on with each other in that team. (Chef 22, 5: 5-21)

They will bail each other out to make that service work. If you've got one guy that won't work with a team, they will make his life hell, irregardless of anything else. ... If you've upset somebody, they will let you sink. (Chef 35, 33: 4-11)

I think from my experience, because it can be quite cliquey, you go into a restaurant, all the chefs know each other, and suddenly there's a new person in, "Who's this person?" So you have to kind of – from what I used to do is you just keep very quiet, and you just try and prove to everybody – it's a bit primitive I suppose – but you kind of prove to everybody that you can do the job, and you keep very, very quiet, and you don't say much, don't do much, and you just wait, I guess, until you're kind of accepted, until they start talking to you. I remember when I went to work at Marco's [Marco Pierre White], I was put to work on the fish straightaway, running the fish section, and it was a very aggressive environment there, and I just didn't say a word to anybody for about three or four months. And then suddenly one day, it all kind of all just clicked, I guess, and then

suddenly I was one of the boys. But it took that long, it really did. On the first day, it's like, "Who's this fucker over here? Who's this new fucker? Whereabouts are you from?" Wouldn't talk to you in the morning, ignore you. Pushing into you – just ridiculous, really, when you think about it, absolutely ridiculous, but it used to go on, and I think it still does. I think you just have to wait to be accepted, I think, because of that cliquy environment, and everyone knows each other, someone else coming in – I think they're a bit territorial, they don't really want really want new people coming in. ... You won't get any help. ... If you're like new in a kitchen, they're just going to leave you alone, they're just going to leave you to see how you cope with it, and if you just kind of fall to pieces, then they're going to say, "Look, he's obviously no good is he?" Whereas if you kind of cope really well, suddenly they've got this kind of respect for you, and then suddenly you've proved yourself almost, that you actually can do it. I think that's probably what people wait for before they accept people, I think. (Chef 6, 22-4: 19-6)

I think it's testing their skill level, testing their resilience, their stamina, are they strong, will they be able to cope under a difficult high-pressure environment. And to a certain extent, it will be fair, because during the service it does become a high-pressure environment and you don't want anybody who can't hack it. They need to be team players. The people in the kitchen, when somebody new comes in, for them it's important as well that it's somebody that fits in and makes a contribution, and not somebody who may become a burden, or somebody they need to carry. So, it is that little bit of testing going on. As long as it's done in a nice way, it's OK, but sometimes you can see they can do it in quite a harsh way. You could almost say it's like bullying, and so on, and I've seen that in many kitchens. (Chef 34, 34: 10-8)

As highlighted in the previous quotes, it would appear that members of the kitchen brigade tend to pursue such social customs and practices as part of a deliberate common group effort to put newcomers to the test in order to prove their worth before earning the respect of the kitchen brigade and becoming accepted as part of the team. Drawing upon such customs and practices, it can therefore be assumed that such

initiation rites or rituals constitute another social construct that plays a significant role in the occupational socialisation of members of the kitchen brigade and the creation and maintenance of the occupational identity and culture of chefs. The following quotes further elaborate the point:

It's almost like a school playground. A kitchen is like a school playground. It is, in a lot of senses. You get your bullies. You get your arse kissers. You get your ones that work well together. You get your outcasts. It is like a school playground, I think, in that respect. And people can be as nasty as they are as a kid in the school playground as well in kitchens. ... I think people that don't have that energy, and don't have that drive don't get on well in top kitchens. They don't. And they're usually the ones that get bullied, and get kicked out. Exactly the same as you would do in a school playground. If you're not accepted, you get bullied. And it's the same sort of thing in a lot of kitchens. ... I've been exposed to it, so I know. ... If you've got "the boys" – every chef's got "the boys", the chef's favourites, they always have to, you see that in these bigger kitchens – and if they get hold of you, you're pretty much fucked; you're sort of an outcast. (Chef 19, 58-9: 20-16)

I went to *The Connaught* which was 52 testosterone-driven chefs in an environment in a cellar, that was part *The Savoy Company*, and it was a bit of a hell hole. It was tough. ... It was a hard, hard environment. It was a jungle, and I suppose if you weren't of the mentality of the lion or the predator, if you were a mouse in that jungle, then were you going to struggle. You weren't going to last very long. It was a hard, hard school to be in. (Chef 17, 2: 14-20)

Indeed, kitchen banter can also serve to exclude less physically and mentally robust members of the kitchen brigade. It would appear that given the difficulty of the job, both physically and mentally, such social customs and practices are perceived as a way to weed out the new recruits who are unlikely to commit to the job and fit in and become accepted as part of the team. The following quotes clearly further illustrate the point:

It's kind of survival of the fittest, isn't it, in some kitchens. If you're no good, you're not going to last very long. You're just going to be put under so much pressure that you'll leave yourself or you're going to be sacked. There was no written warnings and stuff like that. You're just gone, that's as simple as that. (Chef 6, 69: 11-5)

It is survival of the fittest. There's just no two ways about it. If you're not strong and thick-skinned about it, or get yourself thick-skinned really soon, you're not going to survive it because you won't be able to take not just the pace but the verbal abuse as well. (Chef 35, 74: 12-4)

I went to work at a two-star when I was 17 and I was the youngest chef by about eight years, and I got so much abuse – nothing physical, just verbal abuse, all day long, and I used to be in tears some days, going to the toilet, I'll be going, "No, they're not going to beat me. They're not going to beat me!" And I think you need to be toughened up a bit. I suppose it comes from the fact that if you go and work in another kitchen, you've got to prove yourself, and because they see so many chefs coming and going all the time, naturally people they don't warm to you straightaway, they're kind of almost a bit hostile towards you. So you kind of have to be able to shrug that off. ... So, I think you do need to endure it, because when it gets tough in kitchens, when you're kind of 'in the shit' as we say and your back's against the wall, that's when really you see if a chef's any good or not. It's all very well every day being able to cook stuff, but when you're really, really 'in the shit', what does a chef do? Does he cut corners? ... And that's how I really test somebody. When we're busy and they start trying to cut corners, then you know that they're going to let you down. If your back's turned, they're going to let you down. You don't want that. (Chef 6, 29-30: 4-2)

When you get the new guy, you try to test him; you push him a bit more than you push everybody else to see if he can hold the pressure. ... I can still remember everywhere I've been working for the first two months, three months; you get so much shit from the head chef, *sous-chef*, just to see if you can hold the

pressure. ... Because they want you to adapt yourself to them, and if you don't, you get that abuse, it's coming for six months, and you just break, or you get a lot of abuse and after a week, you say, "Fuck it, it's not for me." Because you're passing so much time in a kitchen and it's every minute of every hour you're passing is so important, you don't want to lose your time with anybody else who in a week's time, or two weeks, is not going to be here. (Chef 41, 34-5: 14-5)

I think consciously, you do have to push people now, because then it sorts out if they do really understand and are willing to go through that pain to try and be part of a team that wants to achieve something, or if you've got it, to maintain it, and to drive it on further. ... It didn't do me any harm going through that pain and understanding it, to hopefully get me where I've got to today. ... I think everybody should go through that at a certain stage, to understand it, and then hopefully that gives them the passion and the drive for them to progress and to go on to better kitchens. (Chef 50, 6-7: 22-10)

As highlighted in previous quotes, to be a chef at the high-end level of professional cooking requires passion and drive, to continuously strive to achieve and maintain a standing of quality and excellence day in, day out. Furthermore, to consistently execute each and every dish to an exact standard of quality and excellence day in, day out under severe temporal constraints, in a highly pressurised and stressful environment, requires the utmost discipline. Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, the inordinate amount of discipline required to be a chef at the high-end level of professional cooking is analogous to that of the military. Chef 13 makes the point in the following terms:

You need a huge amount of discipline to make it to the top level as a chef. It's almost like being in the army. We've all seen these programmes where they have US Marines and whatever and it's all about discipline, and beating it into you. There is a part of that in the kitchen world: "That's not right." "Yes, Chef!" Part of that I think is there's almost a tinge of masochism in it. ... To make it to a good level, a chef must have ability, you must have drive and ambition, and must

have flair, and must have an awful lot of discipline – I think discipline is one of the highest things. (Chef 13, 1-2: 20-5)

You're doing things at split-second notice – the timing – the minutiae of what you're doing are vast, and unless you and the people around you are highly disciplined and co-ordinated like an army, then you don't get the end result that you want. ... You're only as strong as your weakest link, and at the end of the day, you've got to make sure therefore your weakest links are strong enough. (Chef 13, 16: 11-22)

You need to be that strict and have that level of discipline that it's almost military – in fact, it is – to keep the standards high. ... Because you've got so many different personalities in there, especially when you've got quite a lot of creative people as well – they're going to put their own spin on something, certainly on the plate itself. And if you've got people who are allowed to do that, your foods going to change out of all proportion to what you originally wanted it to be. ... You've got total inconsistency there. ... You have to have consistency; you have to have people that understand that that has to be the same whether you do it, whether I do it, and that's a very difficult thing to do. (Chef 2, 2-3: 24-23)

The nature of the chef that makes it to the level that you're talking about is somebody who believes in themselves, has a lot of self-confidence, has the arrogance, has the ambition, the discipline, and the drive. And what that means, they're constantly checking what they're doing themselves, and their standards are driven primarily by themselves. And a lot of people like myself are never fucking happy with our own standards, not to mind those around me. So, how do I reconcile that with not killing everyone else around you, and making sure that it's either a happy place or uncomfortable? (Chef 13, 5: 15-20)

Furthermore, due to the intense nature of the job and the extreme working environment, (i.e. working under severe temporal constraints, in a highly pressurised and stressful environment), in order to maintain order, authority and control and consistently

achieve and maintain a standing of quality and excellence day in, day out, an inordinate amount of discipline is required, particularly amidst the chaos of a busy service. The following quotes clearly further illustrate the point:

That's the difference as well with any other business, where every lunch, every dinner, every day – that's seven-day operation, 24-hour day, and all year round, you have to deliver that excellence. Not easy. So we're talking about mega, mega pressure on the chef, and to deal in the adrenalin of the service, where you really feel so high, as high as a kite. So, if you're not trained, all that goes in all sorts of directions, uncontrolled aggressiveness, and that doesn't go on the food, that's wasted away in either anger inside, or passed on to somebody else, that poor little sod who happened to be here. Whereas, with training you can actually make people much more reflective, much more aware on how to handle all these pressures and that adrenalin which is pumped. (Chef 15, 16-7: 19-2)

You come in in the morning you have to be ready for service. Service comes, your adrenalin's pumping because of service and it's got to be right because that's what you're judged on; whether it's breakfast, lunch, and dinner in a hotel, or it's lunch and dinner in a restaurant. You're constantly being judged, and you're only as good as your last plate. ... That is what drives you. Because you want to get things right. Ninety per cent of the top boys are perfectionists anyway, because they know that it has to be right day in, day out. And you can't always pass that passion on to your boys. And that's where it becomes frustrating, and it can become a volatile situation. Because in the middle of service, if you're dressing a table of four, and something's not right, and you know it's not right, the boys don't necessarily know why it's not right, but then today it's very difficult to get those boys to get that passion. You can't teach somebody passion and the drive, but you can teach somebody how to cook. ... But that is very much a problem for today. From when I started, you had waiting lists at *Le Manoir* [*Le Manoir Aux Quat' Saisons*] and at *The Waterside* [*The Waterside Inn*] and stuff like that. You don't have that anymore. There aren't those waiting lists to get in. The quality of staff aren't coming through. So as a head chef or a

sous-chef it becomes a problem because the weight's on your shoulders now. It's your name that's on that menu, as a head chef. And as a *sous-chef*, you should be backing that head chef up. And it does become very, very frustrating. And that's where the problems start. (Chef 50, 2-3: 21-21)

When it comes to the service, when you speak to anybody, it's fast, furious, not terribly polite, sometimes aggressive, and you're looking at people's facial expressions, and you'd better get a, "Yes, Chef." Because what you haven't got time to do is to discuss it. You can't say, "Peter, I actually think that you've possibly overcooked those carrots." It's more like, "Fuck those carrots in the bin you complete wanker, and if you try and put that on my plate, I'll crack you with it." And that's how it is, because it's quicker to say, "You're a cunt," than it is to give him the explanation. ... But when it's fast and furious; you haven't got time for polite behaviour and pleasantries. Now, that has in the past been deemed as bullying. OK, maybe it is, maybe it isn't, but it goes on in every walk of life in every profession. I'm not saying I condone it; it's just a fact of life. And in this very hard world, it's sink or swim. (Chef 28, 29: 11-24)

Because it's a stressful environment, and if something goes wrong you don't have the luxury of saying, "Right, let's put that down, let's go through that again," like in all other walks of life, like in an office job, for instance, you can always put it down, or have a tea break, come back to it; because you're always on demand, everything that you do, if you don't get it right first time then that has a knock-on effect with everybody else, because the timing is such that everybody has to go at the same time; that that brings with it excessive pressures. ... A lot of chefs like to put on the plate their own personality which reflects their own ability, and they surround themselves with people that are not up to that job, which therefore leads to a stressed-out environment. (Chef 9, 1-2: 21-7)

As highlighted in the previous quotes, it would appear that the shouting and verbal insults that often accompany service are more or less a *sine qua non* in the kitchen, insofar as due to the intense nature of the job and the extreme working environment,

(i.e. working under severe temporal constraints, in a hot, noisy, highly pressurised and stressful environment), it is a necessary requisite in order to maintain discipline, order, authority and control. This behavioural norm is also analogous to the military, especially in the sense of the stereotypical Sergeant Major using the same techniques on his charges in order to achieve the same behavioural outcomes. Indeed, amidst the chaos of a busy service, such kitchen banter is aimed at driving the team on and motivating the members of the kitchen brigade in an attempt to get them fired up and performing at the requisite level in order to ultimately and of paramount importance consistently achieve and maintain a standing of quality and excellence. Hence, it would appear that such kitchen banter is almost expected in the kitchen and as such accepted as the norm and ingrained in the occupational culture of chefs. Thus, the shouting and verbal insults, in the same way as the friendly kitchen banter, constitutes another social construct that defines the occupational culture of chefs. Chef 2 further elaborates the point:

You can turn round and tell somebody off in a way that you would never speak to somebody outside of the kitchen. I'll speak to people in there – on the very odd occasion I do – in a way I'd never dream of it. ... That's why we shake hands going in and coming out, every day. ... Because it's something I care about, it's what I do. It's a massive part of me and what I do. This isn't just me making a living; this is me caring passionately about what I'm putting on a plate and what other people who are in my kitchen are putting on a plate. It's your reputation. ... But it's because I care about what I do. And in the middle of service, it's a very stressful environment anyway. (Chef 2, 4-6: 24-10)

Moreover, as highlighted in the previous quote, it is particularly interesting to note the time-honoured custom originating from French kitchen culture whereby all members of the kitchen brigade shake hands upon entering the kitchen first thing in the morning and also prior to leaving last thing at night. Indeed, it would appear that the customary kitchen ritual of shaking hands before commencing work at the start of the day and also having finished work at the end of the night, acts to reaffirm the importance of the team and the sense of family, group solidarity, bonding, camaraderie and feeling

of mutual respect that exists between the members of the kitchen brigade. The following quotes clearly further illustrate the point:

We all shake hands, we're very respectful of each other, everybody says hello when they come in the morning, shakes hands, front-of-house and kitchen, which I think is important when we're spending so much time together, that we have a good bond, and we all get on, we shake hands, we're friends when we start work, and we're friends and we're all happy when we leave at the end of the day. No matter what happens in the day, if shit hits the fan, we still shake hands at the end of the service, and I say, "Thank you for today." (Chef 10, 1: 19-24)

It's showing that we all respect each other, we all say "good morning," we all say "good night," and it doesn't matter what's happened, we all shake hands and say "good night" at the end of the night. I think it's quite an important part of the team spirit and bonding, and making sure that you're saying at end of the night, and I'll say it no matter what, "Thanks for today, thanks for your efforts." And that's saying like, "Whatever happened today is today, tomorrow's a new day, and we get on with it, we learn, and we don't make the same mistakes that we did yesterday." (Chef 10, 47: 12-8)

Moreover, as previously highlighted, due to the intense nature of the job and the extreme working environment, the shouting and verbal insults that often accompany service are as such a necessary requisite in order to maintain discipline, order, authority and control. Indeed, such kitchen banter is aimed at driving the team on and motivating the members of the kitchen brigade in an attempt to get them to perform at the requisite level in order to ultimately and of paramount importance consistently achieve and maintain a standing of quality and excellence day in, day out. Hence, it would appear that such kitchen banter is almost expected in the kitchen and as such is accepted as the norm. Indeed, according to the chefs interviewed, such kitchen banter is a means to an end in order to get the job done and as such should not be taken personally. Chef 50 makes the point:

Saturday night, there were situations here where you become a lot more vocal, and you express yourself in a way that is not necessarily the right way to express yourself. But then afterwards, you say to the boys that it's never personal; it's all down to the food, and to what you expect. ... Like I said to the boys after service on Saturday, "It's never personal. Don't take it like that." We had a guy that's only been here two days, and we got slammed on Saturday, and I suppose he got the brunt of it, not physically, but verbally, things like that, and then afterwards you have to sit down and explain it to him so he understands. He's only a 19-year-old kid, straight out of college. As much as he wants it, does he really want it? That's the question. It doesn't make it right, but that's what you have to go through. (Chef 50, 4: 9-23)

I think it is left in the kitchen. It's, "What happens in the kitchen, happens in the kitchen." In the great majority of kitchens, it isn't personal; it's a means to an end to get to where you need to get to. And actually, I think, what the great majority like, is they actually like that bit of banter, that bit of being 'in the shit', being in the trenches, somebody leading them over the trenches and getting there in the end. ... I think every environment needs a leader, and therefore whether it's a head chef, or a *sous* chef, and sometimes you can be "bad cop" and "good cop", a head chef and *sous* chef, when you get to eight-thirty, and you've got dessert checks, starter checks and mains checks, and you've got a bottleneck, you need to know who the leader of that kitchen is, and there always will be a leader in that kitchen. ... And you need to be able to lead them through that, get them over the trenches and get to the end. Any good chef has been in those trenches and been in the crap now and again. (Chef 17, 10-1: 5-13)

The above quote is particularly interesting for a myriad of reasons, not least as it highlights from a cultural point of view the often diametrically opposed roles of the head chef and *sous* chef (or vice versa) in terms of 'good cop/bad cop' (a psychological tactic often used by police for interrogation) with regard to their behaviour towards the members of the kitchen brigade. Furthermore, according to the chefs interviewed, these

roles are to a certain extent almost expected in the kitchen and as such are accepted as the norm.

As highlighted in Chapters 2 and 5, the identity of chefs is rooted in social interaction and derived from the socio-cultural practices of their occupational group (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Bourdieu, 1990; Burkitt, 1994), as chefs are socially compelled to act out formal roles and behaviour, whilst norms, beliefs and attitudes are perpetuated through occupational socialisation (Saunders, 1981a, 1981b; Balazs, 2001, 2002). In a manner which recalls Goffman's (1959) discussion of impression management Saunders (1981a, 1981b) highlights the formality of both the authority system and the roles and behaviour of the social actors themselves, by pointing to the case of the head chef who, to prove his/her identity, is *expected* by the brigade members to act in a traditional authoritative manner and to purposively generate conflict or expressing resentment and contempt towards the waiters/waitresses, who are traditionally seen as unfairly taking the credit for chefs' hard work (see Whyte, 1948, 1949). As Saunders (1981a, 1981b) argues, the degree to which cultural norms are ingrained in chefs' behaviour is further illustrated in brigade members' tacit acceptance of head chefs' volatile, aggressive and tyrannical behaviour. Similarly, Balazs's (2001, 2002) observations that the character traits of head chefs and *sous* chefs are diametrically opposed, seems to suggest that both head chefs and *sous* chefs derive their identity from enacting their respective roles (in accordance with impression management, as described by Goffman [1959]) insofar as these character traits are *expected* of them within the occupational culture evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above).

Moreover, as highlighted in the previous quote, it is particularly interesting to note the comparison of being 'in the shit' during a busy service with that of the military analogy of being 'in the trenches'. Indeed, analogies with the military continued to flourish throughout the course of the fieldwork, not least the comparison of preparing to go into a busy service with that of the oft cited military analogy of 'preparing to go into battle'. The following quote further elaborates the point:

When the service is on, I suppose it's like the army when they're in battle, but nobody dies, and I think you've got to realise that, that nobody's shooting at

you. But it is a bit like a battle – probably practising manoeuvres – it’s a bit like a battle, I would think, but not the messiness of it: nobody’s getting shot; nobody’s getting killed, but the atmosphere. And the other trick to that is that you’ve got to make sure that the atmosphere doesn’t get so heated that the wheels fall off the wagon. You need the adrenalin, but you don’t want the crack-up. I suppose it’s a bit like the runner: you want him to pump up his adrenalin, run the fastest he can, but you don’t want to pull his hamstring. And that’s when it can boil over in a kitchen. When everything’s pumping, and then the restaurant manager comes out and is saying, “What is happening to table two? I’ve been waiting five minutes.” And then things get a bit excited. ... So you’re wanting this adrenalin, but you’ve got to try and control it, or that’s when you get the chef throwing the cleaver and all this kind of stuff – which I’ve got to say, I haven’t seen for a long time. (Chef 29, 13-4: 16-18)

As previously highlighted, due to the intense nature of the job and the extreme working environment, in order to maintain order, authority and control and consistently achieve and maintain a standing of quality and excellence day in, day out, an inordinate amount of discipline is required analogous to that of the military. Indeed, as previously stated, analogies with the military continued to flourish throughout the course of the fieldwork, most notably the oft cited comparisons with the centuries-old militaristic hierarchy that characterises the occupational culture of chefs. Chef 4 makes the point:

When you have a very good restaurant, you are selling yourself, you have a reputation to uphold, and you need to uphold that quality, and obviously maintaining that quality is not easy. It’s very demanding every day. And to be that focused and driven every day is tough. It’s not easy. And in a way, it is kind of like the army, you have your captains, your majors, your squaddies and whatever else, and it’s the same in the kitchen. It is kind of very regimented, and it has to be run that way, I’d say, for it to work as a team. In a way you have the same obviously in an office, but in a kitchen, I’d say everyone is more close because you are working really with each other, and you depend on every single person. Because if one person fucks up something, the whole kitchen

goes down, without a doubt. If one person is not working to their ability, the whole kitchen will suffer, and then the restaurant will suffer as well. That is the sort of challenge day in, day out that everyone, no matter what their position, has to work to their ability, because otherwise it all sometimes goes disastrously wrong. (Chef 4, 8: 4-16)

Basically, the age old problem was that people tended to be a bit thick, maybe, when they went into the industry, apart from at the top end; but the *commis* and whatever, the underlings as they were, and the KP's [kitchen porter], they need to be organised; hence why there is that structure to the kitchen: the *commis* chefs, *chef de parties*, junior *sous*, senior *sous*, head chefs, and I think it is that sort of style. And it's like having your squaddies, basically, then your officers, your majors, whatever, and it's not dissimilar. If you're organising something, it can be a massive function, it can be a small party, whatever, but if you don't get your *mise en place* and you're prepared for it, as it were to go into battle, then the whole thing is going to go pear-shaped. So there has to be a certain amount of discipline – especially chefs. They're just like caged animals, mostly. (Chef 46, 8-9: 21-6)

As highlighted in the previous quotes, the centuries-old militaristic hierarchy that characterises the occupational culture of chefs is deeply embedded in kitchen culture and the rigidly hierarchical nature of the kitchen brigade. According to the chefs interviewed, while the formal hierarchy of the *partie* system may be more flexible than in previous decades, the militaristic hierarchy of the kitchen brigade is still, albeit to a lesser extent, prevalent in today's kitchens as there is a need for structure and discipline in order to maintain order, authority and control. As previously highlighted, these are requirements due to the intense nature of the job and the extreme working environment (i.e. consistently executing each and every dish to an exact standard of quality and excellence day in, day out, under severe temporal constraints, in a highly pressurised and stressful environment). Hence, such military organisation and the highly regimented nature of the kitchen brigade are understood by all the members of the kitchen brigade as a *sine qua non* in the kitchen, something that keeps them performing as a team in order to

ultimately and of paramount importance consistently achieve and maintain a standing of quality and excellence day in, day out. The importance of the team and the interdependency that exists between the members of the kitchen brigade is illustrated by the fact that they have to rely on each other to get the job done. Indeed, it is teamwork that dictates success or failure on a daily basis. Thus, members of the kitchen brigade are highly aware of the importance of their role and place within the team. The hierarchical nature of the kitchen brigade is thereby pivotal in the transference and reinforcement of the occupational culture of chefs. To be a member of the kitchen brigade is to abide by the rules and regulations of the kitchen hierarchy and the behavioural norms of the group. Overall, the highly regimented and rigidly hierarchal nature of the kitchen brigade that characterises the occupational culture of chefs thereby constitutes another social construct that defines and reinforces the occupational identity and culture of chefs. The following quotes clearly further illustrate the point:

I think there's a huge correlation between the two. And the fact that your rank definitely signifies a certain amount of respect. Obviously, you have to earn respect, but also a *commis* is not going to start back-chatting a *chef de partie* or a *sous-chef* because that guy's earned that position, and that's his responsibility, so he does as the *sous-chef* tells him, and I suppose it's the same in the Army. I don't really see that many other industries where it's that segregated – sure, there's bosses and employees in every industry, but not to that degree, I don't think, not in that many degrees of separation through the chain of command, sort of thing. (Chef 1, 7-8: 20-2)

It's all to do with fucking ranking. And whatever happens, it always goes down the rank, and the poor bloke at the fucking end of it, the *commis* that's actually done nothing fucking wrong, gets roasted all day long – not by me, but I'll roast the chef, the chef will roast the fucking *sous-chef*, and the *sous-chef* will find some sort of reason, even if the *commis* hasn't even touched it, he's going to get it for something. (Chef 40, 22: 2-6)

Indeed, as highlighted in previous quotes, the concept of ‘respect’ for an individual’s rank in the kitchen hierarchy is often spoken about in terms of being essential in the functioning of the kitchen, as the following quotes make clear:

The *commis* in that section are the ones that are taking the shit off the *chef de partie*. But if something goes wrong with that section, it’s the *chef de partie* that generally gets it in the ear from the chef. So, it works on rank, really. You get it anyway if you’re a *commis*. It’s all down to respect again. If you’re the *commis*, you just shut up and get on with it and you learn and you just have to go through that. There’s no other way. (Chef 22, 16: 3-10)

This industry is basically built on respect. You have to have respect in the kitchen, the amount of abuse some of the lads take. I can remember Marco, [Marco Pierre White] he used to stand at the *passé* – Marco didn’t pick on individuals, he picked on the whole brigade – but it was your turn one day. You’d have it. ... And the first bollocking you have off him you take it personally, but then you soon realise, “Hang on,” the next day it was someone else, equally as nasty, the next day it was someone else, but you just take it, because you know what that bloke can teach you will sort of far outweigh just getting shouted at. And it’s respect. So the industry is built on that. (Chef 32, 27: 3-15)

Furthermore, the extent to which the highly regimented and rigidly hierarchical nature of the kitchen brigade is deeply ingrained in kitchen culture is further elaborated upon by Chef 16 in the following:

Very hierarchical world. Very, very hierarchical world. Perhaps it’s getting lesser now, it’s more based on ability than hierarchy – you do get respect. If you’re a great cook, it doesn’t matter whether you’re on one of the lower rungs of the ladder, you still get given respect these days, whereas go back a few generations or a couple of decades, you were just an arsehole until you were the one calling somebody an arsehole! And I think that’s very much the case. ... And on the assumption that, on the whole, it was a flunk-out option of a

profession – you are talking about people who are simple guys in the most part – and that kind of mentality just becomes part of how you operate, and so you get battered, battered, and battered, and battered, and you climb a little bit, but when you start to then attain a position of authority, even if it's relatively low down on the ladder – where you're sort of look after people – that is the kitchen mentality: you give people hard time, “That's shit!” There's no other profession I don't think – you go into an office, it's not, “That's shite! You're a wanker. Do it again,” it's, “Actually, what we need to do is this.” It is beginning to change, but I mean very much beginning to change. And so I think it had become completely ingrained in the kitchen mentality that that was the way that you operated; your position of authority you conducted yourself in a hard, authoritarian way rather than: discipline, and motivate, and communicate, and delegate, it was all just, bang! “That's shite!” or, “Do it again.” (Chef 16, 2-4: 22-2)

I think chefs are still pretty much lumped into the category – sort of fairly – of being hard, disciplined, pretty tyrannical, often abusive, leaders at the top of a long ladder that they have had to climb themselves being abused, and having to work like dogs all the way from the bottom of that long ladder. Go back a generation or two cooking was not something that was seen as anything remotely either cool or ambitious; it wasn't a respected profession, catering, full stop. Quite a lot of the recruitment at the bottom level into colleges was young people; a lot of them hadn't completed their education; it was a cop-out profession, so it was sort of full of quite a lot of – I'm not trying to be sort of harsh here – but quite a lot of riff-raff. And I think run by, in the old days, the real old school kind of head chefs who were very much about being the top dog. You are the top dog, you've earned your position in your little hotel out in the country wherever you are, or big hotel in London, and now I'm going to give back a lot of – even though it might be subconscious – a lot of what I got given on the way up. It does give rise to a very particular kind of environment, really. Although it is changing, it is now a respected profession, an admired profession – not everywhere, but certainly the front line of it is – and so it's attracting a lot of people who might not otherwise have given it a second thought, and now think,

“God, actually I love cooking, and actually, yeah, it’s a great profession, and I’m going to go into it.” A lot of brighter people are coming into it; far more ambitious people are coming into it, so I think they’re rising up to the top end of it. So I think the big wide world has begun to see a slightly different kind of chef. But there’s no two ways about it: they’re still, I think, seen as being, hard, leery, foul-mouthed – there’s always aspects of that – they’re pretty much spot on. (Chef 16, 1-2: 6-4)

As highlighted in the previous quotes, it is particularly interesting to note that despite the previously highlighted evident elevation of the status and standing of the occupation and the new found respect and recognition afforded chefs themselves, the perception of the outside world with regard to the image of chefs is still somewhat spontaneously associated with the deeply ingrained archetypal cultural stereotype of the aggressive, authoritarian, tyrannical, temperamental, volatile, violent and abusive chef. Chef 8 further elaborates the point:

I suppose people always think of chefs as hot-headed, aggressive, violent, foul-mouthed. ... I must admit, in my early part of my career, when I was first taking charge of a kitchen, I used to be like that. I used to be completely off my nut at the stupidest thing, and throw things, and kick things, and be a complete prat. But that was because I’d worked for probably two of the most violent chefs that have ever been in the UK, so I saw they got results by doing it that way. I’d also worked for very timid chefs that also got results, I must add, but the dominating guys for me were the ones that were aggressive, and the big personalities and the big mouths. So I suppose I thought that was the way to do it. ... Working in those kitchens I was lucky enough to be, I suppose, good enough not to take the batterings, and not to take any real bollockings, and not to take any violence. I saw plenty of people that weren’t good enough that did take a lot of shit, and that was wrong, but at the time, it’s such a regimental sort of atmosphere – it’s like the Army. If you’re getting a beating, or you see someone getting a beating, they deserve it because they’ve done wrong. Now you look back at it and think, “Fucking hell! That is wrong.” No-one deserves a beating for putting a carrot in

the wrong place, or getting something out the fridge when it's not meant to come out the fridge or something like that. It's very wrong. But it's such a different world. ... But, you accept all of it. You accept the punishment. ... Back then, it was like, "You will take your discipline, no matter how extreme it is, and you'll shut up," because at the end of the day, we had utmost respect and admiration for who we were working for, and obviously everybody wants to be like someone, and then hopefully you move on and be your own person, but you have to start somewhere. (Chef 8, 1-4: 16-10)

I think to a certain degree, 90% of the kitchens I've worked in have been run by fear, and I don't think that's a bad thing, because, for me, anyway, it kept me on my toes and you try and do your best because you know you don't want to let the team down and yourself down. I think fear, to a certain degree, is a powerful thing, and it can drive a lot of people, but it can also go the other way where it works against you. And that fear, people today, I don't know if they can deal with that. ... Because people don't want to go through that anymore. I think times have changed, and I think that's one of the reasons why people aren't coming into the trade. ... I've had it done to me, but you learnt to accept it then – taken in the fridge and given a good beating because you'd fucked something up. ... It didn't do me any harm, let's put it that way. ... It was just a case of, I made a mistake, and I suppose it was classed as the norm. ... I suppose it hasn't done me any harm, let's put it that way, but I suppose you know not to do it to other people. (Chef 50, 7-8: 16-24)

I think a lot of people have turned the corner and realised that you don't get the best out of someone if you beat the shit out of them every day. It's the other way, if you nurture them, and nice to them, and look after them; you get much more out of a person than beating the shit out of them. But I was brought up like that. When I was at *Anonymous*, their whole philosophy in the kitchen was you bring a boy in who thinks he knows a bit, and you just kick all that out of him, so he thinks he knows nothing. So he thinks, "Oh, fuck, I don't know anything. I'm fucking useless." And then they start building you up as they

want you, so you become part of their empire and how they want it. You become a machine for them, really. That was a lot of the philosophy of the big, big restaurants. That's what they do. (Chef 23, 10-11: 20-5)

The aggressive and violent nature of induction into the catering industry for young, new recruits is shown here as being the result of imitation on the part of more senior, higher ranking chefs – these chefs in turn imitating the behaviour learnt from and handed down by their superiors during their time as new recruits.

Drawing upon the work of Anthony P. Cohen (1982, 1985, 1986) (see Chapter 2), it also becomes clear that chefs derive a sense of belonging and similarity with their peers, by collectively constructing and embracing a front of similarity through shared symbols and other markers of identity which communicate what 'being a chef' means (Barth, 1969; Cohen, 1982, 1985, 1986; Palmer, 1998).

The literature has helped identify a few of the cultural symbols which denote chefs' belongingness and occupational enculturation, such as the quality and quantity of their (own) kitchen knives, their ability to chop rapidly and efficiently (Saunders, 1981a, 1981b; Fine, 1996a) and their knowledge of French service and French phrases (Saunders, 1981a, 1981b). Although no other symbols or rituals have been identified in the literature, the existence of a few kitchen myths has however been acknowledged, notably with reference to violence and bullying (Johns and Menzel, 1999; Wood, 1997, 2000).

However, although anger outbreaks have been identified by several authors as cathartic, coping strategies for chefs and cooks to reinforce the temporary independence of an individual or that of the kitchen as a whole (Chivers, 1972) or to regain control over extreme temporal conditions (Fine, 1990), it can be argued that there is nevertheless a risk that the cultural stereotype of the creative, volatile and temperamental chef (which Saunders [1981a, 1981b] also alludes to) leads to a situation where violent behaviour is expected and institutionalised (Wood, 1997, 2000).

Similarly, Johns and Menzel (1999) in their discussion paper (based on limited qualitative data) which explores the attitudes and perceptions of chefs to the phenomena of kitchen violence and bullying, demonstrate that kitchen culture continues to exhibit a number of popular myths linking violence with culinary art and the cult of the

individual, whilst turning violence and bullying into a necessary part of the kitchen environment, and a test of worth or a rite of passage towards ‘chefdom’ for trainees. Indeed, however disastrous the consequences, it can therefore be argued that from a cultural viewpoint, chefs are able to derive a sense of identity by embracing and perpetuating the myth of the creative and violent chef. The myth is further reinforced by the fact that the chefs who make it to the top of the profession are often the ones who have willingly endured harsh working conditions and mistreatment, as highlighted by Pratten (2003b) and other biographical/journalistic evidence.

It is particularly interesting to note that throughout the course of the fieldwork, discussions with the chefs revealed that this violent and aggressive means of induction is often regarded as being analogous with the means of induction to the military. In both the catering industry and the military, the same notions exist of ‘building’ a functioning member of a unit by means of the initial removal of their previous behaviour patterns, followed by the subsequent rebuilding of these behaviour patterns to conform to those required by the organisation. In this way, both in the catering industry and in the military, once they have been through this process, an individual can be relied on to perform the correct actions in the correct manner at the correct time, to a far higher degree than individuals who have not endured this type of induction. In the words of Chef 43:

When you’re a head chef and you have a *commis* in here, it’s a bit like having a new Private and you want to sort of bring them down to your level, strip them completely naked of their – humiliate them, like a Sergeant Major would in the barracks to a new recruit who’s not even put on his khaki uniform. Basically it’s a form of cruel indoctrination, I suppose. Then you rebuild him up. (Chef 43, 4: 12-6)

You knock them down and build them up, then knock them down and build them up. I have had it done a lot – a lot. *The Manoir [Le Manoir Aux Quat’ Saisons]* was a prime example. I got ridden for about six months by the senior *sous-chef*. ... He rode me every day – every day. But that’s the way it was then. ... To a certain degree you do that – you do do that, but then you’re

playing with people's minds then, and that's a completely different thing. A lot of this game is all about mind games as well. You get inside people's heads, don't you, or people get inside your head. One word can just spark something off, and you start thinking about, "Oh, what does that mean? ... Those mind games can then push people out. That's another way of doing it. Or it can drive you on, spur you on. Or the other thing is that you take it completely out of context when they haven't really meant that at all. And that's the other thing. But nine times out of ten, people do do it for a reason, and that reason is to sow a seed inside your head, whether it's good or bad, or whether they want to get rid of you. It works both ways. That's happened in a few kitchens that I've worked in in London. They will say one word, and it will make you think, "Right, I'm not going to let them beat me or the situation beat me," or, "It's beaten me and I'm going to fuck off now." (Chef 50, 23-5: 15-6)

I think it's a form of brainwashing. Marco [Marco Pierre White] is a real Svengali when you work for him. His techniques were very similar to brainwashing. ... Basically, 99 times out of 100, he'd bollock you, but that one time that you did something right, he would look at you and say, "That's all right, that is," basically, you'd feel like it had made your week, your year, what have you. You were always in a very highly emotional state when you were working with Marco. And because it was so hard, and he made what he called perfection so hard to achieve, and you knew it all the time that it was so difficult, that when you actually achieved something that he was happy with, you really felt like you'd achieve something, because he's your teacher, he's the one you're looking up to, he's the one who's telling you that you're shit a hundred times a day – you'll never be anything, he'll chuck you out of the kitchen, "Fuck off! I don't ever want to see you again," and the next minute he'd send somebody else out, "Go and get him, tell him to peel that sack of potatoes," and then, "Bring him back," "Sack him," "Bring him back," "Tell him to go and work at the McDonald's," and basically it was constant, constant, constant. ... But everybody was brainwashed. (Chef 9, 9-10: 12-4)

As highlighted in the previous quotes, also prevalent is the manipulation of lower ranking staff through psychological bullying. It could be argued that this is a means by which the absolute authority of the head chef is firmly established and ingrained in the minds of their charges. This then leads to the lower ranking subordinate becoming obsessively driven to perform to the unreasonably high standards set by their superior, thereby driving the highest possible level of performance. However, this may well be achieved at the cost of the psychological well-being of the individual, as the following quotes clearly illustrate:

Some chefs do have the attitude that you come in and it's a military way of doing it, where you completely deconstruct somebody and then build them up again. And some people need that level of intelligence where they will walk over hot coals for you; they'll do whatever you tell them to do. ... It can be much, much more subtle than that. ... It can be much more subtle where you just undermine somebody all the time. You completely erode their confidence to the point that you're destroying them, and not just in an immediate respect. That can last a long, long time. I've seen guys come into kitchens and spending two, three months and never go back again. It's not for them. But I think once you get to a certain level, it's a very, very, very easy environment to abuse somebody, as the military is. (Chef 47, 6-7: 4-17)

You're put through some psychological fucking torture for a long time, especially if the chef doesn't like you. It can be an absolute fucking harrowing bollocking they can go through. I've seen people being just screamed at for two hours in kitchens, called fucking everything. *Anonymous*, when I was a young chef training under him, would call people, "Fucking shit! Your mum and dad must be fucking embarrassed by you, you're fucking nothing, you should fucking slit your wrists." ... Just totally like that for two hours, right through fucking service. (Chef 10, 22: 9-6)

I've seen that cloth-flicking thing done in a disciplinary sense, and that is awful because then you're whipping somebody. I wouldn't be proud of anybody in

my kitchen – and I have sacked people for doing that, a sous-chef for whipping somebody and constantly shouting and calling them names and stuff. I just couldn't stand it. Once I'd done that, I got everybody together and said, "I'm never, ever going to work with that again." For me, it was like a bit of a landmark I think, because it's something that I had put up with for years because I thought that's the way that it is in kitchens, and it's not – it's not. And you can show your displeasure without being violent or that harsh, really. Because all you're doing when you're telling somebody that they're crap all the time, you're undermining their confidence. ... And some of them come in with no confidence at all, they're scared stiff. (Chef 9, 5-6: 20-6)

I might say, "Look, just get your head down and get on with your work," but that's not calling someone a "cunt" 50 times, or saying things about their parents, stuff like that, or whipping them with a cloth, or flicking them with a palette knife – burning them. I've seen it all happen. And I suppose at the height of that, it made me feel the least proud of my industry and the least proud of being a chef. There was a time, it's not so bad now, but two or three years ago, chefs automatically thought that that was part of their job criteria, that they had to be able to bully and abuse; and if they couldn't bully and abuse, then they weren't a great Marco Pierre White or a Gordon Ramsay, they weren't a proper, complete chef, and that's rubbish. I think it was taught. I worked for Marco [Marco Pierre White], and I came out of Marco's kitchen, that was what I was taught. I was taught you had to be as hard as boot nails and you had to bollock somebody 20 times a day, and you had to make their life hell in order for them to be a proper chef. He taught me that it was character building, and all the same old. It was just brainwashing, really, and I had to work out for myself that's not the way to do it, and I think a lot more people in the future will work that out for themselves when they've stopped going through chefs. ... I used to have a really high staff turnover. When I had *Anonymous* in Leeds, I turned over 100 chefs in the first year, and new chefs coming in used to get a number – they didn't even get a name. Everybody thought it was hard core, and the SAS of kitchens, and it got us a real reputation in the industry; it got me a big reputation as a ball-breaker; and

at the time, when you're a young lad, you think, "Oh, I'm hard," and it feels great, but it's all bollocks, because all you're doing is paying advertising costs all the time, agency fees all the time, teaching, re-teaching, teaching, re-teaching, making your own life a misery and all for what? So people think you're a bit hard core. So, it's all wrong that. And some of my best friends are still doing it. ... People can't retain information either if you're shouting and screaming and bleating at them. It's a bad learning environment. I've worked in kitchens where people have literally been stood on their section in tears, blokes crying. The sort of mental abuse and physical abuse that I've seen people take is really, really bad, especially in some of the more upmarket kitchens. However, I don't think that it is as rife as it was in the 90s. ... But you hear stories from people that worked in certain kitchens, and if you believe what you hear, then it's still pretty bad. But then there's some sort of sick pleasure that people get out of saying, "Oh, I worked here and he used to whip me every day, and he used to stick a knife in me," and all this carry on. For some reason, they like it. (Chef 9, 2-5: 25-4

It is particularly interesting to note that the intimidatory and violent behaviour and the resultant physical and mental damage caused, and symptoms exhibited, are likened to those of Battered Child Syndrome²¹. The symptoms of poor self-image, anger, rage, anxiety, fear, depression and substance abuse, can all exist in cases of Battered Child Syndrome and can also be observed in chefs and members of the kitchen brigade alike who have been subjected to these various psychological and physical bullying techniques. As in cases of children who have suffered abuse, these symptoms can present themselves immediately, or can emerge after a protracted period of time, or may never emerge to a significant degree, dependant on the psychosocial make-up of the individual concerned. Chef 38 makes the point: 'It's like because they were bullied. They were bullied, and they became bullies themselves. And they will bully other people, those people that get bullied. It's a vicious circle' (Chef 38, 79: 17-9). The following quotes clearly further elaborate the argument:

²¹ Battered Child Syndrome refers to injuries sustained by a child as a result of physical abuse usually inflicted by an adult caregiver who can be a parent or custodian. It is a form of child abuse. The phrase battered child syndrome was first used by Dr. Henry Kempe and his colleagues in 1962 in an article entitled 'The Battered Child Syndrome,' which appeared in the Journal of the American Medical Association (see Kempe *et al.*, 1962).

I think the people that kind of last within those environments are the ones that are a little bit battered child syndrome or have copped that abuse before and they can tolerate that and they think it's the rigour of a Michelin-starred restaurant to be fucking screamed at, and have stuff thrown at you. (Chef 10, 48: 18-21)

I think you can look deeper than that and look where they've come from. You can almost analyse them as people. Marco [Marco Pierre White] and Gordon [Gordon Ramsay] both come from broken backgrounds, tough backgrounds, where they've had to survive, and what they are doing in the kitchen is surviving, and that's the way they do it. Marco comes from a broken home, well, his mother died, and you've got Gordon comes from a broken home, his dad was an alcoholic and beat him and stuff like that. This is survival, and what they're doing is surviving. ... They're both from council estates, rough backgrounds. ... And you find a lot of chefs come from backgrounds like that, I think. (Chef 19, 73-4: 8-1)

I've been exposed to it on numerous occasions in different places. ... I've worked with chefs that are continuously giving you shit. ... I know a lot of chefs that are sort of not head chefs that have worked with chefs and it rubs off on them, and they think it's acceptable. ... The reason why Gordon Ramsay or someone like that could be an arsehole when he was in the kitchen is because he had a queue of people out of the door waiting for a job, and he knew that. He knew that. He didn't need to be nice, because he had a load of people. The people that come in knew that they had to keep in line, or otherwise they'd be gone next. ... I've had instances where even chefs have said to me, "When you're in my position you'll be able to be like I am." And I'm thinking, "I wouldn't want to be like you are". But you say that to the right person it gives them the sort of hundred per cent sort of yes to be an arsehole. It means you need to be like me and be an arsehole. And you see it so much. Even the mannerisms, and the way they do it. (Chef 19, 49-51: 12-16)

I can tell, if I interview a guy from one restaurant that I know has got a bit of a reputation for being like that, and you can tell without even knowing where

they've worked, when you speak to people, if you work with people, you can know who trained them, without a doubt. So if I got someone came in and I didn't know where he'd worked before, and he started working for me, by the way he works and he acts, I could probably tell from where he'd been before, I reckon, without a doubt. It's just the way they behave, and it's the way that they work, and you know how certain kitchens work and run, and you've got some kitchens where people you're nurtured and you're brought up, and there are other kitchens where they beat the shit out of you and bring them up. ... And you can tell that from people. And I've had many people here, they come in, and they work for you, and they're lovely when you first meet them, and then you suddenly think, "Oh, shit!" It's like being abused as a kid, isn't it. If you were abused as a kid, it tends to rub off in the rest of your life, doesn't it. So if you've been put through these really nasty sort of situations, that rubs off on you, and you will tend to be like that for the rest of your career. (Chef 23, 11-2: 19-20)

I think they think that's the way it should be done. I actually think it's inbred. ... It was the norm 20 years ago. They'd go on to lead that kind of kitchen. They'd probably come from that type of kitchen. ... What do they say about a bullied child? (Chef 45, 27: 3-13)

I think it's a battered child syndrome. Gordon [Gordon Ramsay] worked for Marco [Marco Pierre White], Marco fucking kicked the shit out of Gordon; Marco worked for Pierre Koffman and for Raymond [Raymond Blanc] and got the shit kicked out of him, for Albert Roux, who used to totally annihilate him, so it's all been passed down through the line; and Marcus Wareing had the shit kicked out of him from Gordon for the first four years working at *Aubergine*, and that's been passed down, and they all think that's the rigour of running a Michelin-starred kitchen, they all think that you have to go through blood, sweat and tears. (Chef 10, 24: 7-14)

As with other occupations traditionally regarded as trades, the occupation of chef also suffers from the problem of its occupational members being trained solely in its

technical and creative aspects, with little or no attention being given to interpersonal or management skills. This can be viewed on the same basis as a master craftsman teaching an apprentice whereby the specific skills required to produce the end product are passed from master to student, but little or no attempt is made to educate the student on any other aspects of working within the occupation. This means that the student is left with little or no guidance in relation to the management of, training of and interrelationship with others, causing them to, in many cases, make bad choices as regards these aspects of their behaviour and countenances poor management as part of the occupational culture. Chef 15 further elaborates the argument in the following:

I'm not saying I'm whiter than white, but I've learned from my own mistakes because I didn't know better. Because, ethically, chefs were not trained, and that's a big, big problem. In the past, chefs were chefs, they were craftsmen, well, let's say they were preparing food, but they were not prepared to manage people, nor were they prepared to manage a business as such. ... So, effectively, I won't blame the chefs as such for a particular culture, it's a lack of training. ... By training, I'm talking about training a young man to be first a craftsman, then immediately teach him to teach. ... It perpetrates a whole era of abuse. I've seen too many of these young chefs messed up, completely messed up, not even daring to touch food because they were so fucked up by these darn whores which perpetrate violence, whereas it's not necessary at all. And if you see the training that each of my young chefs here will receive, from the moment you come in you are cared for, and I mean *cared for*. And I'm not talking about a nursery, of course. ... There's a whole complete training programme. So we'll do an assessment on his taste, on his skills, on his ability to communicate, and so on, and then we'll create a whole training programme for that young man or young person to grow as a manager, to grow as a craftsman, to grow as a trainer, etc. ... So I want to go away from that culture of abuse. I want to go away from that culture of violence. It's not necessary. You can be tough, and it's tough enough believe me to work in a kitchen without adding that extra pressure to mistreat people. It's simply because it's allowed, because there is a milieu which almost invites this type of behaviour, which is not sanctioned, which is not disapproved of. ...

Some of my chefs, of course, have done a lot of anger management courses. Because it's not easy, you're under so much stress. So that means we've got to teach some of these young people how to handle it. The environment that you see usually a great deal of violence, are an environment which basically do not have training. They're not promoting knowledge; they're not promoting human interaction. ... You don't need that other layer of abuse on the top; we don't need that – for me. But it's been there for a long, long time, and whether it is French cuisine, or English cuisine, it's very much all over the place. Although here lately in England, that's quite new, because in the past, chef got a bit drunk on the *passé* and didn't give a shit anyway because creativity was unnecessary. ... There was no real violence at the time because there was no pressure. But once you put creativity into an environment, then you put a form of density which is lots of energy, and that needs to be managed. So when *nouvelle cuisine* came along, that's when really violence became much more obvious, because chefs were in charge the creative side was what could differ, and the quality and the greatness of the restaurant. ... So violence became even more so rife, because suddenly the chef was in control not only of the food costs, but the wage costs and so on, but also the creative force of the house. And to manage all that together, believe me, needs training, and that's part of it that often chefs have not received such a training to deal with that enormous amount of stress. They've just been taught how to cook, and of course cooking is so much more than that. (Chef 15, 7-12: 1-1)

There's a bit of man management; there's a bit of leadership; there's a bit of showing by example; there's a bit of communication. You've got a strong opinion of what is good and bad and ugly and what you really want, but, whoever taught us? Whoever taught us the communication skills? Whoever taught us to teach a youngster? You learn it, or you don't. ... It's that give and take, and showing, and trying to impress what you want on other people that, for some chefs – me included – is difficult. (Chef 28, 17: 8-17)

Chefs ain't got no management skills have they. Where would you learn that? All you get it off is the blokes you've worked for, and if they're animals, you're going to be an animal. I've taken on the personalities of the blokes that I've worked for. (Chef 40, 107: 1-6)

To be honest with you, it was very fashionable to be a tyrant. The more angry you was, the more aggressive you was, the better the food should have been. ... And it does rub off on you, that's the worst bit about it, is it rubs off on you, and you take that in, and you think, "This is the way it should be," and you're searching for perfection, and you're pushing people to the actual limit, but is it about that, I don't know. (Chef 40, 5: 1-10)

The reality of that is that chefs, some of them, aren't particularly well-educated, and the environment can be quite aggressive when you're shouting. There is a culture where people think to get on in this industry you need to bully people, and be downright bloody rude and aggressive to them. ... Kitchens are, and can be at times, quite daunting. For those that are in it at the time, it's part of the culture, but to say you need to be aggressive and to be hostile to get on in the industry is not true. ... But the reality is, there is this sort of bully culture, and so it attracts certain people. ... It's like saying, "Well I was abused as a child, so now I'm an adult, I'm going to abuse." Is that an excuse? Of course it's not. So industry has to wake up to the responsibility that it's faced with, and that is if you're taking vulnerable, 16-18 year-olds into the industry, you've got to protect them. They're not there to be abused because the chef's had a bad day, or because he's having a hard time with the missus, or because he's just an aggressive individual that never got it when he was young and now he's got freedom in the kitchen and everyone turns a blind eye to it. It's ridiculous. It's not acceptable. ... If someone's not doing their job, they need to be appraised, they need to be managed, and if they're not doing it right then manage them out. There's a way of doing it. Performance review: "You're not doing your job." You don't have to beat them up. I know people that have been physically beaten by certain chefs, in particular, one indeed, *Anonymous* – beaten – and the guys they haven't recovered,

they're a mess, they shake. If you're going to go into a kitchen, I'll show you how prevalent the abuse is. When their chefs walk up to their young *commis*, if the *commis* don't walk away from them or move away, you may not recognise that he's a good individual. So, if I walked up towards you, if you were working on the *passee* here – if you walk up towards me, come up towards me – if you're a certain chef, immediately the *commis* would stand away – like that – because they're used to him burning them, or hitting them, or kicking them. And you see it. If I walk up to any of my chefs, they'd stand right beside me, because I'm not going to do anything to them. ... As soon as some of these certain chefs walk up to their *commis*, the first thing the *commis* do is take a step back, because they're about to be hit. They come out of the industry, and they're good kids, and sometimes I feel like Dr Barnardo's because you're picking up the pieces, and you're saying to the kids, "Look, it's not like that," but it's too late, they're shot, they're gone. They come out, and it's almost like post-traumatic stress disorder. It's shocking – shocking. Appalling. ... And they keep hanging on, and they're like abused kids – that's what it takes to be the best. (Chef 20, 21-3: 8-21)

Indeed, issues of training, recruitment and retention (Nightingale, 1967; HCEDC, 1969; HCTB, 1989; Mennell, 1996; Rowley and Purcell, 2001; Pratten, 2003a; Pratten and O'Leary, 2007; Robinson and Barron, 2007; Robinson and Beesley, 2010), together with the lack of communication/teamwork between head chefs and hotel/restaurant managers (Shamir, 1978; Guyette, 1981, Rowley and Purcell, 2001; Murray-Gibbons and Gibbons, 2007; Bloisi and Hoel, 2008), have long been identified as challenges in the literature, although the latter may in fact be best resolved in light of an understanding of the occupational culture of chefs. For example, whilst researchers have often acknowledged the need for head chefs to acquire better management skills (Guyette, 1981; Rowley and Purcell, 2001; Pratten, 2003a; Johnson *et al.*, 2005; Pratten and O'Leary, 2007; Bloisi and Hoel, 2008), chefs' persisting lacunae may stem from cultural issues, notably the fact that the traditional guild system discourages trainee chefs from developing management skills, and the fact that the promotional process of the cooking profession emphasises the importance of technical and culinary

skills at the expense of management skills (Guyette, 1981) evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above).

Notwithstanding, according to the chefs interviewed, such violent and bullying behaviour is now deemed to be unacceptable in today's kitchens and as such is virtually obsolete. Although it was acknowledged that such behaviour was certainly seen as acceptable in the past and did occur in old school kitchens, it would appear that kitchen culture has dramatically changed over the last 15 to 20 years. Indeed, violence and bullying has all but disappeared in the kitchen as it is now perceived as being an inappropriate way of managing people and as such very few chefs can afford to treat their staff disrespectfully with beatings and overt humiliation if they want to retain their workforce. Nowadays, peer pressure and professional pride, for example, play a much more significant role than fear and aggression in the management of people. This change in culture can be seen as having come about not only as the result of changes in wider society and because of external legislative pressures, but has also been significantly affected by the unique situation the restaurant industry finds itself in, of having disproportionately wider media exposure when compared to many other industry sectors. Likewise, training the members of the kitchen brigade accordingly, so that they can be more efficient and effective amidst the chaos of a busy service, is now seen as a more attractive solution rather than resorting to violence and bullying. Nevertheless, it was also revealed that some chefs may well still be prone to resort to such behaviour and use fear and aggression as motivational factors. However, it was also highlighted that the behaviour of some chefs may well come across as being aggressive and intimidating without them actually resorting to physical abuse. Indeed, some chefs may use this as a way to instil fear in their staff to get them to perform at the requisite level in order to consistently achieve and maintain a standing of quality and excellence day in, day out. Thus, while the prevailing view may be that violence and bullying is a thing of the past, this does not mean to say that such behaviour does not still persist.

Moreover, according to the chefs interviewed, the reputation of the archetypal cultural stereotype of the aggressive, authoritarian, tyrannical, temperamental, volatile, violent and abusive chef that is deeply ingrained in the occupational culture of chefs, may well be traced back to the days when historically chefs were freely given alcohol

in the kitchen – referred to as ‘sweat pints’ in the trade – to drink during service in order to keep them going in such hot and stifling working conditions. Furthermore, it was also common practice for chefs to go to the pub and drink alcohol during their split shifts in the afternoons. Therefore, under the influence of alcohol, some chefs subsequently became aggressive, resulting in the violent and abusive behaviour that gave the occupational culture of chefs a bad reputation. The following quotes further elaborate the argument:

I’ve seen plenty of violence. ... The violence is going out. There’s very little violence now. There still is violence around in the restaurant industry, but there’s less and less violence. ... If you go back when I started 30 years ago, it was just quite common. But again, a lot of it was alcohol-fuelled. Give people in an environment where they’re sweating alcohol into the system you’re asking for trouble, and they got it. Simple as that. And forget the kitchen, put somebody in a sauna, give them four pints of lager, and let them out the sauna and see what you get. And that’s what you were doing. (Chef 29, 58: 6-19)

The facts are that 30, 35 years ago, they actually gave the cooks “sweat pints”, which was like suicide. You got people working in an environment sweating, needing liquid and you’re giving them beer. ... There was no common sense in the fact that, “Ah, just give them beer, they’ll be happy.” ... I think that’s where the impression came from about cooks. ... It made them worse. Take away the drink, forget about the drink for two seconds, and there’s natural aggression there. ... There’s natural aggression there. You give them beer on top of that, sharp knives, fryers, ovens, hot utensils, you’re asking for trouble. There was no logic behind it. It was asking for chaos and it brought it, there’s no doubt about it. But that also brought this image of off-their-head chefs. I’ve seen it. (Chef 29, 16-7: 14-5)

Alcohol I think has always been in the kitchens as far as I can see back, there’s always been the occasional alcoholic and so on. ... When I started off, you were given a couple of bottles of beer every day. That’s what you were entitled to. It was normal. ... Then they start fighting and arguing, and having things like that.

And of course, if everybody only had two beers, they would be OK. I remember when I was at *Claridges*, for example, there were 80, 90 chefs there. They used to get the beer, because a lot of them didn't like it, didn't want it, so they traded it for something else, so somebody ended up with ten or 15 bottles! And of course, they then caused the problem. I've also seen where the head chef used to hand out bottles of vodka and change in the morning just to keep them happy. (Chef 34, 21-2: 11-15)

In the days of old they would have been feeding you lager. When I did my apprenticeship, they were feeding you lager at nine o'clock at night to keep you there. They weren't paying you, so they give you lager – “sweat pints” – long, long gone. ... I'm a functioning alcoholic. If I could drink now, I would drink, and I would drink all fucking day – and I can. So I don't. Even when I'm not at work, I won't drink before seven o'clock at night, because I can, and that comes from the boozing in the old days. I'll hoof down a bottle of wine every night before I go to bed – easy. I think it was part of the culture, and you get into that part of the culture, and therefore your body and your brain thinks that's the only way you're going to get to sleep tonight. You've had a hard day, and it numbs the pain. In reality, that's bollocks. (Chef 14, 19-20: 25-16)

I think the persona also of chefs years ago – not that many years ago – that they were hard-drinking. They used to drink a lot because of the pressure, because of the whole atmosphere of the kitchen, and there were a lot of alcoholic chefs, without a doubt. And even when I came into the game, I worked with guys like that, and they'd be drinking at nine o'clock in the morning. I just think it's the whole thing of the pressure, I think it's a thing of you're around it all the time also. If you're weak inside, it's quite easy; you could go and have a swig. I don't think they do it anymore, but I'm sure they do in lesser places. But the higher profile guys don't. But I think people have got a persona – and within the industry – it's all chefs, it's work hard and play hard as well. ... I think because you're in that sort of society of really working hard, you need that to unwind as

well, so that all becomes part of it really. ... So it is known as sort of work hard, play hard as well, I would say. (Chef 23, 4: 5-25)

Notwithstanding, according to the chefs interviewed, such drinking practices no longer occur in today's kitchens as they are deemed to be unacceptable. However, while chefs are no longer allowed to drink alcohol in the kitchen during service, nor is it common practice for chefs to drink alcohol during their split shifts, there is still a certain shared drinking culture prevalent amongst chefs when they socialise and unwind. As highlighted in previous quotes, it would appear that such a drinking culture may evidence a natural propensity for self-medication, a way in which to relieve the stresses and strains that accompany the long and arduous shifts and numb the mental and physical pain that the work of a chef entails. Besides, such drinking practices may also constitute a means of letting off steam that further binds members of the occupational community together and reinforces the sense of communal togetherness, of acceptance, of fitting in, of belonging, of being part of something. Chef 23: makes the point: 'It's long, hard hours, everyone works hard, everyone plays hard' (Chef 23, 42: 7). Chef 1 states: 'There'd be all these chefs that would get a week's worth of booze down their neck in one day. And then Monday morning, we'd all roll in with a terrible hangover and some stories' (Chef 1, 15: 7-9). The following quotes further elaborate the point:

They're just like caged animals, mostly. Because they're in there, and once they're let out, they start boozing, or gambling, or trying to shag anything's that's warm! ... You're with all different walks of life, but you get on, and you work hard, you play hard. (Chef 46, 9: 5-18)

What you've got to understand though, is drinking, drugs, womanising, shagging, going off on the rampage – you've got to think that from Tuesday to Saturday, or Monday to Friday – the London boys are Monday to Friday, the outside London boys are Tuesday to Saturday, the hotel boys are 24/7, as a general rule you try and get your life into your days off, because you have no life. You have absolutely no life from a Tuesday to a Saturday. You are mine. This is it. Your life revolves around doing what we do in these four walls, and you will try and get a week's

worth of life into that Saturday night, Sunday night/Monday, and it's human nature to try and do that. ... So they all go out on the rampage – it's not unusual for them to get to bed seven, eight o'clock, nine o'clock in the morning on a Sunday, because they've just gone fucking banzai on a Saturday night when we finish at two or three o'clock in the morning; they'll drink solidly six, seven hours, get up at lunchtime after three or four hours, go on the piss again from midday right the way through until fucking two o'clock on a Monday morning. It's not uncommon for them to be on the piss for 15, 16 hours with a two-hour kip in between. Not uncommon. Because they try and get their life and get it into that little block. So much of that life is taken up with work, and then we'll try and ram as much shagging, drinking, snorting, whatever the hell they do, into those day-and-a-half, two days off. They all live the same amount of life, but they just do it over a day-and-a-half. (Chef 48, 102-3: 14-10)

It's probably like being a soldier. You do what you do for that amount of time where you very much have to do what you do, and you have to do your job, and then you get that short amount of time off, that's when you do everything that you should have done in the last X amount of time. So in that sort of Monday-to-Saturday period where everybody else might have a midweek booze-up, you do the whole lot. You have your lay-in on a Sunday, you have your piss-up on a Sunday, you might get laid on a Sunday, if you're lucky, you might even afford to have something to eat as well. And that's it. It's all done in one day, normally in a drunken stupor, whatever, and then Monday everyone swaps stories. By half-nine Monday morning, everyone's too far 'in the shit' to worry about everybody else's stories, and that's it, the week starts again. (Chef 1, 16: 11-20)

Similarly, there is evidence in the work of Fine (1996a) to suggest that the extreme and unusual demands of the job (extreme heat, temporal constraints, long and unsocial hours), combined with workers' interdependency, concur to demonstrate that chefs and cooks form an occupational community. Fine (1988: 125) indeed found that the 'peak experiences' that characterise the hectic work periods (i.e. during 'service') helped chefs and cooks develop a sense of power and satisfaction, whilst reinforcing communal

links between brigade members. This is further reinforced by Fine's (1988, 1996a) observations that chefs and cooks tend to 'hang out' at the workplace or visit the workplace on a day off (see also Spradley and Mann, 1975; Shamir, 1981), and to develop strong bonds of communality both through play and humour, and through the collective consumption of alcohol at the end of their shifts evidenced in the findings of this study (as noted above and below).

As highlighted in the previous quotes, it is particularly interesting to note the comparison with other occupations, such as the military, with regard to the compartmentalised nature of the chefs' lifestyle, their lack of work-life balance and how these factors contribute to stress, thereby predisposing them to excessive behaviour. Whereas individuals in other occupations have relatively large amounts of leisure time, often on a daily basis, in which to relax, chefs have a much less regular pattern of work and relaxation. It is this stark difference between work days and rest days which can be seen as contributing to such extreme behaviour. The regimented, highly pressurised and stressful working environment combines with this compartmentalisation of lifestyle to produce the extreme hedonistic behaviour often exhibited by chefs during their infrequent periods of leisure time. Of course, the highly pressurised and stressful nature of the work is not always perceived as being a negative aspect of the occupation, as the following quotes make clear:

What happens in the kitchen, people come in and they metamorphosise into a different world. And then it all becomes about getting on to this kind of adrenalin factor, and buzz factor that keeps them kind of going for the whole day, and that's a natural kind of a buzz. (Chef 13, 22: 9-11)

That buzz of a busy service, the way that it works, the emotions, the rollercoaster ride that it goes through, and then at the end of the night, you're like, "Yeah!" That feeling – there's the feeling when you have those checks there that, "There's no fucking way I'm going to get this food out." And every chef has had them, when you look at them and you're going, "Oh, my fucking God!" ... It's a fear. It's a fear. Chefs are nervous before a Saturday night too. ... They're

waiting, and then they're waiting, and then they're waiting, and they're waiting, and then, "Check on." It's a nervous fear. It's a nervous fear. You need to have nerves though, because it keeps you going, it keeps you in there – you need to live on the edge – living on the edge makes it sound like really fucking extreme, it's not, but you can't be in a comfort zone. If you're in a comfort zone that's when it's crap, service is crap, they're not pushing themselves enough. They need to be a little bit more fired up. (Chef 3, 108-10: 23-2)

As previously highlighted, the feeling of preparing to go into a busy service is often compared to that of the military analogy of 'preparing to go into battle'. The reason for this comparison would appear to be the feelings of fear, anxiety and nervousness common to both situations and often experienced by members of the kitchen brigade on a twice daily basis. Chef 35 makes the point: 'Adrenalin will get you through it, and that's why you get so hyper. You've got like a nervous feeling inside – not nervous, but like excitement nervous feeling in your stomach, like butterfly kind of feeling' (Chef 35, 59: 4-9). The following quotes further illustrate the argument:

I get nervous every service. I'm anxious as well to get it right, and I'm nervous. And I think if I ever lost that, that's the day I'd give up. Because I think that gives you an edge to sort of doing the service and stuff. And I think to a certain extent it's what keeps you going. ... It's a mixture of anxious and nervous. ... And that probably engulfs the sort of drinking, because it's a relief, after you think, "Oh, I could do with a drink after all that sort of stress." (Chef 19, 95: 9-22)

You need the people having a bit of adrenalin. But the problem is, at the end of the service you've got this rush, and then you've got the desire that the boys want to either go out and party, or lie down in a dark corner, and you've got to manage that as well. And they can be quite emotional in some ways with the highs and lows they get. When they have had a brilliant service, they can be as high as a kite, and that's with no beer, drugs or anything. (Chef 29, 14-5: 22-5)

It is particularly interesting to note that these adrenaline fuelled states of the ‘rush’ and the ‘buzz’ and the ‘high’ of a busy service are often spoken about in the same terms as commonly used to describe the various states of intoxication through the use of artificial stimulants such as alcohol and/or drugs. The adrenaline fuelled extreme euphoric state of the ‘buzz’ of a busy service is neatly summarised by Chef 28 in the following terms: ‘It’s almost like a great big white light, everything is fucking amazing. Those moments are total achievement; those moments are the total buzz’ (Chef 28, 15-6: 22-1). Chef 40 further makes the point: ‘It’s more than a drug. There’s nothing better than that feeling of being on the stove, when you’re “in the fucking shit,” but you know you’re in control’ (Chef 40, 15: 14-6). Furthermore, according to Chef 25: ‘Because you can be really buzzing after a service or worse still, if you had a bad service, then you’ll have a drink like to calm you down, or stop you feeling mopey’ (Chef 25, 36-7: 25-2). The following quotes further elaborate the point:

I think it’s better than sex! I really do think it’s better than sex. A good service is definitely better than sex. If I have a good service, I go home and I fucking feel great. It takes you two hours to sleep. It’s a serious natural high. ... I feel adrenalin when I’m ‘in the shit’; I feel adrenalin when I’m serving great food. ... Do you get a high after a great service? Yeah, you fucking do. There’s nothing better in the world. (Chef 40, 131-2: 3-5)

It takes two or three hours to come down – for me anyway, it takes two or three hours to come down. Because you’re on a high. ... You need time; you can’t just switch off just like that. You *need* time, really, to come down. (Chef 24, 26: 19-25)

I think it’s just a release really. Obviously, you’re going through service and the buzz, or drug, if you like, and then there’s the other side of it, coming off that buzz, off that drug – a natural drug, “Oh, I couldn’t half murder a pint,” which I still say now after like a really busy night, “Oh, God, I need to go down the pub for a pint.” (Chef 8, 41: 6-9)

We wind ourselves up for that buzz of the service, and when it's all over, we're physically finished, mentally drained, and then we might go out and get pissed. We might be so hyper that we need to go and get a few lagers down us. ... Because we need to get that aggression out. Ask anyone in that kitchen there can he leave Saturday night's service, go home and go to bed? He can't. He needs an hour or two hours to come down, with or without wine, with or without drink, with or without anything, but to calm down to go to sleep. (Chef 28, 5: 6-12)

The issue of the means by which an individual deals with the aftermath of 'coming down' from these adrenaline fuelled states of the 'rush' and the 'buzz' and the 'high' of a busy service is one that can often lead to alcohol and/or drug consumption. Of course, while alcohol and/or drugs are used by individuals as coping mechanisms in other strata of society, the atypical nature of a chef's unsociable working hours, combined with the high adrenaline nature of the work, leads to the necessity for coping mechanisms not commonly seen in many other occupations. Chef 3 further elaborates the argument in the following:

I think chefs have vices; chefs have escape routes from where they're working really hard. It's an intense life. You're in before everybody else in normal jobs, and you're out after everyone has finished their normal job, they go out and come to you, and you're still fucking working. You then have a really short space to enjoy your time between say midnight and eight o'clock the next morning when you've got to be at work within eight hours. But in those eight hours, you have to get a couple of hours of downtime before you go to bed – unless you're proper knackered – and in that space of time, the quickest way to get into your own little world is to be sort of punked – there's lots of different chefs out there – there's chefs that are big fucking pot heads, dope heads – not head chefs – chefs that work in kitchens, a lot of them will smoke dope because it's an easy way to chill out the end of the night. ... There's a load of chefs that are coke [cocaine] heads. I've worked in a particular kitchen where there was eight of us on a service, and seven, apart from myself have been tooting charlie [cocaine] through service, including the head chef. ... Every kitchen I've worked in in London, there has

been people with some form of abuse problems. Alcohol, smoking dope, taking coke, doing pills, wraps of speed, all sorts of stuff. But then, is that because they're chefs, or is that because they're just a range of people? Is it a chef thing? If you took eight blokes in a work environment: eight car mechanics, eight builders, eight whatever else, and out of those eight, I bet one drinks six pints of Stella [Stella Artois] every night, another one smokes dope, another one... Maybe it's just the same thing. ... Every afternoon, I would go and read the paper in the pub and have a Coke [Coca-Cola], and the boys would drink three or four pints of Stella, and then go back to work. And then, as they went back to work – because they were on the four pints of Stella – so they weren't pissed, but they were that little bit, it could go either way, if they didn't drink another one within the next half-hour, they would all get a bit tired and grumpy, *or*, they would phone the man, who would turn up, a bit of charlie, keep them going through service, and then fuck off out to a nightclub afterwards. ... Two of them were alcoholics. One was the head chef that was an alcoholic. And the other one was someone who would drink a bottle of gin a day he had in his fridge that no-one knew about apart from me. (Chef 3, 11-4: 11-7)

You see pot use and stuff like that, but that's younger chefs and waiting staff, you see a lot of that – a lot of people in the industry smoke pot. ... You've worked hard, you can't go to sleep. You want to socialise, and you want to talk to people about day-to-day things, rather than talk about work. You just want to totally switch off, so that's why people drink, have a joint. ... The drug thing, I think it was just to get you through it really, the physical work – not to enjoy yourself – just to keep yourself going. I've seen quite a lot of amphetamine use, just to keep you awake, and to keep you at the pace you need to work. I don't think that's so true now. (Chef 8, 41-2: 19-9)

According to the chefs interviewed, the use of drugs, as opposed to alcohol, is now far more prevalent in today's kitchens. As well as being used as an aid to sleep and as a means to switch off, relax and unwind from the long and arduous working hours, drugs are also used as a pick-me-up when physically exhausted and mentally drained as a

means to keep performing at the requisite level, most notably during the intense pressure of a busy service. Chef 19 makes the point: 'The drugs get them back up again. I don't think it's as bad as it used to be. I don't think it is. ... But I think at some point during the early 90s I think it was' (Chef 19, 43: 22-5). Furthermore, Chef 2 states: 'I got told at *The Savoy* that if I were to take speed, I'd be a damned sight better cook than I was. I was openly encouraged to take it' (Chef 2, 58: 22-3). The following quotes further elaborate the point:

There is a drug element now, and especially the last ten years, certain kitchens where openly they take drugs; some kitchens where they have actually been given drugs in order to get them on a high. ... There's much less alcohol now in the kitchen than there used to be, but drugs I think is a different matter. (Chef 34, 21-2: 5-2)

Definitely coke [cocaine] is a bit of a problem at the moment – in our business, not just here. Because it's that kind of business: they go out on a high, if they're shagged out, take a blow in the afternoon – they're up for it night-time. (Chef 39, 14: 22-5)

A lot of chefs they think they just can't handle the hours and they need a pick-me-up, and then the cocaine comes in and that. ... I think it's just these few individuals that think it's necessary to actually get them through a service. (Chef 19, 46-7: 22-15)

Drugs and alcohol are completely abused in this trade. ... Drug abuse is rife in a lot of places, but I think more so now as you're getting to the top end, because this business is becoming so competitive, you just can't carry on if you do drugs. ... I think drugs is becoming less and less in the top end, more and more – becoming more professional. (Chef 44, 35-6: 22-7)

As highlighted in the previous quotes, it would appear that drug taking is still a problem in today's catering industry. Notwithstanding, according to the chefs

interviewed, such behaviour has become less and less prolific in recent years at the high-end level of professional cooking. While drug taking was certainly a problem in the past and still does occur in today's kitchens, it was revealed that the use of drugs as a pick-me-up when physically exhausted and mentally drained as a means to keep performing at the requisite level, most notably during the intense pressure of a busy service, is nowadays frowned upon and as such is uncommon. However, it was also acknowledged that some chefs, most notably among younger members of the kitchen brigade, do still take drugs as an aid to sleep and as a means to switch off, relax and unwind from the long and arduous working hours.

Nevertheless, it was also highlighted that such behaviour is now rapidly disappearing as the occupation of chef has become much more professional subsequently causing lifestyles to become more geared toward professional idioms of behaviour. The following quotes further elaborate the argument:

I don't think drug abuse is anymore an issue in catering than it is in any other walk of life. ... Drinking: I know from what I've heard off other people, a while back it was quite a problem. But whether it's just because in catering there's no way to socialise really, apart from, you finish your shift at night-time, it's normally "Right, if you catch last orders you're lucky," if not, you end up going to a late-night bar or something. Whereas other professions, you can finish, you can all meet up, you can have hobbies, you can go and play pool on the pool team, go to the gym, so I don't think we have that opportunity. But, I think cheffing has got to such a professional level now – maybe back then, because it wasn't such a profession, more of a job, whereas now people want to get on in it and want to do well, maybe they sort of discipline themselves more not to drink. (Chef 32, 56-7: 9-1)

I suppose it's a bit like football, really, it's become a bit more professional, a bit like football and rugby. Before it was like, "Have a game of football, go round the pub afterwards, get slaughtered." Even professional footballers used to be out on Friday night, in a nightclub, a few pints, playing football like three o'clock, and getting paid like 20 grand a week way back then. That's obviously

eliminated itself now because obviously the managers and chairmen won't put up with it because they're paid a hell of a lot of money and they're athletes, and they have to look after their bodies. So I suppose that has really rubbed off on cooking as well. (Chef 8, 40: 6-13)

Nowadays chefs look after themselves, they go to the gym, they eat well; they have a different culture to years ago where you would smoke, drink, in the split you'd go to a pub, have four pints, come back drunk, not give a fuck about the cooking. It's real serious. And I think what's brought that in is football. You saw the transition of football and how they became serious and super fit. At the same time, chefs got their act together, and there's a very strange kind of parallel where you saw these kind of like football stars becoming super fit, eating well, looking after themselves, grooming, and it's kind of filtered into society now. Chefs were very quick to take up on that, and now chefs do marathons, so it's all that health conscious stuff. ... And that's how it should be, because it's a profession, and it's a serious profession. (Chef 11, 6-7: 24-12)

Overall, as a result of the new found level of professionalism at the high-end level of professional cooking, coupled with the previously highlighted evident elevation of the status and standing of the occupation and the new found respect and recognition afforded chefs themselves, the occupation of chef is now held in much higher esteem by the wider audience of society at large and as such it could be argued that the occupation of chef is now perceived as a profession.

8. Research Conclusions

ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To reiterate from the introductory chapter, the research aim was to examine the occupational identity and culture of chefs in UK haute cuisine restaurants. In support of this aim, the following research objectives were met:

1. To explore the role of work in identity formation with regard to chefs, and examine their self-concept and occupational identity.
2. To examine how the occupational identity and culture of chefs is created and maintained through social structures and processes, such as the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths.
3. To investigate whether issues related to the social class, gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity of chefs influence, or are influenced by, the culture and identity of the occupational group.
4. To consider the implications of the occupational identity and culture of chefs for HRM issues, such as the recruitment, retention and training of chefs.

The following are the main research findings/conclusions reached as a result of carrying out this study.

MAIN RESEARCH FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will highlight the main research findings with regard to the social structures and processes (i.e. the kitchen ‘ideology’, symbols, rituals, rites and myths) which underpin the creation and maintenance of the occupational identity and culture of chefs and help to perpetuate a sense of cohesion, identity and belonging that defines ‘being a chef’, before making concluding statements about the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

EXTERNAL RECOGNITION TO IDENTITY – WHAT THE ‘OUTSIDE WORLD’ THINKS OF CHEFS

This section will highlight the outside world’s perception of chefs by considering the origins of the occupation and of gastronomic culture in Great Britain and Ireland. It will also highlight the reasons behind society’s negative perceptions of the kitchen environment as well as the nature of the occupation in the modern media age, before making concluding statements about the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

Firstly, the research identified the servile origins of chefs where the chef was merely a servant cooking for the house and the upstairs-downstairs culture that chefs came from, together with the centuries-old lack of status and standing attributed to the occupation in Great Britain and Ireland where the occupation was perceived as being demeaning and stigmatised, nothing more than a trade, like a builder, or a mechanic, far removed from the professional status afforded the occupation in Continental Europe. Furthermore, the research highlighted that the distinctly low status and standing attributed to the occupation in turn had a knock-on effect in terms of the archetypal person drawn towards the industry, thereby virtually pre-determining the social class and backgrounds of those entering into the occupation. It was also identified that the archetypal person entering into the occupation was perceived as being a social outcast and/or an academic under-achiever and was most likely to come from a council estate background and/or a domestic broken home, whilst the occupation itself was perceived as being a refuge for dropouts, almost a last resort, something you fell into if you were deemed at school to be a bit thick and/or somewhat wayward or difficult.

In direct contrast, however, the research revealed the perception of chefs as ‘kings’ on the Continent, in direct contrast to that of servants in Great Britain and Ireland, and the near God-like status afforded elite chefs and the widely differing status and standing afforded the occupation in other European countries, such as France, Italy and Spain, where being a chef is held in high esteem and perceived as being a highly revered profession thereby bringing respect and recognition to chefs themselves. The perception of chefs as ‘kings’ on the Continent, in direct contrast to that of servants in Great Britain and Ireland, clearly reflects the subsequent status and standing afforded the occupation from one country to another. It is evident that whilst socio-cultural attitudes towards the role and function of food, cooking and eating in society on the Continent determine the occupation to be held in high esteem and perceived as a highly revered profession, in

direct contrast, the same socio-cultural attitudes, albeit diametrically opposed, in Great Britain and Ireland, determine the relatively low status and standing of the occupation, in turn, perhaps inevitably, preventing the occupation from being perceived as a profession.

However, the status and standing of the occupation and in turn the respect and recognition afforded chefs themselves was somewhat elevated in the 1970's with the advent of *nouvelle cuisine*. The research identified that the ensuing emergence of Michelin-starred chefs such as the Roux brothers Albert and Michel Roux sr., Nico Ladenis, Raymond Blanc and Pierre Koffman thereafter undisputedly had a significant influence on cuisine in Great Britain and Ireland (see Chapter 7, Table 7.1). Notwithstanding, the research further revealed that it was the arrival on the restaurant scene in the late 1980s of a disciple of theirs, Marco Pierre White, which undoubtedly changed the face of modern British cooking and the perceived reality of the occupation and the image of chefs. Indeed, Marco Pierre White seemingly portrayed the occupation and the image of chefs as being cool and Rock 'n' Roll, thereby inspiring a generation of chefs and cooks and their quest for Michelin stars.

Furthermore, the research brought to the fore that the influence of the media in the last decade or so, coupled with the modern day culture of celebrity, seemingly glamourised the occupation and the image of chefs, portraying the image as being hip, sexy, the new Rock 'n' Roll and chefs as celebrities, subsequently elevating the status and standing of the occupation thereby bringing respect, reverence and recognition to chefs themselves. What is more, the media and celebrity culture seemingly glorified the occupation and the image of chefs, portraying the occupation as mystical and chefs as culinary magicians, thereby capturing the outside world's new found fascination with food, cooking and eating, subsequently elevating the status and standing of the occupation from demeaning stigmatised trade to aspirational vocation and perhaps even quasi-profession.

Notwithstanding, it was identified that the influence of the media and celebrity culture and the subsequent perception of the outside world with regard to the image of chefs and the occupation in general are not necessarily perceived as being altogether positive and beneficial from the chefs' point of view. Indeed, it was revealed that the media and celebrity and TV chefs tend to portray a false image of the professional chef, blurring the boundaries between reality and entertainment in the eyes of the

outside world and distorting the reality of professional cooking and what ‘being a chef’ actually means. Indeed, ‘working’ chefs actively seek to distance themselves from celebrity chefs and TV chefs, who they evidently perceive as making a mockery of and devaluing the craft thereby demeaning the occupation. In order to differentiate themselves from celebrity chefs and TV chefs ‘working’ chefs highlight their superior technical abilities, or in other words, ‘the knowledge’, thus identifying themselves as proper chefs. Furthermore, the research brought to the fore the frequently cited mantra of the ‘significant others’, that in order to be perceived as being a proper chef, a fundamental precursor to gaining ‘the knowledge’ is ‘doing your time’ and the military induced term ‘earn your stripes’, in effect earning the right to wear the chef’s uniform of chef whites and the right to be called ‘chef’. Besides, the research highlighted the existence of what are in effect internal validating mechanisms, internal to chefs that is, for determining the basis upon which self-worth and self-identity are to be formed. It was revealed that such validating mechanisms, even if informally applied, are important in terms of legitimating identity, in effect earning the right to be called ‘chef’.

Notwithstanding, the research identified that some TV chefs, or in other words, ‘celebrity cooks’, are held in relatively high regard by chefs themselves. What is more, it was revealed that the symbolically charged nomenclatures of ‘chef’ and ‘cook’ seemingly present an interesting conundrum. Indeed, it was revealed that in the upper echelons of cooking, to be called a ‘cook’ is not perceived as a derogatory term between chefs, but rather an underlying compliment, a form of respect. Besides, having earned the right to wear the chef’s uniform and the right to be called ‘chef’, some chefs subsequently distinguish themselves by understating their status. Notwithstanding, it was also highlighted that to be called ‘chef’ is also perceived as being a mark of respect between chefs.

Moreover, respect and recognition in the eyes of the outside world towards the occupation and chefs themselves is also linked with the status and standing of the actual place of work, in other words, the category of establishment. Indeed, the research highlighted that subsequent external measures of success, such as the accreditation of Michelin stars, further increase the status and standing of the restaurant and indeed chefs themselves. However, it was also revealed that such judgements are not just confined to

the outside world since chefs also categorise themselves based upon their actual place of work and external measures of success, such as the accreditation of Michelin stars.

THE CHEF'S SELF-IDENTITY – DERIVING IDENTITY FROM WORK

This section will highlight the way in which chefs derive their sense of identity from the work that they do and highlight the stereotypical dominant personality of the chef. It will also highlight the nature of the occupation as a vocation to which these chefs are called as well as the nature of the occupational community that exists in the restaurant industry, before making concluding statements about the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

What is more, the research brought to the fore the main characteristics of the chefs' identity from the chefs' point of view, in other words, how chefs' perceive themselves, that is to say, the chefs' self-identity or self-concept (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934) (see Chapter 2). Firstly, the research revealed the feelings of insecurity that chefs often experience on a daily basis and their subsequent need for praise and recognition to satisfy their egos in turn validating their sense of self-worth and self-identity. Furthermore, the research highlighted the significant emphasis chefs' place on their ability to develop their own individual cooking philosophy. Indeed, at the high-end level of professional cooking, it is deemed not only to be aspirational, but imperative, for a chef to strive to develop their own distinctly unique and subsequently identifiable culinary style. What is more, it was revealed that the nature of a chef's work at the high-end level of professional cooking is deemed to be extremely emotional and of an intimate and personal nature, analogous to that of an artist, such as a composer, or a painter.

Moreover, it was highlighted that a seemingly fundamental prerequisite of the chef's demeanour is that of the necessity to be in control. Besides, the research also revealed that an interesting characteristic of the chefs' identity is that of the chefs' subservient demeanour and their desire to please people and their need to be liked. Indeed, the very nature of chefs' work, cooking for and feeding people, enables chefs to display their technical abilities working with the high quality ingredients they handle. This in turn gratifies their desire to please and need to be liked, subsequently bringing praise and

recognition, thereby enhancing their sense of self-worth and self-identity. It is evident that respect and recognition towards chefs is based on their ability to do something out of the ordinary, something that not everyone can do. This in turn has implications for social mobility, as the ability to do something out of the ordinary, something that not everyone can do, can alter the way in which an individual is perceived by both 'self' and 'other' in relation to a society's notion of what constitutes a worthwhile and hence proper job. Indeed, the altruistic nature of chefs and the gratification of the quasi-religious notion of feeding people, subsequently affording praise and recognition, thereby enhancing their sense of self-worth and self-identity were clearly shown.

What is more, the research revealed that being a chef is much more than just a job, it is a vocation, a calling; it is sacred work involving sacrifice, pain and suffering, leaving a physical imprint upon the individual in the form of burns, scalds, cuts and scars. Such marks are the physical symbolic manifestation of chef culture. These cultural markers of chef identity illustrate the fact that being a chef has a physical as well as a psychological dimension to it. Such physical demands influence the psychological mindset that supports the individual in being a chef. A chef's disciplinary stigmata symbolises the path taken to acquire 'the knowledge'. The combination of these dynamics – physical, cultural and psychological – supports the notion that the occupation of chef is more than just a job, it is sacred work.

Furthermore, it would appear that the need for praise and recognition in order to satisfy their egos and validate their sense of self-worth and self-identity seemingly provides chefs with the necessary drive and determination to succeed. Indeed, accreditation from the internationally recognised Michelin Guide in particular is perceived as being aspirational and provides chefs with the necessary praise and recognition and subsequent status and standing they seek and constantly strive for. What is more, the need for respect and recognition and subsequent status and standing chefs seek and constantly strive for also manifests itself in the form of acknowledgement and acceptance from their occupational peer group, or in other words, 'significant others'. Indeed, winning a Michelin star brings respect and recognition from within the industry and a status and standing amongst 'significant others' at both national and international levels. However, the distinctly contrasting emotions of losing a Michelin

star and subsequent feeling of loss of respect and recognition within the industry and status and standing amongst 'significant others' was clearly shown.

Moreover, the research revealed that chefs are more than just a group of people; they are a group of people with something in common with each other which distinguishes them from other groups. In other words, they are a community of common minded individuals. As the internal validating mechanisms highlighted clearly illustrate, membership of the chef community is based upon a shared understanding of the criteria for membership, in other words, they speak the same language. It is evident that having 'done their time' and 'earned their stripes' and the subsequent right to be called 'chef', chefs share a common bond between them, a shared feeling of understanding, an affinity with one another, a sense of camaraderie and a feeling of mutual respect. It is further evident that membership of the chef community is based on the ability to do the job. If you can do the job, then you are accepted into the family. What is more, the research brought to the fore that cultural acceptance amongst chefs is global and transcends social class, gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity.

Furthermore, the research revealed that chefs not only see themselves as a community, but as a community that is very different from and largely misunderstood by the outside world. The sense of peripherality, of being on the margins of society, of not quite fitting in, of being slightly out of step with the outside world and the sense of exclusion, perhaps even self-alienation, of chefs from society and the subsequent feeling of 'us' and 'them' and 'our' world and 'their' world is clearly evident. It is evident that the psychological boundaries of the chef community are constructed by the nature of the work and the routines and tasks associated with being a chef. The nature of the work defines the worldview, the value system of the chef community. Belonging is therefore established on the basis of a shared culture. Furthermore, due to the long and unsocial hours, the working environment spills over into the social arena, thereby reinforcing belonging. Conversely, it is further evident that the sense of communal togetherness, of belonging and being part of something, seemingly provides chefs with a kind of security blanket with which to protect themselves from the outside world, a world in which they feel slightly out of step, they do not belong, they do not quite fit in.

CHEFS AND THEIR KITCHEN BRIGADES

This section will highlight the way in which chefs relate to their kitchen brigades. It will also highlight the kitchen from the point of view of familial relationships as well as how members of the kitchen brigade move between kitchens and gain their knowledge via this. It will then go on to highlight the social network of chefs, before making concluding statements about the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

What is more, the research brought to the fore the strong sense of familial kinship ties in the chefs' world and the notion of father figure and feeling of parental guidance, of looking after and caring for, of nurturing and being a teacher, and the subsequent affinity between chefs and the members of their kitchen brigades. Moreover, the research revealed that the time-honoured customary tradition of the occupation whereby members of the kitchen brigade are actively encouraged under the guidance of their chef to 'move on' to another 'house' and work for another chef with a different philosophy of cooking in order to gain 'the knowledge' as part of their personal development and culinary training is subsequently resultant in the transient, nomadic and tribal nature of the chef community. This in turn serves to reinforce a sense of identity and belongingness amongst the occupational members. Furthermore, the oft cited terms *stage* and *stagiaire* were highlighted. Ordinarily, a *stagiaire* (trainee/intern) in the restaurant industry is someone who undertakes to work for free, be it for a day, a week, a month, a year, sometimes even longer, in order to gain 'the knowledge', whilst the time spent working as a *stagiaire* is known as a *stage*. This could be seen as analogous with a trainee/intern in other professions. Indeed, it was identified that in order to gain 'the knowledge' and in turn ultimately earn the right to be called 'chef', members of the kitchen brigade spend in the region of 12 years working in 'houses' of high-standing under the guidance of accomplished chefs as part of their culinary training. It was also highlighted that the significant number of years spent by members of the kitchen brigade gaining 'the knowledge' is likened to that of the medical profession and referred to accordingly by chefs as 'doctor training'. Indeed, the 'doctor years' spent gaining 'the knowledge' in 'houses' of high-standing under the guidance of accomplished chefs is analogous to the years spent at university/learning in the field by other professions, such as a doctor, or a lawyer, who, just like chefs, also spend a

significant number of years training for their profession. The research further revealed that the transient, nomadic and tribal nature of the close-knit community of chefs in Great Britain and Ireland can in fact be traced in a culinary family tree through six degrees of separation most notably back to a select few ‘houses’ of high-standing and significantly influential chefs (see Chapter 7, Table 7.1). It was also identified that the somewhat incestuous chef community subsequently manifests itself in a close-knit international network of chefs in turn perpetuating the mutually beneficial communal practice of ‘moving on’ members of the kitchen brigade as part of their culinary training.

‘KITCHEN LIFE’

This section will highlight life inside the kitchen by considering the means by which members of the kitchen brigade relate to each other. It will then go on to highlight the different management styles used in kitchens as well as some of the less savoury aspects of kitchen life, before making concluding statements about the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

What is more, the research further brought to the fore that the close-knit community that pervades throughout the occupation and the strong sense of familial kinship ties that binds members of the occupation together manifests itself at various levels, not least throughout the kitchen brigade. Indeed, the sense of communal togetherness, of acceptance, of fitting in, of belonging and being part of something, is significantly important to members of the occupational community. Furthermore, it was revealed that membership of the chef community is based on the ability to do the job. Indeed, it may well be argued that the kitchen is a meritocracy. If you can do the job, then you are accepted into the family. Once accepted into the family, the individual joins a group with strong familial kinship ties based upon the customary traditions and shared culture that binds individual members together. This shared understanding of the means by which the title of ‘chef’ is earned, conferred and reinforced, creates a powerful bond between group members. The importance of the team and the sense of group solidarity and underlying camaraderie that exists between the members of the kitchen brigade are illustrated by the fact that they have to rely on each other to get the job done. Thus, members of the kitchen brigade tend to develop strong bonds and are highly aware of

the importance of their role and place within the team. This point is fundamentally important as it suggests that it is the importance of the team and the sense of group solidarity and underlying camaraderie that exists between members of the kitchen brigade that constitutes another social construct that defines and reinforces the occupational identity and culture of chefs. Indeed, applying Mary Douglas's (1970, 1978, 1982) theory of 'grid/group' analysis to the present study, it can be argued that, taken as a whole, the occupational culture of chefs is characterised by a strong 'group' identity and strong 'grid' dimension characteristic of tight work-groups and communities ('wolves' in Mars's [1982] terms) whereby group boundaries are strongly defined. Such interdependence, group solidarity, bonding, camaraderie and feeling of mutual respect amongst members of the kitchen brigade are clearly evident. Indeed, it was highlighted that members of the kitchen brigade rarely go sick so as not to let the team down. Likewise, they would rather carry on working through pain or injury for the very same reason. Besides, the research revealed the oft cited chefs' mantra of *never show your weakness* and furthermore identified the symbolically charged ritual of 'earning your stripes' that is synonymous in modern day kitchen folklore with Marco Pierre White. Indeed, it was revealed that members of the kitchen brigade, most notably when they are younger and working their way up through the culinary ranks of the kitchen hierarchy, deliberately burn themselves as a mark of their occupational identity. Furthermore, the research identified that it would appear that the personality type of an individual has an influence over their choice to enter into the catering industry. Indeed, this seems to be most pronounced at the high-end level of professional cooking, with strong willed, competitive and dominant individuals often seeing the most success. The 'Alpha Male' concept, in terms of a typical personality type of chefs, was revealed. It was identified that this 'Alpha Male' personality type can be seen as a prime cause of the competitive behaviour that occurs in professional kitchens. However, competition is often viewed as a healthy and desirable behaviour, often spoken about with reference to the highest achieving individuals.

Moreover, the research identified that another social construct that characterises the occupational culture of chefs is that of 'kitchen banter'. It was revealed that the friendly banter and verbal insults and the teasing and mockery and the practical jokes and pranks that go on in the kitchen between members of the kitchen brigade are part

and parcel of the everyday routine of 'kitchen life'. Indeed, kitchen banter serves several functions. As well as being used to motivate members of the kitchen brigade and to maintain discipline, order, authority and control, it is a means of letting off steam and a way of initiating new recruits. Part of this initiation may involve what can be termed initiation rites, in other words, practical jokes or pranks, mainly at the expense of young trainees. Indeed, such rites or rituals serve to reinforce the social ties, the bonds between individuals. They reveal the mechanisms by which the social structure of a group is strengthened and perpetuated, as a result of a shared understanding as to the role and value of the ritual in the bonding process. It was revealed that such initiations do carry on to a certain extent, as they constitute a way of testing new recruits before accepting them as a member of the group. However, it was also further highlighted that such initiation rites are no longer common practice in today's kitchens. Notwithstanding, it was further revealed that despite the gradual disappearance of initiation rites in the form of practical jokes or pranks, mainly at the expense of young trainees, initiation rites or rituals are still however common practice in today's kitchens, most noticeably with regard to the initiation of new recruits. Indeed, kitchen banter can also serve to exclude less physically and mentally robust members of the kitchen brigade. It would appear that given the difficulty of the job, both physically and mentally, members of the kitchen brigade tend to pursue such social customs and practices as part of a common group effort to put newcomers to the test in order to prove their worth and weed out the new recruits who are unlikely to commit to the job and fit in and become accepted as part of the team. Drawing upon such customs and practices, it can therefore be assumed that such initiation rites or rituals constitute another social construct that plays a significant role in the occupational socialisation of members of the kitchen brigade and the creation and maintenance of the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

Moreover, the research brought to the fore how issues of gender influence the occupational culture of chefs. A number of reasons why women are still under-represented in the realm of professional cooking and in the haute cuisine sector in particular were highlighted. However, it was also acknowledged that the world of chefs is very male-dominated where-in a masculine and macho ethos prevails and a large amount of testosterone-fuelled, playful sexual banter occurs, which can be an

unpleasant and intimidating working environment for women. Some of the overtly discriminatory practices that used to be commonplace a decade or so ago, and to a certain extent still are, as well as the sexist and chauvinistic attitudes that continue to prevail in professional kitchens were also highlighted. The perdurability of sexist and chauvinistic attitudes in the haute cuisine sector was found to be reflective of the phenomenon described by Leidner (1991, 1993) whereby gender segregation reinforces the belief/assumption that non-traditional members (women in this instance) do not possess the traits necessary to perform the roles (see Chapter 5). Indeed, the research revealed that males (and seemingly perhaps even females) are likely to reject women if they believe that the latter are unable to become full members of the group because of their inability/reluctance to do everything that men can. It is also argued that the military-inherited traits that permeate the occupational identity and culture of chefs may account for the perduring hierarchical structure and male management style that characterise modern professional kitchens, whilst contributing to a masculine and macho ethos which continue to alienate women. Although the perpetuation of a macho culture in the realm of professional cooking, may be understood as a deliberate strategy to exclude women from the occupation (see Acker's [1990, 1992] theory of gendered organisations) (see Chapter 5), the research revealed that that women *can* be accepted by male chefs and cooks, as long as they are prepared to embrace the occupational culture in its masculine expression and accept and mirror patterns of male bonding and behaviour and become 'one of the boys'.

Moreover, the research brought to the fore that to be a chef at the high-end level of professional cooking requires passion and drive, to continuously strive to achieve and maintain a standing of quality and excellence day in, day out. Indeed, to consistently execute each and every dish to an exact standard of quality and excellence day in, day out under severe temporal constraints, in a highly pressurised and stressful environment, requires the utmost discipline analogous to that of the military. It was also highlighted that it would appear that the shouting and verbal insults that often accompany service are more or less a *sine qua non* in the kitchen, insofar as due to the intense nature of the job and the extreme working environment, it is a necessary requisite in order to maintain discipline, order, authority and control. Hence, it would appear that such kitchen banter is almost expected in the kitchen and as such accepted as the norm and ingrained in

the occupational culture of chefs. Thus, the shouting and verbal insults, in the same way as the friendly kitchen banter, constitutes another social construct that defines the occupational culture of chefs. This behavioural norm is also analogous to the military, especially in the sense of the stereotypical Sergeant Major using the same techniques on his charges in order to achieve the same behavioural outcomes. Besides, the research identified the often diametrically opposed roles of the head chef and *sous* chef (or vice versa) in terms of ‘good cop/bad cop’. Furthermore, it was also revealed that these roles are to a certain extent almost expected in the kitchen and as such are accepted as the norm. What is more, the research identified the time-honoured customary kitchen ritual of shaking hands before commencing work at the start of the day and also having finished work at the end of the night, which acts to reaffirm the importance of the team and the sense of family, group solidarity, bonding, camaraderie and feeling of mutual respect that exists between the members of the kitchen brigade.

Moreover, the research brought to the fore the oft cited analogies with the military. Indeed, analogies with the military flourished throughout the course of the fieldwork, not least the comparison of preparing to go into a busy service with that of the oft cited military analogy of ‘preparing to go into battle’ and the comparison of being ‘in the shit’ during a busy service with that of the military analogy of being ‘in the trenches’ and most notably the comparisons with the centuries-old militaristic hierarchy that characterises the occupational culture of chefs. Indeed, the centuries-old militaristic hierarchy is deeply embedded in kitchen culture and the rigidly hierarchical nature of the kitchen brigade. Hence, such military organisation and the highly regimented nature of the kitchen brigade are understood by all the members of the kitchen brigade as a *sine qua non* in the kitchen as there is a need for structure and discipline in order to maintain order, authority and control. The hierarchical nature of the kitchen brigade is thereby pivotal in the transference and reinforcement of the occupational culture of chefs. Overall, the highly regimented and rigidly hierarchal nature of the kitchen brigade that characterises the occupational culture of chefs thereby constitutes another social construct that defines and reinforces the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

Moreover, the research revealed that the perception of the outside world with regard to the image of chefs is still somewhat spontaneously associated with the deeply ingrained archetypal cultural stereotype of the aggressive, authoritarian, tyrannical,

temperamental, volatile, violent and abusive chef. Furthermore, it was identified that the aggressive and violent nature of induction into the catering industry for young, new recruits is the result of imitation on the part of more senior, higher ranking chefs – these chefs in turn imitating the behaviour learnt from and handed down by their superiors during their time as new recruits. Indeed, however disastrous the consequences, it can therefore be argued that from a cultural viewpoint, chefs are able to derive a sense of identity by embracing and perpetuating the myth of the creative and violent chef. The myth is further reinforced by the fact that the chefs who make it to the top of the profession are often the ones who have willingly endured harsh working conditions and mistreatment. It was revealed that this violent and aggressive means of induction is often regarded as being analogous with the means of induction to the military. The research further highlighted that also prevalent is the manipulation of lower ranking staff through psychological bullying. What is more, it was identified that the intimidatory and violent behaviour and the resultant physical and mental damage caused, and symptoms exhibited, are likened to those of Battered Child Syndrome. As with other occupations traditionally regarded as trades, the occupation of chef also suffers from the problem of its occupational members being trained solely in its technical and creative aspects, with little or no attention being given to interpersonal or management skills. This means that the student is left with little or no guidance in relation to the management of, training of and interrelationship with others, causing them to, in many cases, make bad choices as regards these aspects of their behaviour and countenances poor management as part of the occupational culture. Notwithstanding, it was highlighted that such violent and bullying behaviour is now deemed to be unacceptable in today's kitchens and as such is virtually obsolete. Nevertheless, while the prevailing view may be that violence and bullying is a thing of the past, this does not mean to say that such behaviour does not still persist.

Furthermore, it was revealed that the reputation of the archetypal cultural stereotype of the aggressive, authoritarian, tyrannical, temperamental, volatile, violent and abusive chef that is deeply ingrained in the occupational culture of chefs may well be traced back to the days when historically chefs were freely given alcohol in the kitchen – referred to as 'sweat pints' in the trade – to drink during service in order to keep them going in such hot and stifling working conditions. It was also highlighted that it was common practice

for chefs to go to the pub and drink alcohol during their split shifts in the afternoons. Therefore, under the influence of alcohol, some chefs subsequently became aggressive, resulting in the violent and abusive behaviour that gave the occupational culture of chefs a bad reputation. Notwithstanding, it was highlighted that such drinking practices no longer occur in today's kitchens as they are deemed to be unacceptable. However, it was identified that there is still a certain shared drinking culture prevalent amongst chefs when they socialise and unwind. Indeed, the research brought to the fore that it would appear that such a drinking culture may evidence a natural propensity for self-medication, a way in which to numb the mental and physical pain that the work of a chef entails. Furthermore, it was also revealed that such drinking practices may also constitute a means of letting off steam that further binds members of the occupational community together and reinforces the sense of communal togetherness, of acceptance, of fitting in, of belonging, of being part of something. What is more, the research identified the comparison with other occupations, such as the military, with regard to the compartmentalised nature of the chefs' lifestyle, their lack of work-life balance and how these factors contribute to stress, thereby predisposing them to excessive behaviour. The regimented, highly pressurised and stressful working environment combines with this compartmentalisation of lifestyle to produce the extreme hedonistic behaviour often exhibited by chefs during their infrequent periods of leisure time. Of course, the highly pressurised and stressful nature of the work is not always perceived as being a negative aspect of the occupation.

Moreover, the research revealed that the feeling of preparing to go into a busy service is often compared to that of the military analogy of 'preparing to go into battle'. The reason for this comparison would appear to be the feelings of fear, anxiety and nervousness common to both situations and often experienced by members of the kitchen brigade on a twice daily basis. Furthermore, it was highlighted that the adrenaline fuelled states of the 'rush' and the 'buzz' and the 'high' of a busy service are often spoken about in the same terms as commonly used to describe the various states of intoxication through the use of artificial stimulants such as alcohol and/or drugs. What is more it was also identified that the issue of the means by which an individual deals with the aftermath of 'coming down' from these adrenaline fuelled states of the 'rush' and the 'buzz' and the 'high' of a busy service is one that can often lead to alcohol and/or drug

consumption. Furthermore, the research brought to the fore that the use of drugs, as opposed to alcohol, is now far more prevalent in today's kitchens. Indeed, the research identified that it would appear that drug taking is still a problem in today's catering industry. Notwithstanding, it was also highlighted that such behaviour has become less and less prolific in recent years at the high-end level of professional cooking. While drug taking was certainly a problem in the past and still does occur in today's kitchens, it was highlighted that the use of drugs as a pick-me-up when physically exhausted and mentally drained as a means to keep performing at the requisite level is nowadays frowned upon and as such is uncommon. However, it was also acknowledged that some chefs, most notably among younger members of the kitchen brigade, do still take drugs as an aid to sleep and as a means to switch off, relax and unwind from the long and arduous working hours. Notwithstanding, it was also highlighted that such behaviour is now rapidly disappearing as the occupation of chef has become much more professional subsequently causing lifestyles to become more geared toward professional idioms of behaviour.

Overall, as a result of the new found level of professionalism at the high-end level of professional cooking, coupled with the evident elevation of the status and standing of the occupation and the new found respect and recognition afforded chefs themselves, the occupation of chef is now held in much higher esteem by the wider audience of society at large and as such it could be argued that the occupation of chef is now perceived as a profession.

MAJOR RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS/CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

The study revealed that chefs tend to come from socially and economically deprived backgrounds and tend to use the survival strategies learned whilst growing up to survive and thrive within the kitchen environment. Indeed, the biggest influence on the restaurant industry in Britain in recent times has been Marco Pierre White. His book *White Heat* was read by what became the next generation of Michelin-starred chefs and in it they saw somebody from their own socio-economic background who had achieved an enviable and desirable position within society and they themselves wanted to emulate him.

Chefs are also motivated by the desire for acceptance by their occupational peer group (i.e. 'significant others'). The respect of their peer group is gained through enduring the rites and rituals of the kitchen and the achievement of a high level of standing in the restaurant industry is achieved through the accreditation of Michelin stars. Although it has already been identified that in general the chefs upbringing is a socially and economically deprived one that leads to the working class nature of kitchens, the point at which they ascend to the position of head chef, certain behaviours were identified that are more analogous with those in the art world, such as a composer, or a painter, insofar as they produce an art form that elicits an emotional response. It was also demonstrated that chefs see their job as a calling with a higher purpose.

Furthermore, in terms of the culture of the industry, the kitchen is a meritocracy, irrespective of social class, gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity. Chefs are solely judged by their peers on their ability to do the job. The world of an individual employee in the restaurant industry is a very closed and incestuous one. Chefs' friendship groups only tend to contain other chefs and frequent movement between kitchens is commonplace. The self-image of chefs is influenced by a number of factors. A significant component of the self-image of chefs is that they are engaged in a similar career path as compared to that which exists in the higher professions; chefs tend to compare the stages of their own careers to those of doctors and lawyers. However, the occupational community of chefs is much more close-knit than is seen in other professions. A kitchen brigade is often compared to a family and engenders a high degree of group solidarity, bonding and camaraderie between its members. This is what informs the unusually tight-knit and what is often seen by outsiders as walled-off nature of the restaurant industry. Part of the social cost of membership of this family is the demonstration of dedication to the familial group. This cost is paid through the individual putting the needs of the group above their own, in the sense that they will not take time off for sickness and they will work through pain or injury. Indeed, the burns, scalds, cuts and scars attained whilst working in the kitchen are seen as signifiers of occupational validity.

A significant part of the occupational socialisation of chefs occurs through banter in the kitchen. Friendly banter and verbal insults and the teasing and mockery and the practical jokes and pranks, serve to induct new recruits into the familial group but also serve to construct the social hierarchy of the kitchen. Significantly, those individuals

with very dominant personalities, the 'Alpha Males', are the individuals who most often rise to the heights of the profession. Although it was highlighted that kitchens are often very male dominated and places in which sexist and chauvinistic attitudes exist, it was also apparent that while women may find these environments unpleasant, they are ultimately judged by their peers on the basis of their ability to perform the required work and as such can gain acceptance into the familial group, irrespective of gender, as long as they are prepared to become 'one of the boys'. The nature of the work of chefs is that of working under pressure to immovable deadlines. As such the mechanism which is used to make this function correctly is that of extreme discipline, order, authority and control. Chefs often compare this to the means by which the military functions, even citing comparisons of carrying out service with going into battle. Whilst the perception still exists amongst the general public that violence and bullying frequently occur in kitchens and while this has been the case historically, these behaviours have now become much less commonplace.

An oft identified and significant appeal of being a chef was the 'high' or 'buzz' that is experienced as a result of working to a high standard in the stressful situation of a busy service. However, this 'high' is often accompanied by a corresponding 'low' and this leads to greater than normal use of alcohol and drugs amongst chefs as a coping mechanism. In addition to this, the nature of working the unsociable hours required of chefs leads to the atypical patterns of their social lives meaning that opportunities for social drinking are limited, leading chefs to exploit these opportunities when they do arise by drinking to excess.

Although the outside world perceives life in the restaurant industry as being very harsh and brutal, the reality of the modern Michelin-starred kitchen is one of an organisational structure that delivers to a high standard, consistently, under highly pressured circumstances. Although in the past this has been achieved through draconian methods, in today's restaurant industry these methods are becoming to a large extent obsolete and have all but disappeared. However, it remains the case that in the minds of those who work in kitchens, the results of their labours are of overriding significance insofar as all that matters is what ends up on the plate. Indeed, it may well be argued that whilst still evolving, the occupation of chef has moved significantly away from its

roots of being considered a working class trade and into the realm of being a more professional middle class career.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

As previously discussed, whilst it is clear that both the use of unstructured, in-depth interviews and overt participant observation are apposite to the research, it is important to acknowledge the problems and limitations inherent in these research methods which are likely to affect the validity of the research. As previously highlighted in the methodology and methods chapter (see Chapter 6), the possibility of reactivity between the subjects of the community and the researcher in a piece of overt research constitutes a significant threat to the validity of observational data. Foster (1996) points out that conducting ethnography may lead to personal reactivity, as subjects start behaving differently because of the personal characteristics or behaviour of the observer, but also to procedural reactivity, characterised by a change in subjects' behaviour caused by their knowledge of the fact that they are being observed. Yet, it has been noted that in the case of participant observation, subjects tend to become accustomed to the observer's presence and begin to behave more 'naturally' the longer the observer is around, thus reducing the influence of reactivity (Bryman, 2004).

The reflexive nature of ethnography implies that the researcher is part of the world that is under study and is consequently affected by it, therefore posing a further threat to the validity of observational data (Boyle, 1994). Observer bias derives from such reflexivity, as observations are inevitably filtered through the interpretive lens of the observer and affected by the researcher's theoretical standpoints or existing knowledge (Foster, 1996). In effect, observations can never provide us with a direct representation of reality, since the observer's subjectivities can affect what behaviour is selected for observation and how this behaviour is interpreted and recorded, thus potentially resulting in invalid data (Foster, 1996).

Furthermore, an important problem ethnographers face in the field is that of 'going native', a term with an obvious origin in anthropology (Fielding, 2001). This is when the researcher identifies too closely with the subjects and loses his/her sense of detachment, thus leading him/ her to adopt an over-sympathetic view of subjects and

therefore to present a biased and inaccurate account (Foster, 1996). Although this issue is highly relevant for participant observers, Fielding (2001: 149) warns against the more likely danger of ‘not getting close enough’; that is, ‘of adopting an approach which is superficial and which merely provides a veneer of plausibility for an analysis to which the researcher is already committed’.

To deal with the limitations of participant observation, it is important for the researcher to balance the outsider and insider aspects of his/her role, or what is often termed ‘managing marginality’ in reference to the researcher’s attempt to manage a marginal position *vis-à-vis* subjects, to be at one with the group and yet to remain apart (Foster, 1996). Other ways of assessing validity may include techniques such as reflexivity, triangulation and respondent validation. Reflexivity involves the continual monitoring of, and reflection on, the research process, with regard to the extent of the researcher’s role in the process of data production and the extent to which the data is affected by the social context in which they were collected (Foster, 1996). Triangulation and respondent validation are also useful to supplement and check the data obtained from observation (Foster, 1996).

In addition, issues of reactivity affecting the research validity also need to be taken into account when undertaking interviews. Bryman (2004) argues that the unnatural character of the interview encounter can lead to the emergence of reactive effects on the part of the respondents. Indeed, respondents’ knowledge of the fact that their behaviour and culture is being scrutinised by the interviewer may make them conscious of not divulging too much about themselves. Conversely, the interview encounter may encourage respondents to exaggerate certain phenomena and distort reality (Foster 1996). The unstructured, in-depth nature of the interviews, however, help to counteract these reactivity issues by making the encounter less artificial, thus turning the interview into a ‘conversation with a purpose’ (Webb and Webb, 1932: 130).

In summary, whilst both unstructured, in-depth interviews and overt participant observation present some limitations affecting the validity of the research, it is argued that the systematic use of reflexivity, together with the combination of both methods for respondent validation and triangulation purposes, help to offset issues of reactivity and observer bias, and generate a more valid and reliable set of data.

Moreover, as previously highlighted in the introductory chapter, it is acknowledged that the research focus on haute cuisine restaurants will constrain the scope and generalisability of the study. 'Haute cuisine' is defined as 'artful and elaborate cuisine' (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2006), but also refers to the high-end of professional cooking, whilst being generally associated with critical acclamation, as embodied in the institution of the 'Michelin Guide' and its star rating system (Surlemont and Johnson, 2005). Although 'haute cuisine' first implied a particular style of French cooking, the term is nowadays used in reference to gastronomic excellence, regardless of nationality (London Restaurants Guide, 2006) but still evokes a particular style of kitchen hierarchy, derived from the *partie* system (Wikipedia, 2006). Although a marginal and elite segment of the restaurant industry, 'with less than 0.5 per cent in volume', the haute cuisine sector plays a key role in 'trend setting, image building and in setting standards for the industry as a whole', as Surlemont and Johnson (2005: 578) pointedly remark. The research scope was also ultimately influenced by pragmatic reasons to do with costs, especially time and money, thus preventing the researcher from carrying out a longitudinal study and gathering data across different national cultures. No claims for generalisability are therefore made beyond the context of UK haute cuisine restaurants. Although it is impossible to apply the research findings to the whole population of chefs working in commercial kitchens, the research findings nevertheless provide an original contribution to knowledge, by conceptualising how the occupational identity and culture of chefs is constructed and maintained through both work and social interaction. In addition, this study, may also generate findings of relevance for HRM in the hospitality industry in relation to the enduring practical issues of training and the recruitment and retention of chefs, which have long been recognised as managerial challenges within the hospitality industry (Nightingale, 1967; HCEDC, 1969; HCTB, 1989; Mennell, 1996; Rowley and Purcell, 2001; Pratten, 2003a; Pratten and O'Leary, 2007; Robinson and Barron, 2007; Robinson and Beesley, 2010). This study may indirectly help to get to grips with these HRM issues, by providing a better understanding of the occupational identity and culture of chefs.

On a more generic level, this study aims to generate empirical data that informs contemporary debates about the role of work in identity formation and the structure of occupational identities in our contemporary society. This study is thus an attempt

to assess, in light of the experiences of chefs, the untested argument that contemporary work holds little meaning for today's workers (Rifkin, 1995; Bauman, 1996, 1998; Gorz, 1999; Sennett, 1998; Beck, 2000). This study thus departs from the post-modern tradition and posits that a person's work/occupation is still a significant contributor to identity in modern society.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Given the lack of updated academic studies of the occupational identity and culture of chefs, this study may therefore help stir renewed interest in the subject and generate further studies of practical relevance to the service sector in general and to the hospitality and catering industry in particular, with regard to HRM issues for instance. Indeed, an area of interest which was frequently raised during the fieldwork included a criticism of the majority of catering colleges and the current National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) system. Further research may be required to identify this issue inherent to the catering industry.

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Appendices

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APPENDIX A: THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF IDENTITY FORMATION AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL AND THEIR APPLICATION TO THE STUDY FOCUS

THEORIST(S)	IDENTITY FORMATION AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL	APPLICATION OF THEORY TO STUDY FOCUS: THE IDENTITY OF CHEFS AND COOKS
Symbolic Interactionists Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934)	<p>For Cooley (1902), one’s self-concept is significantly influenced by what the individual believes others think of him/her.</p> <p>For Mead (1934), the self emerges when the individual learns to take the role of the ‘generalised other’, that is, to assume the attitudes and values of the community towards his/her own behaviour and linguistic acts. The self necessarily implies the ability to act as others act and to view one’s actions, emotions and beliefs from the perspective of ‘significant others’.</p>	<p>Analysing the identity of chefs thus means examining the social processes through which chefs come to create and sustain a sense of identity. Chefs’ conceptions of self identity are influenced both by their occupational peer group, who constitute ‘significant others’, and by the wider audience of the ‘generalised other’.</p>
Symbolic Interactionist/ Ethnomethodologist Goffman (1959)	<p>Drawing upon a dramaturgical lexicon, Goffman (1959) argues that identities are formed through role performances, as people try to get others to see them as they want to be seen, by communicating to others the expected characteristics of the social role.</p> <p>Goffman (1959) also describes the division between team performance and the audience in terms of ‘region’. The demarcation of the interactional framework between ‘front’ and ‘back’ regions is critical for individuals to present an acceptable and consistent self-image.</p>	<p>For an individual to fully acquire the identity of chef/cook, the self-image they present during social interaction must be accepted and reaffirmed by others.</p> <p>Acting in conformity with the expectations of the social role of chef/cook may help individuals build a sense of identity and belonging that can be shared with other group members within the occupational group.</p> <p>In hotels and restaurants, the distinction between front and back regions is well defined and fixed.</p>
Labelling theorists (Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1972)	<p>External identification, through naming and categorising, can affect an individual’s sense of identity.</p> <p>Drawing upon the Symbolic Interactionist premise that individuals’ self-concepts are largely derived from the responses of others, Becker (1963) and Lemert (1972) both contend that individuals tend to see themselves in terms of the label that others ascribe to them; thus resulting in a self-fulfilling prophecy.</p>	<p>The external definition of an occupation held by others can become internalised into the self-concept of the individual members of that occupational group (Saunders, 1981a). Both positive and negative ‘labels’ ascribed to the occupation of chefs similarly can influence chefs’ sense of identity.</p>

<p>Contemporary social theorist/ Synthesiser Jenkins (2004)</p>	<p>Drawing upon the above theorists, Jenkins (2004) conceives the self as the ongoing and simultaneous synthesis of internal self definitions and external definitions of the self taken in from the outside. Both individual and collective identities are similarly subjected to this dialectic of internal-external identification, whereby the interplay of similarity and difference plays a critical role.</p>	<p>The occupational identity of chefs is formed through this dialectic of internal-external identification. In other words, it is influenced both by their occupational peer group, and by the views and attitudes of others towards them in the ‘outside world’.</p>
<p>Social Constructionists Berger and Luckmann (1966)</p>	<p>The work of Berger and Luckmann (1966) acknowledges humans’ ability to actively construct the social world, whilst emphasising that individuals are also highly reliant on pre-existing meanings and ways of doing things (i.e. institutions, customs, language) which constitute pre-given sources and sites of (individual and collective) identification.</p>	<p>To become a chef and forge oneself a chef identity, the individual is compelled to draw from the existing meanings and ways of doing things that have informed and characterised the occupation of chef for many generations.</p>
<p>Post-structuralist Foucault (1978, 1980) and the discursive strand in organisation studies</p>	<p>Language and power are interwoven in the creation of knowledge and individuals’ identities. Foucault (1978, 1980) uses the concept of discourse to refer to a set of statements and expressions which provide a way of talking or writing about the knowledge of a particular topic at a particular historical moment. For Foucault (1980), these discourses are played out by social institutions to exert control over individuals, by influencing the knowledge that they develop about themselves and their subjectivity (or sense of identity).</p>	<p>Occupational discourses have been shown to provide significant discursive resources from which individuals draw to shape their identity. Chefs’ and cooks’ identities could be shaped by social power structures that influence the prevalent occupational discourses.</p>
<p>Critic of Post-structuralism Burkitt (1994)</p>	<p>Burkitt (1994) highlights the limits of this Foucauldian/post-structuralist understanding of identity formation, insofar as the self is not merely a creation of discourse but also ‘a product of social relations and embodied actions within those relations’ (Burkitt, 1994: 8). In this sense, earlier sociological perspectives (Mead, 1934; Bourdieu, 1990) can be seen as an advance over post-structuralist conceptualisation of identity, for they acknowledged that identity is rooted in social practices and the membership of social groups.</p>	<p>The identity of chefs and cooks is first and foremost derived from the social practices of their occupational group.</p>

APPENDIX B: THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF THE PROCESS OF COLLECTIVE IDENTIFICATION AND THEIR APPLICATION TO THE STUDY FOCUS

THEORIST(S)	THE PROCESS OF COLLECTIVE IDENTIFICATION	APPLICATION OF THEORY TO STUDY FOCUS: THE IDENTITY OF CHEFS AND COOKS
Social psychologists Tajfel and Turner (1979)	Tajfel and Turner (1979) empirically demonstrate how collective identification comes into being in the context of inter-group relations, whereby groups identify themselves against, and in their relationships with, other groups (through the interplay of both group identification and categorisation).	The collective identity of chefs and cooks is formed in relation to what they are not, that is in relation to the non-chef/cook community.
Anthropologist Barth (1969)	Similarly, Barth (1969) posits that (ethnic) groups derive a sense of identity in the course of social interaction with other groups (i.e. at the boundary) during which they develop an awareness that things are done differently elsewhere.	Chefs' and cooks' sense of identity is thus negotiated at the boundary with others in the 'outside world', where cultural differences become more prominent.
Anthropologist Cohen (1982, 1985, 1986)	Cohen (1982, 1985, 1986) contends that the sense of similarity shared by all community members is as fundamental as the awareness of being different from others outside the 'community'. Such sense of similarity is achieved as members begin to construct and share symbols which come to embody the community as a whole, and which allow them to present a consistent face to the outside world.	The sense of identity and oneness vis-à-vis other members which characterises the occupational group of chefs and cooks derives from its members collectively constructing and embracing a front of similarity through shared symbols, regardless of whether they actually have anything in common. An examination of what chefs <i>believe</i> they share in common with other chefs could thus be particularly useful to understand chef identity formation.

APPENDIX C: ANTHROPOLOGICAL DEFINITIONS OF CULTURE AND LINKS WITH ORGANISATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CULTURES

Schools of Thought and Main Theorists	Definitions of Culture	Links with Organisational Literature and Application to Occupational Culture
<p>Functionalist Malinowski</p>	<p>‘Culture is ‘an instrument serving human biological and psychological needs’ (Smircich, 1983: 342). ‘Manifestations of culture such as institutions and myths are explained by their functional necessity for the satisfaction of basic human needs’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 197).</p>	<p>‘Organisations are social instruments for task accomplishment’ (Smircich, 1983: 342). The social milieus of organisations [and/or occupations] are ‘social enactments of participants’ quest for need satisfaction’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 217).</p>
<p>Functionalist-Structuralist Radcliffe-Brown</p>	<p>‘Culture is made up of those mechanisms by which an individual acquires mental characteristics (values, beliefs) and habits that fit him [<i>sic</i>] for participation in social life; it is a component of an integrated social system which also includes a social structure component, to maintain an orderly social life, and adaptation mechanisms, to maintain society’s equilibrium with its physical environments’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 217).</p>	<p>Organisation [and/or occupational] social milieus provide ‘functional enactments of society’s legitimating values and myths’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 217).</p>
<p>Ecological-Adaptationist White, Service, Rappoport, Vayda, Harris</p>	<p>Culture is ‘a system of socially transmitted behaviour patterns that serve to relate human communities to their ecological settings. ...the environment is not merely a set of contextual factors that limit or constrain the development of culture; it has an active, selective role in channelling the evolution which, in turn, influences environmental characteristics’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 197).</p>	<p>‘Organisations [and/or occupations] are social enactments of ideational designs-for-action in particular environments. They take on varied forms through a continuous process of adaptation to, or selection by, critical environment factors (<i>which include the society’s culture</i>)’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 218).</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Historical-Diffusionist</p> <p>Boas, Benedict, Kluckhohn, Kroeber</p>	<p>‘Culture consists of temporal, interactive, super-organic and autonomous configurations or forms which have been produced by historical circumstances and processes’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 218).</p> <p>‘Historical processes, rather than adaptation processes, explain cultural transformation’. The focus is on the study of ‘dynamic cultural configurations and on the charting of acculturation and diffusion processes’. (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 202).</p>	<p>Organisational [and/or occupational] forms ‘arise and vanish in the ebb and flow of historical circumstances’. ‘Specific patterns of organisation [and/or occupational] structures are characteristic of historical phases of the organisation’ [and/or occupation] (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 218).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Cognitive (or Ethnographic School)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Goodenough</p>	<p>Culture is ‘a system of knowledge, of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting. Culture is the form of things that people have in mind, their model of perceiving, relating and otherwise interpreting them’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 219).</p> <p>It consists of ‘whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members’ (Goodenough, 1957: 167).</p> <p>‘As a product of human learning, culture consists of the ways in which people have organised their experience of the real world so as to give it structure as a phenomenal world of forms, that is their percepts and concepts’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 219).</p>	<p>‘Knowledge of the organisational [and/or occupational] culture enables individuals to interpret the demands of the [occupational] group and to make sense of their ongoing interactions with others’ [colleagues or occupational members] (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 203).</p> <p>The role of the researcher is to uncover the rules that guide action and to find out how the members of a culture see and describe their world.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Structuralist</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lévi-Strauss</p>	<p>Culture is made up of ‘shared symbolic systems that are cumulative creations of mind; universal but unconscious principles of mind generate cultural elaborations and artefacts, the diversity of which results from the permutations and transformations of formally similar processes and latent structures. Since all cultures are the product of the human brain, there must be features that are common to all cultures’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 220), such as myth, art, kinship and language, for example.</p>	<p>Organisational [and/or occupational] ‘forms, structures and processes ... actually result from the permutations and transformations of universal and unconscious processes of ... the human mind’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 205).</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Mutual Equivalence Wallace</p>	<p>‘Culture is a set of standardised cognitive processes which create the general framework that enables a capacity for mutual prediction and interlocked behaviour among individuals. It is an implicit contract that makes possible the maximal organisation of motivational and cognitive diversity with only partial inclusion and minimal sharing of beliefs and values on the part of ‘culture-bearers’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 220).</p>	<p>Organisational [and/or occupational] forms, structures and processes are merely ‘causal, calculative schemata developed to anticipate and explain other actors’ behaviour’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 209).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Symbolic (or Semiotic School) Geertz, Schneider</p>	<p>‘Culture is a system of shared symbols and meanings. Symbolic action needs to be interpreted, read or deciphered in order to be understood’ (Smircich, 1983: 342).</p> <p>‘Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action. It is an ordered system of shared and public symbols and meanings which give shape, direction, and particularity to human experience. Culture should not be looked for in people’s heads but in the ‘meanings’ shared by interacting social actors. The analysis of culture therefore is not an experimental science in search of laws but an interpretative one in search of meaning’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 221).</p> <p>‘Those significant symbols, or products of mind, constitute the raw materials for the interpretation of the ordered system of meaning in terms of which social interaction takes place’ (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 199).</p>	<p>‘Organisations are patterns of symbolic discourse. “Organisation” is maintained through symbolic modes such as language that facilitates shared meanings and shared realities’ (Smircich, 1983: 342).</p> <p>‘The social or organisational world exists only as a pattern of symbolic relationships and meanings sustained through the continued processes of human interaction’ (Smircich, 1983: 353).</p> <p>The researcher with affiliation to the symbolic school is concerned with analysing how organisational [and/or occupational] members ‘interpret and understand their experience and how these interpretations and understandings relate to action’ (Smircich, 1983: 351).</p> <p>The focus of attention is on organisational [and/or occupational] language, symbols, myths, stories, and rituals, which are not taken as cultural artefacts but as generative processes that yield and shape meanings and are fundamental to the very existence of organisation [and/or occupation].</p>

APPENDIX D: FUNCTIONS AND EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL FORMS WITHIN OCCUPATIONAL CULTURES

<i>Cultural Form</i>	<i>Functions of the cultural form within the occupational culture</i>	<i>Examples taken from occupational studies</i>
Stories	<p>* To help members of an occupation develop a sense of kinship with the past, along with a sense of sharing current experiences, that indicate to members how they should feel and behave while performing the occupation's tasks and responsibilities (Trice, 1993).</p>	<p>The stories told among fire-fighters have been found to dramatise for newcomers and old-timers what constitutes proper and desirable behaviour, such as the proper way to display one's feelings (McCarl, 1980 in Trice, 1993).</p> <p>Also, as one fire-fighter explained, 'You learn a lot by listening to the stories that the guys tell you in the firehouse; the more you hear about things, the more that stuff flashes in your mind when you have similar experiences on the fire ground' (McCarl 1980 in Trice, 1993: 93).</p>
Myths	<p>* To condense key traditions and experiences into sacred narratives which, over time, become taken-for-granted rules of conduct: myths therefore help group members seek legitimacy from the past (Malinowski, 1954).</p> <p>* To symbolise collective identification by demarcating the contours of group membership (Bain, 2002, 2005), and helping the occupation to organise its members (Trice, 1993).</p>	<p>Before World War II, old-line carpenters and bricklayers expressed their ideology of craft control in the myth of the boy apprentice who would be 'growing up in the trade' and devoted to a course of action 'involving patience, abstinence, and the arduous acquisition of high skill' (Myers, 1948: 332).</p> <p>A programme of apprenticeship training characterised by the development of stamina, rigour, and dedication to a vocation, subsequently grew out of this myth (Trice, 1993).</p> <p>Bain (2005) shows how the consumption of myths is one way in which visual artists reinforce their occupational identity in the absence of a shared workplace culture. Thus, artists have been found to perpetuate popular myths of marginality, 'outsider' status and creative freedom, whereby artists are conceived as socially and economically alienated individuals who devote their entire lives to art. Despite growing social integration, perpetuating such myths (e.g. by hiding the fact that one has a secondary job) aid artists to reinforce their occupational authenticity.</p>

<p>Language (e.g. argot)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To describe the specialised tools, roles, and circumstances unique to the work with new words or expressions. A special language becomes a shorthand for referring to technical processes (Rothman, 1998). * To strengthen a sense of identification, promotes group solidarity, and affirms the history and traditions of the group (Rothman, 1998). * To separate members from non-members, as mastery of language confirms 'insider' status (Rothman, 1998). 	<p>Train dispatchers' special 'railroad language' structures and controls their behaviour (Gamst, 1990 in Trice, 1993).</p> <p>The argot of hustlers sets them off not for the purpose of secrecy, but rather by the way of helping their sense of collegueship and feeling of 'we-ness' (Polsky, 1967).</p>
<p>Gestures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Used to accompany spoken languages or as a substitute when circumstances do not permit verbal communication (Trice, 1993). * To convey solidarity and group control. 	<p>Iron workers typically take for granted an elaborate set of hand signals for bringing steel beams into position (Haas, 1972).</p> <p>Longshoremen engage in mock physical assaults (such as playful pats on the shoulder and rough scuffling) before work to reaffirm group solidarity and identification (Pilcher, 1972).</p>
<p>Artefacts</p>	<p>Artefacts (uniforms, tools etc.) are invested with meanings not inherent in their physical characteristics (Rothman, 1998):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * In dealing with outsiders, they serve as a visible identification of occupational membership * When dealing with insiders, they symbolise cultural acceptance and group membership for the people who wear them. 	<p>The dress of judges and physicians denotes prestige and high-status, while the uniforms of waitresses and airline attendants may symbolise subservience and inferiority (Rothman, 1998).</p> <p>Pilots and physicians need to earn the right to wear the uniform by successfully going through the extensive educational requirements (Rothman, 1998).</p> <p>Similarly, Riemer (1977) points out that apprentice electricians discover that tools reflect ability and maturity. This is illustrated in the way newcomers carry a large number of tools of varying quality, whilst master electricians carry only a few well-worn tools of very high quality (usually one particularly reliable brand).</p>

APPENDIX E: CULTURAL FORMS OF OCCUPATIONAL CULTURES

MYTHS

Drawing upon Malinowski's (1954: 125-6) anthropological research on indigenous Melanesian culture, myths have been found to control social behaviour, and help individuals seek legitimacy from the past for their actions: 'the really important thing about myth is its character of a retrospective, ever-present, live actuality. It is ... neither a fictitious story nor an account of a dead past; it is a statement of a bigger reality still partially alive'. Myths thus condense key traditions and past experiences into sacred narratives and beliefs which, over time, become taken-for-granted rules of conduct that organise the lives of occupational members (Bain, 2002). Although myths are often stories drawn from the past recounting concrete but unconfirmed events, they become shared and unquestioned by occupational members and underpin the essence of the occupational ideology in narrative terms (Trice, 1993).

It is important to note that occupational myths may sustain their power to compel despite their manifest inauthenticity, as illustrated in the case of journalists' occupational mythology (Aldridge, 1998). For Aldridge (1998: 112), these occupational myths illustrate the fact that occupational identity is, in effect, a living reality, 'a dynamic that sustains participants and mediates their relationship to other institutions and groups', which Bourdieu has captured through his notion of 'illusio': 'the adherence to the game as a game, the acceptance of the fundamental premise that the game... is worth being played, being taken seriously' (Bourdieu, 1996: 333-4).

For Bourdieu (1996), the *illusio* involves people investing in a particular form of life (or *field*), such as working or playing games/sports, through both a tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the field and practical mastery of its rules. From a removed perspective (i.e. without the *illusio*) many of our life pursuits could indeed appear absurd, such as the customary modes of address, rhetoric and rituals of certain occupational practices in parliamentary politics, business meetings and court trials, for example. Similarly, embracing and sustaining occupational myths, despite their blatant falsehood, is therefore also an illustration of the *illusio* at its purest.

Aldridge (1998) further suggests that journalists' traditional myths continue to thrive because the current working conditions do not provide an environment in which new myths can evolve (i.e. lack of group identity and team effort as journalists are often in competition with each other). In a similar vein, Bain (2002, 2005) argues that occupational myths serve to symbolise collective identification and demarcate the contours of group membership in occupations where there are few opportunities for social interaction among occupational members. For example, Bain (2002, 2005) shows how the consumption of myths is one way in which visual artists reinforce their occupational identity in the absence of a shared workplace culture. Indeed, Toronto artists consciously or unconsciously continue to perpetuate the popular myths of marginality, outsider status and creative freedom, whereby artists are conceived as socially and economically alienated individuals who devote their entire lives to art. Despite growing evidence of artists' social integration, perpetuating such myths (e.g. by hiding the fact that one has a secondary job) seemingly aid artists to reinforce their occupational authenticity.

SYMBOLS

The definition of a symbol given in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* is: 'A thing regarded by general consent as naturally typifying or representing or recalling something by possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or in thought' (Hendry, 1999: 83). Unlike a sign which simply represents a concept, a symbol has more semantic content in the sense that it is open to a variety of interpretations (Hendry, 1999). For example, in their study of the subculture of Harley-Davidson bikers, Schouten and McAlexander (1995) have highlighted that although the motorcycle has become for all bikers the symbol of freedom *par excellence* (to be contrasted with the confinement of the automobile), other symbols, such as the tattoos, long hair, and bushy beards of many bikers, may also signify freedom and liberation from mainstream values and social structures. Thus, although symbols tend to be unanimously shared within a culture, it is precisely their imprecision and malleability that make them so powerful in binding together members of a culture who have little in common. Indeed, as Anthony P. Cohen (1993: 196) explains: 'To be effective ... [symbols] should be imprecise, in

order that the largest possible number of people can modulate a shared symbol to their own wills, to their own interpretive requirements?.

RITUALS

As is often the case in anthropology, the literature points to the lack of agreement about the precise meaning of 'ritual', despite the widespread usage of the term (Leach, 1966; Holland, 1993; Hendry, 1999). The term has often been restricted to behaviour connected with magic and the supernatural, as illustrated in Victor Turner's (1967: 19) oft-quoted definition: '[ritual is] prescribed formal behaviour for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings or powers'. Yet, this definition of ritual is far too restrictive for it fails to account for the myriad of rituals in industrial societies which are not related to beliefs in the supernatural. A more encompassing definition of ritual is that given by Bocoock (1974: 36, italics in original), in *Ritual in Industrial Society*, which views ritual as '*bodily action in relation to symbols ... involv[ing] groups of people who share some sets of expectations in common...*'.

Similarly, Barry Turner (1971) and Rothman (1998) broaden the definition of rituals to accommodate organisational and occupational rituals and contend that rituals are sets of behaviour involving the manipulation of symbols which have been 'stylised or formalised and made repetitive in that form' (Turner, 1971: 18). Sociologists who understand ritual in this manner are, in effect, influenced by Goffman (1967) who also used the term to refer to any form of patterned and repetitive behaviour (albeit with particular focus on status enhancement). Thus, following Goffman's tradition, Trice (1993: 83) defines rituals as 'standardised, detailed sets of behaviours that both manage anxieties and express meanings but seldom produce intended technical consequences of practical importance'. To illustrate his point, Trice cites the example of school teachers, pharmacists, and nurses who keep highly detailed records as ritualistic protection against making mistakes. Donald Roy's (1960) famous description of the everyday interaction and horseplay taking place amongst machine operators in a clothing factory can also be understood as rituals in the sense proposed by Trice (1993). Indeed, as Roy argued, the daily rituals (stealing a banana, sharing a peach, opening the window, etc.) served to

relieve the monotony of the workers' boring and repetitive jobs and provide benchmarks for measuring the passage of time, whilst also generating a feeling of camaraderie amongst the workers.

In contrast, sociologists/anthropologists, such as Turner (1969), in a more direct Durkheimian tradition emphasise the capacity of rituals to reinforce collective sentiment and social integration and to communicate and instil shared values of great importance to a society or social group (Burns, 1999; Auslander, 2003). Anthropologists, such as Malinowski and Margaret Mead for example, have found that ritual is 'functional' in the sense that it helps maintain social order by reaffirming a consensus of values within a social group (Holland, 1993). Similarly, for Victor Turner (1968: 6), ritual is a social phenomenon, or in his words, 'a periodic restatement of the terms in which men of a particular culture must interact if there is to be any kind of a coherent social life', and serves two basic functions: an expressive and a creative one. While the expressive function of ritual is to symbolically communicate the values of the social group, the creative ritual function creates or re-creates the principles underlying the structure of the social group (Holland, 1993). Drawing upon Turner's (1969) conceptualisation, Holland (1993: 1467) concludes that the handover report is ritual within nurses' cultural system for it dramatises the values of the group: 'it could be seen here to ensure that the common values enshrined in their nursing practice are sustained ... and their symbolic language ensured exclusivity from other groups in society'.

rites

Based on significant research among people in small-scale societies, Van Gennep (1960) discovered rites of passage to serve as a transition for individuals moving from one social category to another. These rites were found to ease individuals and their social groups through periods involving marked changes in role or status, by transforming uncertainty into expectable stages and providing social integration. Although Van Gennep wrote mostly about a few small-scale societies, his theories have been shown to have applicability in any society in the world (Hendry, 1999). Thus, rites of passage may include any of the following four types of transition: the passage of people from one *status* to another (as in marriage), or the passage from one

place to another (as in a change of territory), the passage of *time* when the social group move from one period to another (as in the reign of a new queen/king, or New Year) and, most importantly for the purposes of this study, the passage from one *situation* to another, such as taking up a new job or joining an occupation (Hendry, 1999).

As Van Gennep (1960) famously argues, rites of passage manifest three characteristic patterns: *rites of separation*, whereby participants are both physically and symbolically detached from their former social categories and roles; followed by *rites of incorporation* which consist of collective actions that enable the participants to try out their new roles or statuses. These two sets of rites are themselves separated by a transition period, that Van Gennep refers to as ‘rites de marge’ or *transition rites*, where the participants are in an ambiguous state in which they are no longer in the previous position but have not yet reached the next position. Expanding on Van Gennep’s theory, Victor Turner (1970: 360) has argued that this intermediate state corresponds to a *liminal* or ‘betwixt-and-between’ phase, since participants are neither in the old nor in the new status. Turner (1970) further suggests that liminality is characterised by a period of indeterminacy, openness and humility, when a social structure of *communitas* is likely to form. According to Turner, communities are indeed unstructured communities based on equality, where normally accepted differences between the participants are de-emphasised or ignored altogether.

Despite the disappearance of rites of passage in modern Western society, numerous researchers have pointed to instances of rites of passage in different occupations which display the characteristics highlighted by Van Gennep (1960) (Turner, 1971; Trice and Morand, 1989; Trice, 1993; Rothman, 1998; Mayrhofer and Iellatchitch, 2005). Thus, *rites of separation* have been found to encourage newcomers to forget about their previous roles and statuses and to start learning about the group’s values, beliefs and cultural norms. As Trice (1993) points out, it is also during this phase that newcomers must convince the gatekeepers of the occupation that they have what it takes to become successful occupational members. Well-developed occupations (e.g. medicine, law, and policing) tend to rely on admission committees at professional schools for such separation rites. As Ahern (1972: 3) pointedly remarks, when the new police recruit is introduced into the police academy; he/she then ‘*leaves society behind* to enter a profession that does more than give him a job, it defines who he [*sic*] is’.

Craft and industry-oriented occupations, however, rely on more informal methods to put newcomers to the test, as illustrated in the case of new recruits in pipeline welding who must demonstrate that they ‘have what it takes’ by cautiously participating in name calling, hitting, wrestling, and clod throwing (Graves, 1958).

In contrast, *rites of transition* mostly consist in a series of ordeals in which newcomers must learn the technicalities of the job and demonstrate that they can perform the occupational role competently (Trice, 1993). During the transition phase, it is frequent for newcomers to either be treated as if they were not present – as in the case of fishermen who refuse to learn the names of newcomers until they have learnt the ropes (Orbach, 1977), or to be actually physically absent and assigned night duties – as in the case of medical interns and apprentices in the printing industry (Melbin, 1987).

Finally, *rites of incorporation* function to indicate to others that the training and socialisation process has transformed the novices into full and valued members of the occupation (Trice, 1993). For example, as Van Maanen (1974) has shown, rites of incorporation in the police involve rookies’ graduation from the academy and their first experiences as patrolmen, during which they must convince their partners that they are trustworthy and reliable, and able to deal with dangerous assignments. Rites of incorporation have also been found to signal that novices have become worthy of recognition through their being given access to a variety of rights and privileges within the occupation. In their study of hotel waiters, Mars and Nicod (1984: 89) have shown that once new recruits have ‘demonstrated sufficient ability and willingness to learn’, their incorporation into the occupation is symbolised by their gaining access to a variety of perks and illicit treats that are part of the ‘underlife’ of the hotel.

As Trice (1993) pointedly remarks, rites of passage are not always formalised into three explicitly defined stages, but rather unfold informally. The miners’ rites of passage, however, perfectly illustrate Van Gennep’s (1960) proposed sequence in its entirety (Vaught and Smith, 1980). Thus, during the separation phase, newcomers are subject to a series of indignities which remind them that they have not yet been accepted within the group. During the transition period, as they start learning the ropes, novices have to put up with the degrading remarks and criticisms of senior miners, whilst being given nicknames that symbolise that they are in a new world

where their old names no longer apply (Trice, 1993). Finally, miners are incorporated into the mining culture through a series of degrading, body-centred games which convey the importance of the group's solidarity and the need to always put the interests of the group before one's own.

APPENDIX F: CLASSIFYING OCCUPATIONAL CULTURES USING MARY DOUGLAS'S GRID-GROUP ANALYSIS

Mary Douglas's (1970, 1978, 1982) 'grid-group' analysis was initially proposed to examine the links that exist between culture and behaviour in different human societies, and provide a basis of comparison between societies, which, she argues, can all be compared according to two cultural dimensions: 'grid' and 'group'. The grid dimension describes the amount of rules, constraints and hierarchical authority within the culture that structures social relations and restrains individual behaviour (Trice, 1993). For example, while strong-grid cultures, such as the caste systems of India, impose internal rules on its members and provide clear guidelines for their behaviour; low-grid cultures, such as the Western culture, provide individuals with opportunities for free competition with others, where status is judged primarily on merit, and autonomy and individuality are highly valued (Mars, 1982). The group dimension, in contrast, describes the degree of cohesiveness and collectiveness produced by the culture among its members and the extent to which an individual is pressurised into conforming to the culture's 'ideology' and 'cultural forms', to use Trice's (1993) terminology. Thus, in strong-group cultures, the interests of the individual become subordinate to those of the group and; whereas cultures weak on the strong dimension tend to emphasise individuality and freedom of individuals from group controls (Mars, 1982).

Mars (1982) was the first to argue that Mary Douglas's two dimensions could not only be applied to whole human cultures, but also to the analysis of occupations in Western society. Applied to occupational cultures, the grid dimension is used in reference to the tangible structures which regulate social interactions between co-workers and their superiors, such as hierarchical authority, formal rules, differential rewards, rankings, and members' autonomy over their work (Mars 1982; Sonnenstuhl and Trice 1991). Drawing upon the above, a high-grid occupational culture defines its members' roles and statuses with precision and provides limited scope for individual autonomy and entrepreneurial activity, as illustrated in the case of large bureaucracies and craft occupations such as construction work (Trice, 1993). Conversely, a weak-grid occupation is constrained by very few rules (if at all) as members have considerable

autonomy and freedom to choose how to carry out tasks and how to behave towards one another. The cultures of senior management and independent professionals are good illustrations of a weak-grid culture (Mars, 1982).

To determine the strength of the grid dimension, Mars (1982: 26) argues that four elements need to be taken into consideration, namely *autonomy* (the amount of rules constraining the behaviour of individual members), *insulation* from other members (as marked by ranking), *reciprocity* (the degree to which a ‘job allows its incumbent to offer to others and how much he has to accept in return’) and *competition* between members of the occupation.

For occupational cultures, the group dimension refers to the extent to which occupational members come under the control of other members and develop a sense of belonging to the group. According to Mars (1982: 26-8), the group dimension can also be evaluated according to four criteria, namely the *frequency* with which people interact with others on tasks; the extent to which repeated contacts take place within a mutually interconnecting network (*mutuality*); the *scope* of its activities illustrated in the extent of overlap between work activities and non-work/leisure activities; and the presence of a defined *boundary* to the group. Similar criteria for assessing the strength of the group dimension have been advanced by Trice (1993), on the basis of a comprehensive literature review of occupational cultures, which are also reminiscent of Rothman’s (1998 [1987]) and Salaman’s (1974) factors, as listed (see Chapter 4). According to Trice (1993: 26), the specific forces that facilitate group identity among members thus include:

- (1) esoteric knowledge and expertise,
- (2) extreme or unusual demands,
- (3) consciousness of kind,
- (4) pervasiveness – the occupational culture permeates nonworking life,
- (5) ideologies that confer favourable self-images and social value to the tasks,
- (6) the extent to which members of the occupation are members’ primary reference group, and
- (7) the abundance of consistent cultural forms.

APPENDIX G: DETAILS OF THE CHEFS INTERVIEWED

Respondent's Name	Restaurant Name	Restaurant Location	Michelin Stars as at 2006-8	Respondent's Gender	Respondent's Nationality
Adam Simmonds	<i>Ynyshir Hall</i>	Powys, Wales	1	Male	English
Alain Roux	<i>The Waterside Inn</i>	Berkshire, England	3	Male	French
Alan Murchison	<i>L'ortolan</i>	Berkshire, England	1	Male	Scottish
Allan Pickett	<i>Orrery</i>	London, England	1	Male	English
Andrew Fairlie	<i>Andrew Fairlie at Gleneagles</i>	Perthshire, Scotland	2	Male	Scottish
Andrew Pern	<i>The Star Inn</i>	North Yorkshire, England	1	Male	English
Anthony Demetre	<i>Arbutus</i>	London, England	1	Male	English
Brett Graham	<i>The Ledbury</i>	London, England	1	Male	Australian
Chris Firth-Bernard	<i>Summer Isles</i>	Ross-shire, Scotland	1	Male	Scottish
Chris Horridge	<i>Bath Priory</i>	Bath, England	1	Male	English
Claude Bosi	<i>Hibiscus</i>	London, England	2	Male	French
Daniel Clifford	<i>Midsummer House</i>	Cambridgeshire, England	2	Male	English
Derry Clarke	<i>L'Ecrivain</i>	Dublin 2, Ireland	1	Male	Irish
Eric Chavot	<i>The Capital</i>	London, England	2	Male	French
Francis Atkins	<i>Yorke Arms</i>	North Yorkshire, England	1	Female	English
Galton Blackiston	<i>Morston Hall</i>	Norfolk, England	1	Male	English
Heléne Schoeman	<i>The Greyhound</i>	Hampshire, England	1	Female	South African
Herbert Berger	<i>1 Lombard Street</i>	London, England	1	Male	Austrian
Heston Blumenthal OBE	<i>The Fat Duck</i>	Berkshire, England	3	Male	English
Hywel Jones	<i>Lucknam Park</i>	Wiltshire, England	1	Male	Welsh
Jake Watkins	<i>JSW</i>	Hampshire, England	1	Male	English
James Bennington	<i>La Trompette</i>	London, England	1	Male	English
Jason Atherton	<i>Maze</i>	London, England	1	Male	English
Jeff Bland	<i>Number One at The Balmoral</i>	Edinburgh, Scotland	1	Male	English

John Burton-Race	<i>The New Angel</i>	Devon, England	1	Male	English
John Campbell	<i>The Vineyard at Stockcross</i>	Berkshire, England	2	Male	English
Keith Braidwood	<i>Braidwoods</i>	Ayrshire, Scotland	1	Male	Scottish
Kevin Mangeolles	<i>The George</i>	Isle of Wight, England	1	Male	English
Kevin Thornton	<i>Thornton's Restaurant</i>	Dublin 2, Ireland	1	Male	Irish
Mark Raffan	<i>Gravetye Manor</i>	West Sussex, England	1	Male	English
Martin Wishart	<i>Restaurant Martin Wishart</i>	Edinburgh, Scotland	1	Male	Scottish
Matthew Tomkinson	<i>The Goose</i>	Oxfordshire, England	1	Male	English
Michael Caines MBE	<i>Gidleigh Park</i>	Devon, England	2	Male	English
Michael Deane	<i>Restaurant Michael Deane</i>	Belfast, Northern Ireland	1	Male	Irish
Nathan Outlaw	<i>Restaurant Nathan Outlaw</i>	Cornwall, England	1	Male	English
Nigel Haworth	<i>Northcote Manor</i>	Lancashire, England	1	Male	English
Paul Heathcote MBE	<i>The Longridge Restaurant</i>	Lancashire, England	1	Male	English
Philip Howard	<i>The Square</i>	London, England	2	Male	English
Raymond Blanc OBE	<i>Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons</i>	Oxfordshire, England	2	Male	French
Richard Guest	<i>The Castle</i>	Somerset, England	1	Male	English
Rose Gray MBE [1939-2010]	<i>The River Café</i>	London, England	1	Female	English
Ross Lewis	<i>Chapter One</i>	Dublin 1, Ireland	1	Male	Irish
Ruth Rogers MBE	<i>The River Café</i>	London, England	1	Female	American
Sat Bains	<i>Restaurant Sat Bains</i>	Nottinghamshire, England	1	Male	English
Shane Osborn	<i>Pied à Terre</i>	London, England	2	Male	Australian
Simon Gueller	<i>The Box Tree</i>	West Yorkshire, England	1	Male	English
Simon Rogan	<i>L'enclume</i>	Cumbria, England	1	Male	English
Stephen Crane	<i>Ockenden Manor</i>	West Sussex, England	1	Male	English
Steve Drake	<i>The Clock House</i>	Surrey, England	1	Male	English

Tessa Bramley	<i>The Old Vicarage</i>	South Yorkshire, England	1	Female	English
Tom Aikens	<i>Tom Aikens Restaurant</i>	London, England	1	Male	English
Tom Kerridge	<i>The Hand & Flowers</i>	Buckinghamshire, England	1	Male	English
Tony Borthwick	<i>Plumed Horse</i>	Edinburgh, Scotland	1	Male	English
Warren Geraghty	<i>L'Escargot</i>	London, England	1	Male	English

Interview Themes and Questions

Image/status of occupation/industry

- **What do you think the ‘outside world’ thinks of chefs?**
- **and vice versa? (What do chefs think of the ‘outside world’?)**
- and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?
 - How do you see the status of the occupation as a whole?
 - What type of person typically enters the industry?
- How do you think the image of the occupation has changed over the years?
- What do you think the status of the chef is nowadays?
- and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?

Kitchen Life

- Do chefs have their own language in the kitchen?
 - Jargon? Banter?

Trainees/new recruits – Socialisation

- What do young chefs have to do to prove themselves and become accepted by the brigade?
- How do brigade members/chefs ‘test’ young chefs?
 - Practical jokes or pranks?
 - Rites of initiation or rites of passage?
 - Chopping flour or sugar? Filleting whitebait?
 - How long does this ‘testing’ last?

Group bonding, solidarity and camaraderie within the brigade

- Is there camaraderie in the kitchen and how does it show itself?
 - Never go sick? Work through pain or injury?
- How does loyalty or solidarity show itself within the brigade?
 - Chef leaves/brigade follows?
- How do brigade members bond?
 - ‘Banter’? Practical jokes or pranks?
- Can the ‘high’ of service trigger a feeling of being part of a team or ‘family’ and a feeling of belonging?
 - Part of a community?
- What would you liken the build-up and performance of service to?
 - Being on stage?
- How does it feel going into a busy Saturday night service?

- Going into battle?
- What would you liken the synchronicity of a busy Saturday night service at the peak of activity to?
 - Team sport? Opera?

Competition between brigade members

Brigade members work as part of a team with the different sections reliant on each other:

- Is there competition between sections and if so how does it show itself?

Relationship between chefs and front of house staff (in Michelin-starred restaurants and the haute cuisine sector)

- Is the kitchen the chef's domain?
- Do chefs and waiters/waitresses argue and if so why?
 - Do you think this helps reaffirm the independence of the kitchen?
- Do you think 'open kitchens'/'chef's tables' changes the behaviour of chefs?

What do chefs think of the 'outside world'?

- Do you think that chefs can feel 'out of step' with the rest of society?

Social interaction

- Do brigade members socialise together?
- Do brigade members 'hang out' at the workplace on their days off?
- Do brigade members 'hang out' at the workplace before or after work?
- Do brigade members socialise with waiters/waitresses?
- Do brigade members socialise with other brigade members working for other restaurants?

Drinking alcohol

- What is the extent of drinking in the industry?
 - and in Michelin-starred kitchens in particular?
 - Is it communal and bonds brigade members?
 - Is it a coping mechanism?

Drug-taking

- What is the extent of drug-taking in the industry?
 - and in Michelin-starred kitchens in particular?

Hierarchy and discipline

- The hierarchy of the kitchen has often been likened to the Army. Why do you think that is?
 - Militaristic? Regimental?
- How is discipline maintained in the kitchen?
- Why is bollocking used?
 - Is it expected as part of the chef's role?
 - Is it done to motivate the brigade?
- Do some chefs not use 'bollocking' and use 'other means'?
 - What 'other means'?

Violence – Verbal/physical abuse and bullying

- Do you think violence is an issue in kitchens?
 - Is it a necessary part of a chefs' training for becoming a head chef?
 - Is it to be expected from artistic individuals under pressure to gain accreditation?

Recruitment, Training and Retention Practices

Apprenticeships, training and catering colleges

- Is it important for young chefs to undertake an apprenticeship?
- Do catering colleges actually prepare trainees for the reality of kitchen life?

Role of the head chef

- What part does a head chef play in moving young chefs onto other chefs?
- Do the head chef and *sous-chef* have opposite personalities?

Social networks

- How important is it for brigade members to stay in touch with former brigade members and head chefs?
- How important is it head chefs to stay in touch with former brigade members?
- How important is it for head chefs to stay in touch with former head chefs and mentors?

Role models/mentors

- What or who influenced you to become a chef?
 - Do you have any role models or mentors?
 - Has their manner or style influenced you in the way that you run your kitchen?
 - Quiet? Aggressive?

Networks of elite (Michelin-starred) chefs

- Do head chefs socialise with other chefs?
 - And Michelin-starred chefs in particular?
- How do head chefs get to know other chefs?
 - and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?
- Are you friends with other chefs?
 - and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?
 - Why do these friendships come about?
 - What purpose do they serve?

Competition between elite (Michelin-starred) chefs

- Is there competition and rivalry between head chefs?
 - and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?

The head chef's self-concept: deriving identity from work

Distinction between a chef/cook and heterogeneity of occupation

- What is the difference between a chef and a cook?

Place of art in the chef's identity/cooking as a craft

- Are chefs artists?
- Is cooking a craft?
- Is there more to being a head chef than just cooking?
 - 'Father figure'?
 - Leadership? Accounting/Finance?
 - Entrepreneurial? Businessman?

Cooking as a profession

- Do you think that being a chef can be viewed as a profession?

Importance of the 'guides' and external recognition to identity

- Is recognition by the 'guides' an important driver for chefs
 - and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?
 - Ego?
- Chefs place a great deal of emphasis on the Michelin Guide:
 - Why is the Michelin Guide so credible?
 - Importance of winning/losing Michelin stars?
- Do you respect the views of all of your customers?
 - Do some customer requests restrain the chefs creative freedom?
 - Is the customer always right?

Values of risk, entrepreneurship and individualism

- How important is it for chefs to run or own their own restaurant?
 - and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?
 - Creative freedom?
 - Freedom from management constraints?

Celebrity and Television chefs

- How do you think some cooking programmes reflect the credibility of chefs?
 - Ready Steady Cook? Jamie Oliver?
- How do you think reality TV shows portray the occupation?
 - Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares? Hell's Kitchen?
- Why do chefs distance themselves from 'TV chefs'?
- What is your opinion of chefs endorsing products?
 - and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?

Symbols

Symbols – Space

Chefs work in a clearly defined space:

- How important is it for chefs to be in control of their own space?
 - Does the kitchen have a rhythm or beat?
 - How do you learn the rhythm or beat of the kitchen?

Symbols – Scars

- Can you tell a chef from a 'civilian' in the 'outside world'?

- What physical markers identify them?
- Are burns/cuts/scars a mark of a chef's identity?

Symbols – Knives

- What prestige is attached to a chef's knife skills, such as slicing or chopping rapidly?
- What importance do chefs attach to owning and looking after their own knives?
- How do you think a chef would react if another chef picked up and used their knives?

Symbols – Uniforms

Historically a chef's status was conveyed through their uniform (i.e. the higher the hat, the higher the status):

- Is status still conveyed through the chef's uniform?

Symbols – Hierarchy of the *partie* system and of foodstuffs

- Do some 'stations' have more prestige than others?
 - The 'sauce' (meat) chef might have higher prestige than the fish chef?
- Is more prestige attached to the handling and cooking of certain foodstuffs than others?
 - Meat might have a higher prestige than fish?

Gender issues

To male interviewee:

- Why do you think there are so few female chefs?
 - (and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?)
- Have you ever worked with female chefs in your own kitchen or elsewhere?
- Do you think that female chefs change the dynamics of the kitchen?
- Do you think females might be put off working in the kitchen by the 'kitchen culture'?
 - Macho? Testosterone? Language? (i.e., swearing, sexual joking?)
 - Why do females seem to head for or end up in the pastry section?
- Do you think female chefs have to become 'one of the boys' to be accepted?
 - Why might females not be accepted by the group?
- Do you think there is any discrimination or sexism towards female chefs in some kitchens?

To female interviewee:

- Why are there so few female chefs?
 - (and Michelin-starred chefs in particular?)
- How are female chefs treated by male chefs in the kitchen?
- Do you think females might be put off working in the kitchen by the 'kitchen culture'?
 - Why do females seem to head for or end up in the pastry section?
- Do you think that female chefs have to become 'one of the boys' to be accepted and get on?
- What obstacles have you faced and still face as a female chef?
- Have you ever encountered/witnessed any form of discrimination/sexism towards female chefs either during your training days or more recently?



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XXX
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XXX
XXX

29 September 2006

Re: 'Speaking Kitchens: Chefs In Their Own Words'

Dear ***Sir or Madam***

I am currently writing my PhD thesis at The Scottish Hotel School, University of Strathclyde and the topic of my research is 'Speaking Kitchens: Chefs in Their Own Words'.

My research aims to explore the occupational identity and culture of chefs – in particular elite chefs, i.e. Michelin-starred chefs and their kitchen brigades – in order to examine how the identity of chefs is socially created and maintained.

Indeed, although a popular interest in chefs has grown considerably over the past few years the occupational identity and culture of chefs is still little understood from a sociological point of view.

Therefore, this research seeks to identify the unwritten rules, values, attitudes and beliefs which bind chefs together, as well as the rituals, symbols and myths which help perpetuate a sense of cohesion, identity and belonging that defines 'being a chef'.

Whilst being undertaken as part of a PhD over a three-year period, the research is funded by The Scottish Hotel School, University of Strathclyde and is a follow-up to a smaller-scale study carried out as part of my MA degree research in 2004.

As part of the current research, in 2007, I will be undertaking a large-scale academic study of Michelin-starred chefs. This research will be carried out in the form of face-to-face interviews. Although the interviews will be semi-structured to allow me to gain your insights and opinions on certain issues; more importantly, the idea is in the title 'Speaking Kitchens: Chefs in Their Own Words'. The research will attempt to take into consideration the diversity of chefs' backgrounds, i.e., gender, ethnicity and experience.

Attached is an outline abstract which formed the basis of the idea for this study. Please do have a read and if you agree it is an interesting and relevant topic and you have an opinion (which I'm sure you do!), I would be very grateful if you would agree to let me interview you, as I believe your opinion would be extremely interesting and most significant.

By allowing me to interview you, you will be contributing to the most in-depth academic study ever to be dedicated entirely to the occupation of professional chefs, and thereby enhancing our understanding of this centuries-old and noble profession.

I look forward to hearing from you 'in your own words'.

Many thanks.

John Cooper

ABSTRACT

'Speaking Kitchens: Chefs in Their Own Words'

Something strange has happened to chefs and their kitchens over the past two decades. The trend is for celebrity chefs and their 'open plan' kitchens which open up the previously secret 'backstage' of professional cooking. New York Chef Anthony Bourdain observed the restaurant kitchen to be 'a subculture whose centuries-old militaristic hierarchy and ethos of "rum, buggery and the lash" make for a mix of unwavering order and nerve-shattering chaos'. While Chef Gordon Ramsay asserts 'kitchens are boisterous environments and you need to get a beating to do well. Cooking is dog-eat-dog. The weak disappear off the face of the Earth'. Marco Pierre White claimed 'the catering world in Britain is like the French Foreign Legion; it's the last resort of the inadequate'. Or, as Nico Ladenis argued; with the advent of *nouvelle cuisine* 'the chef began to perform. The public was his audience. The chef had become an artist'. Given these comments it is not surprising that one of the key economic concerns of the catering industry is the recruitment and retention of chefs and cooks. Efforts to resolve this crisis by changing management and recruitment practices have had little effect because they fail to account for the complex cultural issues underpinning the characteristics of work. This research will explore the culture of the workplace through an investigation of the role of work in identity formation. Focusing upon the identity of chefs it will examine the world of chefs and their kitchens, identifying the unwritten rules, values, attitudes and beliefs, gender and ethnic identities, and rituals, symbols and myths of the chefs' domain, in order to inform our understanding of a high-profile but little understood occupational culture.



Letter of Consent

I consent to the recording and use of the data collected and my name and restaurant being identified for the purposes of the interview conducted by John Cooper, The Scottish Hotel School, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____