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What is the Pensee Sauvage and is it still alive in Modern society?

Introduction

Cuisine reflects an individual's distinct culinary fingerprint: Belief, history, identity, memory and geographical position are all encapsulated in the fingerprint. Cooking is the point where the first production began, where social relationships were formed, from which arts and sciences emanate, the starting place of trades, the target of the marketplace and the object of philosophy (Symons, 1998). Cooking eventually led to the development of new societies based on social rules and regulations (Wrangham, 2010). Analysis of these societies and their food preferences may reflect the society's cultural soul. Mary Douglas interpreted the grammar of meals, deciphering the meaning of the meal, as a structured social event (Douglas, 1998). Mennell, Murcott and van Otterloo (1992) recognised developmentalist food literature which orientates to explain varying degrees of social and geographic patterns of food consumption in terms of man's historical evolution, especially in the contexts of economy and power. Food is an intimate part of hospitality ceremonies which can be religious, civic, symbolic or ritualistic and clearly reflects the overall cultural identity of mankind throughout the ages reflecting attitudes, religion, customs, taboos and philosophy.

The culinary process has changed somewhat down through the ages but not to any great extent. The raw materials are still similar but innovation and creativity has been applied to them to give the finished product varying degrees of taste, texture, sensory and aesthetic pleasure. Fundamentally the tools which we use to interpret or rate our food are the very same apparatus which animals use to define theirs. The anthropology of sensory perception is essentially the same for animals and man in an evolutionary perspective (Pasquet, Simmen & Pagezy, 2000). It reflects the capacity of the animal or primitive human mind to differentiate or detect simple odours and aromas such as esters or aldehydes present in food. Given these physical constraints we are therefore limited in how far we can develop our dining pleasure as our receptive tools cannot be replaced. Scientific knowledge is now being applied to dining in the realms of Haute Cuisine by which pleasure can enhance dining appreciation through the use of complementary systems, pairings and electronic devices. Humans also exercise discretion in what we do and do not eat not from a practical, nutritional or survivalist perspective but for conventional reasons, every society has done so. Creativity and innovation represent an area of culture where we have developed a specifically human arena or process to reflect our apprehension of nature. This creativity has been consistently applied to our diet down through the ages; this application has been in a very cyclical fashion with trends becoming popular, disappearing and later re-emerging. Innovation in the gastronomic field has been a gradual process. The progression and dynamic of the human psyche in terms of food has been consistent and measurable. But eating is both a biological and social event therefore if we are to extract meaning from it we have to take many different factors into account. At different times in our history particular presentations and flavours have been fashionable. Scientific development, invention and creative expression have all contributed to this popularity. Culinary innovation has been applied by many cooks through the ages bestowed, there seems to have been a pattern whereby cooks in different places have thought along the same lines in taking their cooking to the next level, leaders have unified these emerging styles

Ferdinand de Saussure developed Structuralism as a specific “method” to analyse isolated events or meanings in terms of linguistics and to look beneath the surface of meanings to find hidden structures (Kearney, 1994, p.238). He saw language as a code and Structuralism as a way of decoding it. Claude Levi Strauss was introduced to structural linguistics by Roman Jakobson, who he met in New York in the 1940’s. Levi Strauss through his encounters living with groups of Indians in rainforests of South America was able to form new theories about anthropology. These ideas were based on the study of the intricacies of social structures, art, language and myths of the Caduveo, Bororo and Nambikwara tribes and lead to his general theory of culture, which emphasised the significance of hidden structures (Wiseman & Groves, 1997). He considered his fieldwork to be an opportunity to study, what he considered to be the wild thought processes of primitive man, then still in existence at the heart of those wild tribal societies. By choosing to apply the linguistic method to an investigation of myth linking man, society and language Levi Strauss was able to develop what he called structural anthropology. Levi Strauss recognised that in a similar way that phonological systems become manifest in the human brain, so too kinship is conceived at an unconscious level of thinking. He argued that the primary linguistic character of our mental life provides the basis for all subsequent cultural patterning’s, even those that are non linguistic in nature including cooking (Kearney, 1994).

Kinship is a focal point of the work of Levi Strauss (1969). Influenced by Bronislaw Malinowski and the concept of reciprocity, the philosophy determines ideas about exchange of women, biological continuity and mans adaption from animal to human through his regulation of breeding partners. The elementary family is at the heart of this alliance of kinship systems. Kinship is identified as communication among people in a knitted group and the emergence of language or symbolic thought plays a key role as part of this system. Incest taboo is a significant aspect to this theory because it is present in all human societies at some level. The taboo determines that the wealth of the group primarily exists in the number of fertile women which they possess and reinforces this logic through exchanges. The women possess the potential to maintain and expand the population of the tribe. Therefore the wealth of the group can only be truly exploited through mother, daughter or sister being exchanged as gifts to neighbouring tribes. This departure from natural selection signifies where culture begins. This is the point that early man exercises conscious control over his family, group or tribe which would not be practised by animals in nature. This evolution of a new dawn for early humans provides the juncture between instinct and human culture. It is mans interpretation of nature through his classification which gives the groupings of animals and plants their identity. Man creates order through his classification of what seems to be a wild world. Significant taboos develop about what can be eaten not based purely on any sensory botanical reasoning, but through man’s interpretation of his environment, with some plants and animals given sacred status. Overtime early man recognises that foods exposed to nature in the form of water, wind, heat and sun resulted in changes to the structure of food improving palatability. Man attempts to interpret natural ingredients through a process of digestion outside of the body, hence our culinary culture is born. No other species in the animal kingdom practises this transformation. As the social group gather to eat a whole new narrative is born based on hierarchy, kinship and sharing displaying the hidden structures which so intrigued Levi Strauss.

Levi Strauss discerned two types of culinary process prevalent in all societies' immersion in hot fat or liquid or exposure to dry heat or a naked flame. The latter is a process of exocuisine or cooking on the outside where the food is exposed to flames to form the centrepiece of a feast or celebration. The social gathering would normally include invited guests. Maillard reaction caused by the browning of meat in the flame produces Amodori products which enhance taste and texture and also result in a thick brown crust which caramelises the evacuating juices from the meat joint. The process produces high sensory notes but it is an extravagant form of cooking, whereby significant nutrients are lost to the fire. The fire itself consumes a high quantity of materials to reach the point where the food becomes palatable in contrast to boiling in a single pot. The roasting is more normally carried out by the males of the kin, in a similar way today in which the barbeque is the preserve of the man of the house.

The latter would normally be carried out by females or the mother of the family. This is an endo-cuisine performed for the close knit family and in the domain of the home. The stew pot maintains all the nutrients and flavours in the cooking liquid to which other ingredients can be added to bulk up or add to the flavour. The foods are soft and easily digested. Tough meat, bones and sinew become palatable when exposed to long slow cooking, which takes place around the hearth of the home. Youngsters and older invalids can gain nourishment from this nutritional meal. The cooking process maximises the heat output of the fire and conserves fuel.

The practical function of both cooking processes stimulates the appetite of the clan and the physical action of heat mechanically breaks down long chains of carbohydrates and complex proteins. As the food fibres or molecules cook they become easier to eat, pathogens are killed, potential toxins removed and the nutritional content of the food can potentially increase. The considerable diversification between ingredients, cooking methods, and gatherings creates a rich culinary narrative to decipher. Foods need to be discernable, recognisable and placed in a correct category to ensure health and food safety. A whole new mechanics of food preparation evolves underlined by the type of processes food is exposed to and those involved in its sharing. The relationship which has built up between hunter and prey, plant food, water and fire can be interpreted by pre- Neanderthal man through symbolism. Man through classification can relate his being and dependability to nature and his immediate environment. In this way Levi Strauss saw totemism as a code to distinguish social differences between different groups which was also evident in the natural world. He thought totemism to be evidence of the symbolic systems which evolved in the mind of primitive man all over the world in different societies. The codification is essential for survival and does not exist in nature but is the result of social construction. It is a significant part of culture or our picture of meaning which we translate to our social members. While totemism provided Christianity with a means of distinguishing early man from the modern Christian, for Levi Strauss Totemism was the evidence that the fundamental mental operations taking place were the same in all man's history.

In contrast to religious sects Levi Strauss argued that there was no great difference between the "Pensee Sauvage" of people which was at the centre of earlier cultures and the way in which mankind still thinks today (Levi-Strauss, 1966). And that even today this way of interpretation or thinking may well co-exist with more structured thinking as in the sciences.

Translation from French to English of the term ‘Pensee Sauvage’ can result in the meaning of the work of Levi Strauss being misinterpreted, as sauvage means wild in French not savage. Levi Strauss determined that the way in which the mind of man thinks has always been the same and he discerns the Pensee Sauvage mind most notably in modern man through his artistic expression in for example the art of cooking. While what drives the savage may be defined as instinct, his motivation to create his order of the natural world through coding and classification is in reality, a “will to knowledge that has no other end than its own fulfilment, a kind of instinct for knowledge” (Wiseman & Groves, 1997, p. 55). Thus anthropology for Levi Strauss is foremost a psychology which reflects the internal workings of the human mind from the basic primitive sciences of the pre-Neolithic era and right up to and including the invention of weaving, agriculture and culinary processes. The one mind has always had the ability to create and understand nature through sensory data in the field of primitive sciences, which today for modern man can then be explained through scientific investigation and reasoning which reflect inner realities and hidden properties previously overlooked. Levi-Strauss distinguished societies by the level of their development from cold underdeveloped non literate, poorly educated to hot, highly evolve societies which are dependant on social hierarchies and the invention of writing. The latter comparable to a steam engine creating order and being able to carry out a lot of work, but also producing a lot of entropy. The former merely seek to maintain itself, resist change and self regulate.

The more modern civilisation and culture mankind is familiar with today evolved from a new type of science which began in Greece. This period is most significant in the history of mankind from many perspectives including philosophy, gastronomy and democracy. This modern science was focussed on solving problems of production, egress, mathematics and philosophy. This new phenomenon Levi Strauss referred to as “Domesticated or cultivated thought which are in essence specialised modes of thought geared for productivity” (Wiseman & Groves, 1997, p.67). This modern science born out of Greek ingenuity satisfies a means of sustenance for the metropolis. Yet productivity is also linked to aesthetic within the confines of the human mind. Each order maintains a sense of superior production (an occupational aesthetic that is not reducible to organisational demands” (Fine, 1992, p.1269). Taking a look at western society and its hot dynamic there may be artistic expressions that echo familiarly with those of Strauss. Civilisation has used food as a means of demonstrating wealth, station, art and sophistication. The creation of food with aesthetic value has obsessed cooks for centuries and is more than philosophical in nature, it is a sociological quest. The catalyst which provided the substrate on which this new science was to grow began in Athens. Philosophy and gastronomy became entwined. The provision of slaves provided social elite with the time and resources to concentrate on more celestial matters. The comfort and lubrication of the symposium facilitated deep reflection in a communal setting so ideas developed could be brought to fruition through the collective motivation, support and resources of all those present.

The Mediterranean witnessed the birth of modern gastronomy, although the Babylonians, Egyptians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Buddhists had all previously participated in elaborate feasting. The location and exclusivity of the symposium ensured that it would be employed by many high ranking officials for centuries to come in many different nations.

History to Levi Strauss is a human construct, a cultural invention which functions as the motor of the development of the hot society. Around the Mediterranean, at the time, 500BC, similar cultures had begun to develop alphabets and writing texts. The olive, Zai denoted the fourth letter of the alphabet in most ancient alphabets and forms part of a holy trinity in the Mediterranean basin with bread and wine. The trinity provides basic nourishment from which a simple diet can be gleaned when complimented with seasonal produce. The expansion of the olive groves and of civilisation went hand in hand between Greek and Phoenician trading posts.

The olive tree was a fundamental part of this evolution providing nourishment, light and conservation of perishable foods. Pallas Athene was bestowed the honour of its introduction by the Greeks, having made a tree grow from the rock near the Erechtheum, whose fruit was used for nourishment, light to worship their gods and as a symbol of peace, fertility, strength, glory and purification (Toussaint-Samat, 2009a). In ancient mythology Cadmus who was cook to the king of Sidon is credited with bringing the Phoenician alphabet and writing to Greece (Toussaint-Samat, 2009b). Literacy by the social elite inevitably played a significant role for Athens to become the birthplace of modern civilisation. Jack Goody (1982) recognised that not all societies developed into a high elite with low peasant cuisine, yet societies with literacy were more likely to do so. The level of sophistication to which a society develops is also evident in its cuisine and is reflected in 'Life of Luxury,' by Archestratus, which was a cookbook describing how to source all the fruits of the Mediterranean and emphasised the importance of sourcing the best quality ingredients in Athens as the new epoch unfolded. The search for ingredients outside of one's own environment or periphery reflects a need to improve upon or elaborate on the regular culinary provision available at the time, a means of signifying one's status. Paradoxically today the field of gastro-tourism is currently the fastest growing travel market, whereby the global back packer seeks to discover authentic gastronomic experiences specific to a unique geographic location.

Epicurus one of the first food writers recommended simple dishes that satisfy us as much as simple feasts (Courtine, 1988). This philosophy reflects a knowledge, appreciation and confidence in the inherent natural qualities of fresh produce available to him at that time. Like all other civilisations food for these discerning Greeks held religious and philosophical meaning. The sun raining in the heavens and rain falling from the sky perhaps not only helped nurture the crops, but also gave some foods special kudos. And so the Greeks never ate meat unless it had been sacrificed to a god, thought of Dionysus while drinking wine and Persephone whenever they ate bread. The offerings to their gods known as psadista united the three sacraments as uncooked bread, mixed with oil and wine. And the sacraments of bread and wine are still with us today. Aethenaeus described how the Greeks had mastered the art of baking and catalogued a total of 72 varieties of bread (Toussaint-Samat, 2009c). This is significant from not only a gastronomic but also cultural level, as the knowledge of the bakers was such, that they had developed the theory and skill to be able to consistently manipulate yeast in such a way that a coarse unleavened bread was not the only product available. The marketplace provides skilled craftsmen and artisan food producers a focal point for their wares and also competition which resulted in more refined offerings and greater variety. While cooks were most often slaves, they were bestowed the right to sell new original dishes to the public, creating an appreciation of culinary arts in the marketplace and motivation to innovate.

Cooks in the town of Sybaris in Magna Grecia were awarded patents to protect their recipes. A natural simplicity in cooking style was appreciated and examples of this style included recipes for black pudding and turbot with herbs, without excessive seasoning which is a re-occurring theme in the history of gastronomy, less is more. Imaginative dishes cooked simply with ingenuity and creativity were not only rewarded through higher sales but also respected and protected by law. The symposium became the focal point for aspirational citizens and also the first theatre where one could compare, contrast and evaluate the culinary capabilities of the host. Though female peers, students of Xenophon, were excluded, there is a link between the fare, the fair sex and gratification. The feasts became linked within moral codes about sex, age, rank and ethnicity a place where those of high rank and authority could dine and drink to a very high standard in comparison to more humble citizens (Jones, 2008a).

Levi Strauss discovered cooking to be a very good indicator of social stratification and differentiation between cultures because human societies throughout history consistently attributed foods and diet with symbolic meaning. While Neolithic man produced functional materials such as pottery, weaving and art, modern man was able to bring sophistication to another level. In the context of food a comparison could be made between basic functional recipes and haute cuisine. Levi Strauss (1964) determined that cooking has been transformed by humans from nature into a cultural phenomenon and the cook is a cultural agent in the process. Strauss used cooking as a means of identifying contrasting traditions and cultures of mankind which helped to signify the progress of civilisation through new symbols and systems. He demonstrated the processes of food preparation and classification of food categories had universal principles underlying their structures (Leech, 1989). The culinary triangle is a mesmerising attempt to put universal meaning into cooking throughout the history of human civilisation. It also demonstrates that completely different societies around the world classified their interpretations of nature the same way. And despite the considerable differences in foods, climate, language and topography each civilisation was using the very same instrument to decipher their interpretations of nature through, the human mind. Furthermore I believe that while the basic subsistence recipes are the product of the wild mind, but that the haute cuisine familiar to the upper echelons of all societies is a product of both the wild and modern scientific mind, the former providing the artistic expression and the latter the rationale. While good cooking is dependent of good ingredients, preparation, care and execution, haute cuisine requires artistic expression, interpretation, attention to detail and the finished product will normally have been par digested in the cooking process or requires little mastication.

Greek society went through a dynamic period of change highly influenced by characters such as Aristotle who came to study at the school of Plato. By the time of Aristotle, vision was given greatest significance in the hierarchy of importance and was considered essential for the development of knowledge, closely followed by hearing with the remaining three rated equally (Korsmeyer, 1999). Aristotle was undoubtedly a polymath, not merely a philosopher and studied many varied subjects including zoology, history, physics, astronomy and aesthetics. With the evolution of civilisation and the opportunity for some to immerse them in education, Levi Strauss argues that this period is the crossroads between the stratification of the lower and upper classes in the new hot society. Literacy is the key to control.

The reign of an educated elite is reflected by Aristotle is his role as an ambassador for education who supposedly became the tutor to Alexander the Great, in 344BC and he set up his own school at the lyceum, in Athens (Watt & Griffith, 1996). By 200BC following the death of Aristotle and Plato the philosophy of Stoics, Sceptics and Epicureans had all stemmed from Greece and proved stimulus for students which travelled far beyond the realms of the ancient world at are still relevant today.

Levi Strauss referenced the making sacred of particular animal deities as part of the philosophy of primitive man, but as society develops in the ancient, world once subsistence is not a primary problem for man, then the notion of denial takes a far more precarious or dramatic route. The non consumption of animals confirmed humanities dignity and separation from the animal kingdom. Since Antiquity vegetarianism is seen as an ethical means of nourishing body and soul. Denial of earthly pleasures is a reoccurring theme in the history of man, so one can truly achieve enlightenment or be rewarded in heaven. The connection between diet and health seems almost an instinctive in man, while all societies have always ate foods which they knew were not good for them, gluttony at least for the Greeks was perhaps frowned upon. In the words of Plutarch 'Kill to eat if you will, but do not slay me that you may feed luxuriously (Plutarch, 1878). Through his work Claude Levi Strauss discovered the inherent significance of the human diet throughout history not merely as a notorious phenomenon but as a key reflector of the complexity and sophistication of a particular civilisation. As well as his endeavours in the fields of philosophy and social sciences Levi Strauss made the study of culinary arts significant and he showed the way in contributing to the importance of gastronomy for mankind as a credible field of academic study. It is not important to believe in his approach of structuralism or whether it can ridicule or disproven today. The revelation in his work is how and what mankind eats demonstrates a cognitive conscious or even subconscious instinctive need or desire for humans to impart their apprehension of nature or make their mark on the world through cooking and the products they consume. This comprehension therefore contributes to an idea or sense that the human mind is in some natural way pre-programmed and that different civilisations, clans and religious sects throughout the ages while trying to be different were infact all the same because they all use the same minds. This tool can only function within set boundaries. While this rationale opposes all of the wars, conflicts and devastation which humans have created for them it provides a focus point for a potential future of mankind unified with a common thinking instrument for peace, harmony and prosperity world wide.

Today the artistic presentation of food has progressed to a new level and fine dining cooks have become artistically expressive in their execution of dishes. This was a gradual development which still goes on today where recipes are refined and food presentation continually evolves in the very same way that painting moves through different genres or movements into new art forms. Intriguingly as a cook one can develop a style which is recognisable by peers. One may have a similar style to another cook which one has not met but only at the same time. Style and expression change constantly individually and somehow on another cognitive level perhaps in the pensee sauvage collectively. In such a way that at any one time there is not just one cubist painter or not one cook practising cuisine Minceur. One person may be rewarded or given the accolade of being the founder of the new genre but there are always others in the same style on the fringes of the movement.

The topic of a collective vision or place where artists are striving to go, to make their work more individual perhaps reinforces the notion that we are limited by our minds capacity to see new ground and at a specific time many may see the next stop as a logical destination, without reference to their peers, for example from cuisine Nouvelle to cuisine Natural. Infact the language of artistic expression is an internal feeling or emotion which my not want to be shared too loosely with peers or perhaps is constrained in the soul of the artist. Unfortunately with the evolution of the hot society, the Greek market place and productivity or commercialisation today's society is so focussed on profit that perhaps the are very few who can truly express themselves without an eye on the till. The constraints of which undoubtedly shackle creativity, as Nietzsche had described, when art is shackled to morality; too much constraint inhibits self expression (Magee, 2001, p.173). Morality may be in this context of this piece be perhaps loyalty to an employer. Intriguingly some cooks are so driven by their art that while they can generate significant revenues and patronage, they cannot run successful businesses. The reasons are very often not purely down to not having the right business acumen, but they simply enjoy employing too great a love of using top quality ingredients in abundance, in the same way that some mothers love to over feed their children.

While the progression of modern society was gradual advances in science, moon landings and growing individuality saw families spurn the traditional modern meal (Telfer, 1996). Dehydrated, reconstituted, evaporated became fashionable. Traditional fresh local foods were seen as old fashioned and linked to a rural past. In France the familiar role of the 'Bonne Femme' staying at home to look after the children was replaced by the working mum. The homemade soup was conveniently replaced by condensed varieties, meat was processed, vegetables became popular dehydrated or frozen, and taste is sacrificed for kitsch (Gronow, 1997). The introduction of Hazard Analysis Critical Control in the restaurant and hotel sector heralded the post modern society era. Travel was now seen as an integral part of the post modern new world order of mobility. Globalisation and an influx of ingredients from all over the world created ethnic restaurants and cuisine Modern. Today's society is an altered condition of increasing diversity and fragmentation, old norms have disappeared (Swingewood, 1991).All the while society is looking back to nature for stability through organic goods, individuals cooking, baking and growing fruit and vegetables.). In contrast to the Fordism mentality of the early 20th century in America there was also a yearning to go back to nature, connecting with the universal "Zeitgeist: anti-industrial rural romanticism; the idealism that called for the return to the plough and the re-embodiment of Cincinnatus in American life. "This movement aspired to eat natural, wholesome foods and thus created Corn flake crusades based on patent cereal products" (Ameresto, 2001, p.50). This is another reoccurring theme in society that man is perhaps searching for a piece of nature to make sense for his pensee sauvage mind that life is not purely about production and with mankind's constant intrusion into the most natural processes has resulted in modifications to all animals and fish that provide us with nourishment. It has be argued that perhaps the native oyster is only one of a few which have not been adapted (Ameresto, 2001b).Peace, economy growth, improved living standards and urbanisation resulted in the Mc Donaldisation of society (Ritzer, 2000).

Molecular gastronomy was the true post modern cuisine looking to reinterpret or reconstruct nature through rational scientific means and also using the mythology of bygone recipes as inspiration for new creations. The movement was inspired by the writings of Harold McGee who looks at the purely rational scientific aspect to cooking, while Herve This investigates mythology of the ancients, customs, old proverbs or traditions and attempts to prove or disprove them from a scientific perspective. Worryingly in an attempt to reconstruct traditional dishes and improve the aesthetic additional additives are used in cooking or presentation which one would not expect to find in fresh foods. Agar, Lecithin and xanthan gum are all cultural, not natural ingredients. Chefs such as Ferran Adria working at El Bulli attempted to define creativity by not copying others and sought to develop completely new innovative dishes every season. Collectively around the world in France Pierre Gagnaire and in England Heston Blumenthal among others were moving in the same direction. Although most of their cuisine was based on new methods developed at El Bulli. The human brain is maintaining a drive forward in search of new methods of artistic expression for food. The senses are used as a starting point as well as association, inspiration, adaption, deconstruction, minimisation and new techniques applied to food. In a similar way in which the Roman cooks added to, pounded, chopped minced modern or post modern man is attempting to reinterpret nature through the application of technology using liquid nitrogen, Paco jets, dehumidifiers, vacuum packaging machines and thermostatically controlled water baths. The modern kitchen providing fine dining experiences now resembles a laboratory. Yet given that our senses remain the same and our brains still process signals in the same way they always have there is no fundamental need for all this paraphernalia which is simply a product of our culture. But the continual evolution of gastronomy does not take place in isolation as the artists need drives his expression so too does the consumers need to express their own individuality through the food they eat.

The latest trend in the World's best restaurant reflects ingredients taken from nature, cooked simply with little processing or addition of chemicals. The pendulum is now swinging back in the opposite direction. The search for perfection has landed back at Mother Nature's door and not the in the laboratory. Finding wild, unpolluted natural ingredients is almost impossible as Man's exercise of culture has not taken place purely in the realms of cooking but on every aspect of nature from agriculture to aquaculture. Almost every animal or plant food source has been altered through cross pollination, fertilisation or domestication. The current popularity for wild, natural raw food is perhaps a desire to experience the pre-civilised world before cooking when Levi-Strauss would not have been able to distinguish mankind from animals as they were one.

From the gastronomic perspective, taste is now a global experience consisting of an experience, in an expressive style. The meal is comprised of a variety of sensations and services which concern complex judgements of taste. Food style is a fashion commodity. Taste expresses individuality, distinction and identification. In the quest for authenticity the media have created new social strata the petit bourgeois (Bourdieu, 1987). Economies of scale facilitate the democratization of luxury. We are now living in an altered post modern condition; it is not enough to reflect on these changes, the form and content of sociological ideas must themselves be deconstructed (Derrida, 1992).

Self identity plays a significant factor in the choices made by post modern consumers and may not be linked to typical social classes of modernity (Sloan, 2004). People today are well informed about food origins, calorific value and quality, yet they eat things which are not good for them. All advanced civilisations throughout history are the same in that regard, opting for fare which is pitifully devitalised and improperly balanced (Armesto, 2002). While times have changed the genome remains the same. When we think about being, belonging and our place in the universe, food is an instrument which can be used by mankind to personally acknowledge our position, status or belief to others, it is non-verbal expression which demonstrates the way man has always thought in two different expressions of the one mind.

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