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REGION, NATION AND GASTRONOMY: REGIONALISM IN GASTRONOMIC TEXTS
OF THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY (1900-1939)

BY

LAUREN RECHES

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in French in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2017

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OF THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY (1900-1939)

By

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in French in satisfaction of
the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

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By

Lauren Reches

Advisor: Francesca Canadé Sautman

France is far from being a uniform culture and yet the food of French provinces is often subsumed into one universally known “French cuisine.” While 19th-century *haute cuisine* ignored regional differences, gastronomes of the early 20th-century, such as Curnonsky, Marcel Rouff, Austin de Croze, and Pampille, defined a new French culinary identity based on appropriating and incorporating the diversity of the regional cuisines. Regional cuisine at the time was, however, quite diverse. Some of the regions of France were newly added to the country, such as Savoie and Nice, while others had been in contention for some time, such as Alsace. In addition, peasant cuisine differed greatly from that of bourgeois and upper-class households. Nevertheless, gastronomic works emphasized that an inherent “Frenchness” made them uniform, a concept put to work in the service of French national identity, even as one witnessed a rising regionalism. I argue that regionalism intersected with French gastronomy at the time and played a defining role in the construction of what is currently referred to as French Cuisine, exemplifying the profoundly political nature of culinary discourse at the time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Francesca Canadé Sautman, for her guidance and work on my behalf. She always pushed me when I needed to be pushed and cheered me on when I needed the enthusiasm. She never allowed me to produce anything but my very best.

I would also like to thank my other committee members, Julia Przybos, Antoinette Blum and Sara McDougall for their unique insights during the reading process. Their clever connections to other areas of interest, including literature, culture and politics, contributed greatly to the production of a well-rounded study.

I would like to thank my parents, Roger and Kristine Christensen, who have encouraged me for my entire life to never stop learning. Life doesn't stop while you are getting your doctorate and their support will never be forgotten or taken for granted.

Finally I would like to thank my husband, Or Reches, who supported me so much during the writing process. Thank you for wiping my tears, dusting me off and encouraging me to keep at it even during the most difficult moments.

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INTRODUCTION

Foie gras with truffles, crêpes, bouillabaisse, these are inarguably cornerstones of French cuisine. Though the food-loving public of the 21st century may see French cuisine as a highly recognizable institution based on some sort of essential national *art de vivre*, what we call French cuisine today is the product of a long political and social process imbedded in French culture and the struggles to define French identity. A significant period in the history of modern French cuisine came in the first decades of the 20th-century, from 1900 to 1939, when writings on gastronomy lauded differences between regions, highlighting their typical food products and culinary traditions. This tendency was influenced by the rise of regionalism, a concept championed by Jean Charles-Brun (1870-1946), founder of the Fédération Régionaliste Française in 1900, an organization that advocated for the development of regional pride and autonomy while maintaining national unity. It did not, as some movements would later, advocate for complete regional autonomy, and even less so, independence, as did the Breton separatists in the thirties and again in the seventies, or the Corsican liberation movement that was founded in 1976. Gastronomic regionalism touted the importance of the regional culinary tradition as an important aspect of national French identity. The result of the fusion of the new discourse of gastronomy and of a developing regionalism was a restructuring of French cuisine that is still in effect today.

Cuisine Before the 19th-century

In order to understand how cuisine became so ingrained in French identity, a few words discussing the creation of gastronomy and its evolution up to the 20th-century are in order.

Cookbooks were being written in France as early as the 14th century, with examples such as the famous *Le Viandier de Taillevent*, thought to have been written in the early 14th century, and *Le Ménagier de Paris*, dated 1393. Though medieval cooking was somewhat uniform in ingredients and style, cookbooks still show that there were also distinctive national taste and preparation preferences. In his book, *De la cuisine à la gastronomie: Histoire de la table française*, Patrick Rambourg writes “Le goût des épices et des saveurs acidulées est général dans l’Europe médiévale, mais déjà se dessinent des sensibilités et des comportements propres à chaque pays: Les Français préfèrent manger des carpes moins cuites que les Allemands, et découpent leur saumon d’une autre manière que les Anglais” (Rambourg 9). Nevertheless, it is hard to speak of a real national culinary identity before the Renaissance. Rambourg observes that it was during the Renaissance that fine cuisine began to be associated with the French nation. Preferences for cooking with butter and the consumption of sugar gradually became known as specifically French (Rambourg 10).

The first printed cookbook touted as recognizably “French” in style and purpose was *Le cuisinier françois* in 1651, by François Pierre de la Varenne (1618-1678). The book was so successful that it was republished multiple times in the next decades and even translated into English, German and Italian (Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste* 36). *Le cuisinier françois* was addressed to professional cooks who worked in the kitchens of the aristocracy. Its main purpose was to outline techniques and methods for proper cooking. As other publications began to emerge, the techniques, methods and ingredients that made up “French cuisine” were debated by authors who thus began to define it. L.S.R.’s *Art de bien traiter* (1674), for example, criticized La Varenne and stated that his own book was meant to “reformer cette antique et dégoûtante manière d’apprêter les choses et de les servir” (2). He suggested instead that fine cuisine was not

a matter of excess, but of the choice of the finest meats and delicate seasoning. (L.S.R. 2-3).¹ Ferguson explains, “Publication made such contestation and competition possible. By pushing things culinary out of the private kitchen and individual dining room, the printed work opened cuisine up to discussion and debate” (Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste* 38). Another important work of the 17th-century was *Le cuisinier roïal et bourgeois* (1691) by Massialot (1660-1733). His work was divided into *gras* and *maigre* to follow the religious dietary restrictions of the Catholic church. An innovation of his work is that the recipes are arranged in alphabetical order and classified by type of dish or their main ingredient. This would be the formula for cookbooks going forward and it still exists to this day (Rambourg 95).

The 18th-century was marked by the impression of a new wave of French cuisine. Cookbooks of the time, such as *Le cuisinier moderne* (1733) by Vincent La Chapelle (1690-1745), the *Nouveau traité de cuisine* (1739) and *La cuisinière bourgeoise* (1746) by Menon², referred to cuisine as “nouvelle” or “moderne” (Flandrin and Montanari 651-652). *La cuisinière bourgeoise* in particular saw great success. By the end of the 18th-century, it was in its 62nd edition. The book was aimed at a broader audience including, of course, the rising numbers of bourgeois readers. But what also distinguishes *La cuisinière bourgeoise* is that it is addressed to women. “Proposing a cuisinière instead of a cuisinier, an Officier de bouche or a Maître d’hôtel, Menon clearly locates the *cuisinière bourgeoise* outside the sphere of the aristocracy, its elaborate preparations, and its elite consumers,” writes Ferguson (*Accounting for Taste* 41). During the middle of the 18th-century, then, cuisine began to broaden its reaches outside of the aristocracy. The French Revolution aided this democratization of cuisine immensely as the cooks of the aristocracy opened restaurants and were able to share their talents with a wider public.

¹ L.S.R. only signed in his initials and little to nothing is known of his background.

² No information can be found on the dates of birth and death, nor any other details on this author’s life.

Cuisine and Gastronomy in the 19th-century

The birth of the restaurant marks perhaps the most significant change in the history of French cuisine. The new form of culinary appreciation was first accepted with trepidation, but also with a new interest on the part of chefs like Antonin Carême (1784-1833) and also gastronomes like Grimod de la Reynière (1758-1847). Rambourg notes the importance of the restaurant to the creation of the field of gastronomy, “La réputation du cuisinier ne dépend plus des bonnes grâces d’un protecteur fortune, mais d’une clientèle qui va peu à peu constituer une opinion publique” (Rambourg 165). Thus the gastronome represented a new type of culinary author, one who codified French cuisine by writing of it as an art instead of exclusively as a profession.

The concept of gastronomy, which thus appeared in the early 19th-century, brought about a fundamental transformation in cuisine. The culinary discourse was essential to the popularization of gastronomy and gastronomy was necessary for the transformation of the culinary discourse, because its texts made the personal act of eating become a social act. In her article, “A Cultural Field in the Making: Gastronomy in 19th Century France,” Ferguson remarks, “Although writing anchors every cultural field, the transitory nature of culinary products renders the gastronomic field absolutely dependent on a textual base” (611). Cuisine is made to be consumed and therefore destroyed, which pushes us to produce texts to help it to survive. These texts create what we call a discourse, which is defined by Merriam Webster as “a mode of organizing knowledge, ideas, or experience that is rooted in language and its concrete contexts (as history or institutions).” As with each other discourse, the discourse on French food and wine was not born with the subject, but took years of writings to become what it is today. It was due to

writings on gastronomy that French cuisine became a true institution in France and also in the world.

In *L'ordre du discours*, Michel Foucault explains that discourse evolves throughout history as it is precisely controlled by those who write about it. « Dans toute société, la production du discours est à la fois contrôlée, sélectionnée, organisée et redistribuée par un certain nombre de procédures qui ont pour rôle d'en conjurer les pouvoirs et les dangers, d'en maîtriser l'événement aléatoire, d'en esquiver la lourde, la redoutable matérialité » (Foucault 10-11). If one retraces the production and organization of the culinary discourse, one can see the control of cuisine and its diffusion according to the politics and society of the era in question. Though the French Revolution aided in transforming the *haute cuisine* or *grande cuisine* of the courts into a cuisine accessible to the people, the inclusion was mostly an illusion. It was the bourgeois that took control of the discourse and began to appropriate it into their own society and culture.

Grimod de la Reynière stands out as one of the first of these restaurant critics or gastronomic journalists. He was a trained lawyer who gained fame for hosting dinners in Paris. He then published his *Almanach des gourmands* which appeared in eighteen volumes between 1803 and 1812. “Grimod de la Reynière was the first to grasp and begin to explore [the vast potential of the democratization of culinary luxury], inventing a role for himself as the intermediary between the swelling ranks of bourgeois consumers, ever more eager for culinary refinement, and the burgeoning providers of gastronomic pleasure—food shops, wine and spirit merchants, restaurants—vying for their share of the growing market” (Garval 52). Indeed, Grimod de la Reynière’s *Almanach* did not serve to instruct in cooking, but to instruct in the art of appreciating fine food.

Though Grimod is considered the first gastronome, the most famous writer of the category is still Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826). Brillat-Savarin saw gastronomy as the knowledge and understanding of all that relates to man as he eats, famously saying “Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es.” Brillat-Savarin’s writings show us that gastronomy included the consumer in cuisine and made it so that cuisine became an art for him as well. It is true that the culinary habits of a person can tell us a lot about his or her economic status and social life, including traditions and nationality. However, I argue that when speaking of French national identity, it is not exactly what one eats that is the determining factor, but how texts spoke of food and French culinary traditions. These texts led to the fashioning of cuisine as an integral part of modern French identity.

In his tribute to Brillat-Savarin, delivered at the first meeting the Académie des Gastronomes, Curnonsky said, according to Simon Arbellot, « [Brillat-Savarin] appartenait à ce Troisième Etat qu’on pourrait appeler l’Etat Solide, je veux dire cette Bourgeoisie moyenne, dont on a dit tant de mal et qui a dit tant de mal d’elle-même, mais n’en a pas moins donné à la France de bons et loyaux serviteurs et le meilleur de son sang » (Arbellot, *Curnonsky* 100). Cuisine was above all an institution reserved for the bourgeoisie and upper classes. The need to speak about cuisine, to share cuisine and to have friends who appreciated cuisine, all the time excluding others who did not know about this subject or who did not have access to the same products or ways of talking about them, created what Foucault called in his book *L’ordre du discours* (1971) a “society of discourse” around food, its preparation and its elite consumption.

In his book *Le bruissement de la langue*, Roland Barthes explores the cultural nuances of *Physiologie du goût* by Brillat-Savarin. He explains that culinary habits were associated with certain professions: « établissant que les grands gourmands de la société sont principalement les

financiers, les médecins, les gens de lettres et les dévots, ce que [Brillat-Savarin] considère, c'est un certain profil d'habitudes, bref une psychologie sociale: le goût gastronomique semble à ses yeux lié par privilège, soit à un positivisme de la profession (financiers, médecins), soit à une aptitude particulière à déplacer, à sublimer ou intimiser la jouissance (gens de lettres, dévots) » (Barthes, *Bruissement* 322-323). Medical doctors were often referred to as gastronomic experts. In fact, gastronomy was still closely related to health in the 19th century.³ The 10th aphorism of Brillat-Savarin in his "Aphorismes du professeur", considered as proverbs for gourmets, is « Ceux qui s'indigèrent ou s'enivrent ne savent ni boire ni manger » (Brillat-Savarin 37). Barthes explains, « Cette ouverture scientifique correspond à ce que fut B.S. dans sa vie même ; ce fut essentiellement un sujet polymorphe : juriste, diplomate, musicien, mondain, ayant bien connu et l'étranger et la province, la nourriture ne fut pas pour lui une manie, mais plutôt une sorte d'opérateur universel du discours » (Barthes, *Bruissement* 324). This connection to health did not diminish until well into the 20th-century and it is still apparent in some approaches to cuisine today, including fad diets and avoiding certain food categories for better health, such as gluten or meat. Even when gastronomes began exploring the simple food of the provinces in the 20th-century, doctors were often the main resource on local food and epilogues to gastronomic treatises occasionally included dietary advice.

The 19th-century was also marked by the codification of cuisine by chefs and gastronomes. The contributions of writers such as Brillat-Savarin with his *Physiologie du goût* (1826), Antonin Carême with *L'art de la cuisine française au XIX^e siècle* (1835), Alexandre

³Cuisine and health had been closely related as far back as the 5th-century BC when Hippocrates, known as « the father of modern medicine » devised the theory of humors. According to this theory, the universe is made up of air, fire, earth and water. There are 4 qualities associated with these, hot, cold, dry and wet. The combination of these factors gives birth to the humors. In order to stay healthy, a person had to eat a balanced diet and adjust it according to their humors that needed tempering. The concern for a balance of the humors was still present in culinary writings of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Dumas (1802-1870) with *Le grand dictionnaire de la cuisine* (1873) and many other encyclopedias and books, assisted in defining cuisine as an institution in France. This codification of cuisine is particularly evident in the works of Carême. “Carême constructed his culinary model on a linguistic system, putting together a lexicon that, like every language, could be adapted by different users to their own purposes,” explains Ferguson (*Accounting for Taste* 71). It is through the creation of a special culinary language that cuisine was able to diffuse itself throughout the country.

Carême worked for kings and nobles before the French Revolution and practiced *haute cuisine*. He is above all famous for his *pièces montées*, which were elaborate sculptures that served as centerpieces made of sugar, eggs, gum-arabic and sometimes almond paste. These *pièces montées* could also be eaten. Each piece straddled the line between the culinary art and the architectural, coming in figures such as pavilions, temples, fountains, and houses. In fact, presentation was quite important, according to Carême, and his *Le Cuisinier parisien* (1828) is filled with pages of illustrations of proper presentation, showing dishes on pedestals and ornamented with flowers. Rambourg observes of Carême’s cuisine, “Le raffinement de l’ornementation des mets distingue la haute cuisine et révèle la sensibilité de l’artiste” (Rambourg, 177). His cuisine can be seen as the link between the *ancien régime* and the truly national establishment that it became during the 19th century when the institution was opened up to the people after the Revolution. Indeed, Carême’s publications sought to reach across class divides in cuisine, though often artificially. In his book *L’art de la cuisine française au dix-neuvième siècle*, Carême mentions that he wanted it so that “les cuisiniers de toutes les classes pussent profiter de mon travail.” However, he also contradicts this statement by saying that his cuisine is reserved for the great lords and for sumptuous events such as a ball. His book was

written for men working in the professional sector of cuisine and does not include traditional cooking or cuisine prepared at the home by women.

The idea that there was a new culinary generation on the rise is once again expressed at the end of the 19th century in works such as those of Urbain Dubois (1818-1901) and Emile Dumont (1829-1887). Dubois's first edition of *La cuisine classique* appeared in 1856, but in the preface of the 18th edition he wrote « En ces temps troublés, où la splendeur de la cuisine semble se voiler, alors que les grandes écoles disparaissent ou deviennent plus rares, le besoin de l'étude s'impose naturellement aux esprits sérieux ; et dès lors, c'est aux bons livres qu'ils vont demander le secret des grandes traditions négligées ou perdues » (Dubois XV). One sees here an indication that cuisine was in the process of changing or evolving. Carême himself expressed in his works an attachment to tradition, but also a positive view toward the future of cooking. Dumont expressed the same feelings regarding the changes of cuisine and the importance of a discourse that supports this evolution. Certainly, one of these evolutions took place at the turn of the century with the advent of regionalism.

The French cuisine described by Dubois and Dumont at the end of the 19th century was still largely *haute cuisine* and did not take into account typical regional cuisines or the cooking of the lower classes. Dumont describes his selection of recipes in the following manner: « J'ai laissé les recettes qui n'ont aucune utilité pratique, parce qu'on n'aura jamais l'occasion d'y recourir ou parce qu'en les exécutant soi-même on ne trouve nul avantage sous le point de vue économique tels les *échaudée [sic]*, pâtisserie dont la confection est longue, minutieuse, et que l'on trouve dans les plus petits villages au prix le plus modique » (Dumont XI). Gastronomes of the end of the 19th century, like Dubois and Dumont, never mention the region where the dishes that they include originate, except by title, for example: *Sole Mornay des Provençaux*. The

different styles of cuisine are more or less noted as merely typical of the north or of the south of France. Accordingly, differences were blended together in cuisine and French cuisine was considered more or less monolithic. This national discourse differs from that of the early 20th-century because of the way it unified France, silencing differences and insisting upon one homogenous France: for example, Provençal cuisine is French simply because Provence is part of France.

Gastronomy in the early 20th-century: The Emergence of Regional Cuisine

Like their colleagues and mentors before them, gastronomes of the early 20th-century insisted on the fact that food and wine were important elements of French identity. However, in the beginning of the 20th Century, the culinary discourse changed profoundly. The *grande cuisine* of the 18th and 19th centuries was put to the side and gastronomes started to explore a new perspective on cuisine: regional cuisine. With the invention of the automobile, and before that, with the development of railway travel, well-off men, and in a small part, women, eagerly explored the varied culinary practices of France. Despite the extreme diversity of the provinces that remained vibrant during this time, their regional cuisines were—and still are—considered part of one French “cuisine”. Until the 19th-century, *haute cuisine* represented a uniform French cuisine and ignored regional differences. When a new generation of writers passionate about food and wine entered the culinary scene during the beginning of the 20th-century, they approached the subject differently from the gastronomes that preceded them, focusing on the seemingly simpler culinary traditions from France’s unique provinces.

The most important gastronome of the period was Curnonsky, (pseudonym of Maurice Edmond Sailland 1872-1956), who assisted in creating a new literary genre called gastronomic

tourism and a thorough classification of regional French cuisine. Travelling throughout France and conducting surveys on local cuisine, Curnonsky made his name through his *La France gastronomique* (1921), co-written with Marcel Rouff (1877-1946), a collection of 28 volumes categorizing local recipes, products, restaurants and culinary customs, along with *Le trésor gastronomique de France* (1933) and *Atlas de la gastronomie française* (1938). Like Curnonsky and Rouff, Austin de Croze (1866-1937), Maurice Des Ombiaux (1868-1943), and Pampille, pseudonym of Marthe Daudet (1878-1960), advocated a regionalist emphasis on cuisine that maintained old traditions and spoke of the culture and history of its region of origin.

Curnonsky, for example, travelled all over France to rediscover regional cuisine, employing techniques often used in ethnography in the beginning of the 20th-century. Writers such as Curnonsky that undertook a “travail de terrain” on cuisine were nicknamed the “gastronomades.”⁴ They underlined culinary and oenological differences in France by displaying their admiration for unique traditions in each region, just as if they were folkloric traditions of foreign cultures. Despite their differences, one thing remained consistent in the provinces: a tradition of cuisine. The methods and typical ingredients (eggs, butter, milk, flour, truffles, foie gras) were not the only definition of cuisine for the gastronomade, but rather, it was the very existence of *the culinary tradition* that was typically French.

However, ethnographic studies, just like constituted discourses on a practice or institution, can never be entirely neutral in their orientation or forms of exclusion. The evident biases in these gastronomic works reflected the era in which Curnonsky wrote and the upper-class or bourgeois friends with whom he associated himself. For example, when Curnonsky did

⁴The term “gastronomade” is found in many works by Curnonsky, for example *Six portraits gastronomiques*, a booklet written by Curnonsky and his friend Dugo and published by L’Ecu de France in 1938. The word represents someone who wanders from town to town in search of good regional cuisine.

his “survey”, the author did not question farmers or peasants, but elites (especially doctors). In this case, this is a false ethnology from the onset. In addition, despite the fact that Curnonsky considered his opinion toward women that cooked to be “revolutionary”, discriminatory attitudes toward women’s cooking that he judged as “folklorique” or “traditional” are repeatedly encountered in his texts. His views are also evident in the fact that he seems to close his eyes to the influences of other countries on French cuisine. Savoie and Alsace had especially strong influences coming from their non-French neighbors. The fact that these foreign influences were ignored in gastronomic writings was due to the politics of the interwar period that insisted on the unification of France while still glorifying its diversity. By analyzing the works of Curnonsky and his colleagues and the evolution of the culinary discourse of in the first decades of the 20th-century, from 1900 to 1939, one can note the tension between a national discourse and regional culinary autonomies.

Much of the change in the gastronomic discourse can be attributed to the increased interest in regionalism, beginning in 1900 and extending well into the interwar period. In fact, regionalist ideas were salient in many culinary texts geared to a growing public interest in local cultures and customs. Gastronomes’ writings were often politically conservative, championing the protection of French tradition and frequently manufacturing nostalgia that purported to connect the reader to the distinct identity of each region’s cuisine. However, writers and chefs from all political backgrounds participated in the creation of an institution of regional cuisine during this period. Republican ideals became especially important into the interwar period, and regionalism and gastronomy both adopted a theme of unity and modernization while maintaining traditions that made each region unique.

State of the Literature on Early 20th-century French Gastronomy

Current studies of French culinary history tend to minimize the varied influences in this period and the contributions of individuals such as Curnonsky. Food historian Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, writing about the “nostalgic cooking” particular to gastronomic writings of the interwar period, only discusses Curnonsky’s *La France gastronomique*. For other historians, the automobile is the decisive factor in the rapid development of early 20th-century cuisine. In his book *Marketing Michelin: Advertising & Cultural Identity in Twentieth-Century France* (2001), Stephen L. Harp underscores the importance of the *Michelin Guide* for gastronomes and the interdependence of tourism and gastronomy in the beginning of the 20th century. Harp, however, does not detail the contributions of Curnonsky and his colleagues. Further, he only discusses the impact of Michelin, and not the advent of popular culinary tourism. Freedom to travel was indeed an important factor in the popularization of regional cooking, not only by automobile, but also by railway. However, both means of travel were limited to the bourgeois and upper-classes. I contend that without a Republican discourse on the unification in diversity of France, regionalist gastronomy would not have acquired so much weight. Of course, tourism was a way to explore France but I further argue that it also served to diffuse regionalist thinking, a fact Pascal Ory alludes to in his survey of French gastronomic writing entitled *Le discours gastronomique français des origines à nos jours* (1998).

Julia Csergo’s “La Constitution de la spécialité gastronomique comme objet patrimonial en France” (1997) examines the evolution of culinary regionalism. She begins with the first gastronomic map in the 18th century, discusses the Third Republic, when the gastronomic specialty becomes a *lieu de mémoire*, and ends with the gastro-touristic works of Curnonsky and

his colleagues. Csergo thus sheds considerable light on the way regional and culinary discourses intersect in the interwar period, yet also only briefly discusses Curnonsky's writings.

Amy Trubek's work specifically addresses the history of regional cooking. *The Taste of Place: A Cultural Journey into Terroir* (2008) concerns the definition of *terroir* and its significance in modern gastronomy. Trubek's *Haute Cuisine: How the French Invented the Culinary Profession* (2000), discusses the building of the culinary profession. Trubek's books provide both valuable context and theory to examine modern French cuisine, but circumvent the crucial role of the French *gastronomades* of the interwar period.

On the other hand, works that focus on regionalism rarely take gastronomy into account. Anne-Marie Thiesse's book *Ecrire la France: Le mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la Belle Epoque et la Libération* (1991) is considered one of the most well-researched texts on regionalism and its beginnings. However, it focuses specifically on political regionalism and the emergence of literary regionalism, without directing any chapters to cultural regionalism and its impact. Similarly, other major works that concentrate explicitly on regionalism, such as Julian Wright's *The Regionalist Movement in France, 1890-1914: Jean Charles-Brun and French Political Thought* (2003) and Thibault Flory's *Le mouvement régionaliste français* (1966) do not explore regionalism beyond its political implications.

Largely, most works brush upon the idea of the effects of regionalism on the gastronomy during the early to mid 20th-century, but very few go into great detail on the subject and many limit the types of texts they use as evidence to cookbooks. In contrast to Ferguson, Harp, Csergo, and Trubek, I examine the early 20th-century, not only through cookbooks but through many types of texts directed to different audiences, such as advertisements, gastronomic tour guides, books including culinary anecdotes, and government archives accessible on the internet. Indeed,

a study of the relationship between gastronomy and regionalism must rely on a variety of sources to be compelling and bring out the intricacies of the cultural history of the period. My broad corpus of texts allows me to study in depth the relationship between cuisine and regionalism in early 20th-century and interwar France. I will be limiting my study to 1900 through 1939, as the turn of the century marked the debuts of cultural regionalism, while the interwar period marked the peak of the fusion of gastronomy and regionalism.

Eschewing an impossible comprehensive examination of each province, my analysis anchors itself in two regions, Périgord and Savoie (Savoy). This allows me to compare and contrast culinary and regionalist themes in writings and representations of two historically and culturally different parts of France, providing representative samples of interwar connections between cooking and regionalist ideology.

My sources pose different challenges for interpretation: cookbooks are essential but often contain only recipes with very little surrounding text to facilitate interpretation. Works of literary fiction represent rather than document, but are filled with valuable detail, not only about foodstuffs and preparations, but also about the locations and sites in which these are served, transmitted and panegyricized. Gastronomic travel guides are often rich in clearly political commentary about regions and their relation to the Center. Various forms of gastronomic advertisements call for interpretative tools that are at once focused on the hidden messages of iconography and on the sociology of consumption.

My first chapter follows the construction of regionalism. I outline not only the origins of the movement, but also its many facets, including literary regionalism, political regionalism and cultural regionalism. I look particularly at the contributions of Jean Charles-Brun, considered the founder of regionalism at the turn of the 19th century, as well as writings by Charles Maurras and

Joseph Paul-Boncour. I argue that writings by Charles-Brun on cultural regionalism focused on the contributions of local artisans and the importance of the partnership between regionalism and tourism. This partnership is what fostered gastronomic tour guides by authors such as Curnonsky and Croze and shaped the transformation of the culinary to include simple regional cooking.

My second chapter provides a close reading of Curnonsky's works and those of his circle, including Marcel Rouff, Austin de Croze and Pampille (pseudonym of Marthe Daudet). My main focus will be on *La France gastronomique* [1921], co-authored with Rouff, though I also use his other works of gastronomic tourism, such as *Le trésor gastronomique de France* [1933] and *Atlas de la gastronomie française* [1938], as well as his more anecdotal writings such as his *Gaîtés et curiosités gastronomiques* [1933]. I also discuss some of his contemporaries such as Maurice Des Ombiaux, Austin de Croze, and Pampille, and the impact of regionalism on their writings. I will thus connect the writings of these gastronomes to defining events of the period, situating the merging of French culinary identity and gastronomic discourse in the early 20th century within the main regionalist ideas of the same period.

The third and fourth chapters are case studies on two specific regions: Périgord situated in the west of France, inland of Bordeaux, and Savoie lying on the Alps and bordering Italy and Switzerland. I study the region of Périgord to show how traditional peasant cuisine was interpreted and, arguably, *mis*interpreted by bourgeois gastronomic tourists such as Curnonsky. Indeed, to support a unified vision of French cuisine, gastronomes ignored class differences in cuisine and often used fabricated nostalgia to connect readers to purportedly strange local customs.

The region of Savoie represents a very different case in the promotion of regional cuisine. Savoie had been recently integrated into France after a controversial annexation and plebiscite in

1860, which was welcomed by a small group of Savoyards, but met with resistance by others. Though the region was largely French-speaking, the north of Savoie had close economic and cultural ties to Switzerland, while Italian influences could be sensed in the cuisine and food preparations in the south and east. For this reason, French gastronomes felt it necessary to prove the “Frenchness” of Savoie by discussing the relations of its cuisine to that of France. In the *Atlas de la gastronomie française* (1938), after mentioning the plebiscite of 1860, Curnonsky described the cuisine of the region as “saine, agreste et loyale”, (wholesome, agrarian, and loyal), qualities that were to make Savoie cuisine inherently French. My case studies – Périgord and Savoie - allow me to examine two very different manifestations of regionalism in gastronomic texts in the early 20th-century.

The fourth chapter is an additional case study on Paris. I analyze both how regional cuisine was presented in Parisian restaurants and how the cuisine of Paris was categorized in regional gastronomic tour guides. Regional restaurants thrived in Paris where locals were interested in tasting “authentic” regional cooking. Though Paris was often said to have the most talented chefs, it was on the other hand thought to display a lack of traditional home cooking. Discourses of regionalism often view Paris as an Other to the regions, presenting it as corrupt and modern. For this reason, it was necessary for gastronomes to find a way to adapt gastronomic regionalism to include Paris. Thus what was presented as the regional cuisine of Paris can be thought of as an Invented Tradition as defined by Eric Hobsbawm in *The Invention of Tradition*.

In my conclusion, I discuss the history and impact of gastronomic regionalism on modern culinary discourse. A significant contribution of regionalism was the Appellation d’Origine Protégée (or AOP) institution, arguably the most significant addition to the gastronomic

enterprise during the interwar period, fueled by vigorous regionalist politics. The AOP was born in 1919, but it took over 15 years to define its function before wines began to receive AOP designations in 1935. This system is based on the concept of “*terroir*”—the uniqueness of gastronomic products stemming from their relation to a specific, narrowly defined place of origin. This concept was one of the foremost contributions of gastronomic regionalism during the early 20th-century. Though the word *terroir* has been in use since the 17th-century, its use in relation to wine became especially significant in the early 20th-century as the ideas of regionalism gained strength. Another effect of regionalism was the idea of shopping local and of fostering farmers’ markets. Today, these often derive from regionalist themes promoting simple cooking and the purity of authentic rural products as opposed to the mass-produced foodstuffs associated with the city.

My dissertation argues that French culinary discourse was deeply transformed by the emergence of regionalism in the early and mid-20th-century. Regionalism helped define how French cuisine was categorized and portrayed not only within France but throughout the world. Because of this transformation in the early to mid-20th century, French cuisine began to be associated with diversity and tradition, as it is today. These writings continue to play a crucial role in how France posits itself as a global cultural force in the 21st century.

CHAPTER 1 - REGIONALISM

Scholars have not failed to acknowledge the contrast between France's cultural diversity and its longstanding embrace of unified identity. Fernand Braudel recognized this tension in his work *The Identity of France* (1986) stating, regarding the particularities of the French population's regional identity, "The vital thing for every community is to avoid being confused with the next tiny 'patrie', to remain *other*" (Braudel 41). However, Braudel adds, this does not prevent the Frenchman from proudly identifying as "French" at the same time. During the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, the discourse of "unity in diversity" gained particular intensity in parallel with the introduction of regionalism. Perhaps for this reason, regionalism has long been studied by cultural historians and sociologists seeking insight into the development of modern French identity.

Origins of Regionalism

In order to understand the regionalist movement and its implications for French gastronomic writing in the early 20th century, we must first go back to its origins. Historians have often disagreed about the source of this increased interest in regionalism, diversely attributing it to a reaction against modernization and globalization, technological advances in transportation and tourism, the patriotic nation-building of the Third Republic, or even patriotism born from a more conservative nationalist protectionism. In his book *The Regionalist Movement in France 1890-1914: Jean Charles-Brun and French Political Thought* (2003), Julian Wright notes that "The second development that has drawn new attention to Belle-Époque regionalism has been the success of cultural history, and in particular one of its central paradigms, the 'construction of

identity'. As interest grew in the imagining of European nationalities during the nineteenth century, European 'micro-nationalism' has naturally become a subject worthy of attention" (3). Several historians have thus dealt with regionalism as a primary focus of their writings on cultural identity; however, none have focused on the role of gastronomy or cuisine in the construction of that identity.

Ever since its introduction into the French language, the term "regionalism" has been subject to a certain amount of confusion. This is because the term itself has had many manifestations and its precise origins are for the most part unknown. According to Thiébaud Flory, author of *Le mouvement régionaliste français* (1966) and among the first scholars to write on the subject, regionalist views were present as far back as 1865 in Nancy when a charter was signed that aimed to "Fortifier la commune, vivifier le canton, supprimer l'arrondissement, élargir le département" (Flory 2-3). Though regionalist ideas of decentralization and the focus on local power are central to it, the Nancy Charter of 1865 did not actually use the word regionalism and left out social or economic issues. It was first and foremost a reaction against centralization more than the emanation of an early regionalist movement. However, this charter greatly inspired Jean Charles-Brun who has been credited as the father of French regionalism. In fact, it was referenced by another important regionalist, Joseph Paul-Boncour, in his *Un débat nouveau sur la République et la décentralisation* (1905). This work was written in collaboration with the rightist Charles Maurras, not as the stepping stone to the foundation of regionalism, but as an example of bi-partisan participation (Boncour was on the Left) in the political argument for decentralization (Paul-Boncour and Maurras 14).

Actually, the regionalist movement was considered an "aspiration diffuse" until the early 20th century when it acquired its first definition in a doctrine formulated by Charles-Brun upon

his creation of the Fédération Régionaliste Française (FRF) in 1900. The FRF played an important role in the organization and transmission of the ideas of the regionalist movement throughout France. Charles-Brun's major work on the subject, *Le régionalisme* (1911) did much to define both its administrative goals as well as its cultural and social aspirations. Like the Nancy Charter of 1865, it brought together groups of diverse backgrounds and political affiliations interested in regionalism and gave them a common purpose. Thirty years later, the movement had gained enough popularity to merit a definition of regionalism in the Dictionary of the Académie Française of 1934: « Tendance à favoriser, tout en maintenant l'unité nationale, le développement particulier, autonome, des régions et à en conserver la physionomie des mœurs, les coutumes et les traditions historiques » (Peer 49). Although my study will focus on regionalism as outlined by Charles-Brun and his writings, it is important to introduce regionalism by also examining the contributions of other regionalist writers, such as the republican and socialist Joseph Paul-Boncour (1873-1972) and of more nationalist and right-wing regionalists such as Charles Maurras (1868-1952) and Maurice Barrès (1862-1923).

A number of scholars, including Thiébaud Flory, Anne-Marie Thiesse, Eric Storm, Timothy Baycroft and Julien Wright have devoted much attention to regionalism and yet there is very little overlap in their discussions. This is due to the fact that regionalism is a subject that is reflected in many aspects of the 20th-century, encompassing politics, economics, art, literature and culture. While Thiesse's position centers on regionalist literature, touching only lightly on political decentralization, Julian Wright and Flory take a more historical approach to the subject and focus on the political influences of regionalism and their impact on economics and law. Wright centers more specifically on the works of Charles-Brun and criticizes Flory's cursory exposé of Charles-Brun's important contributions to the subject.

In addition, regionalism has often been studied as a purely French movement, while in fact many countries throughout Europe witnessed similar ones. In his 2012 article “The Birth of Regionalism and the Crisis of Reason: France, Germany and Spain”, appearing in the collection *Region and State in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Nation Building, Regional Identities and Separatism*, edited by Joost Augusteijn and Eric Storm, Storm traces the beginning of regionalist movements in France, Germany and Spain by highlighting both their similarities and differences and regionalist manifestations in art and architecture. In order to compare these instances of the movement, he chooses one author from each country that can be considered a principal voice of regionalism: Julius Langbehn (1851-1907) of Germany, Angel Ganivet (1865-1898) from Spain and Maurice Barrès (1862-1923) of France. He points out, for example, that all three authors asserted that their country was experiencing a collective identity crisis and favored “a more organic national unity based on a return to the country’s most authentic traditions and a resurrection of its true collective personality” (48), though they disagreed about the appropriate solution. Langbehn praised the Dutch painter Rembrandt as the spirit of the Germanic race and as an educator whose teachings would lead to a national rebirth. Ganivet argued that Spain’s identity crisis was rooted in its history of conquest and territorial expansion. Barrès on the other hand argued for the protection of regions which were in his view at once a source of local pride and a gateway to true patriotism, a common theme in French regionalism from both the Left and the Right.

In comparing these three diverse regionalist perspectives Storm argues that “no epoch-making event can be identified that functioned as a watershed” (Storm 37) leading to explanations of their cause, but that they were part of a transnational phenomenon. However, he does highlight several important events that did lead to the emergence of regionalism, such as

social and economic modernization, the Franco-Prussian war, the rise of the market economy, and the development of education, transportation and communication, which greatly changed rural society. Though the notion of connecting regionalism across different countries is perhaps an interesting one, it remains too ambitious to cover in a small article and therefore falls short. Each comparison can only be a vague shell of the analysis of the political and cultural mood surrounding regionalism in the three countries.

As the movements and their catalytic events were so particular in different countries, each one should be studied separately in order for their implications to be fully grasped. In France, for example, two very important events that one must take into account while studying the development of the regionalist movement are the French Revolution and the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian war. The reaction against the unitary state brought about by the French Revolution is a cause that has often been overlooked or glossed over by those writing on the subject. The provinces that had held various special privileges under the Ancien Regime, such as Brittany, stood to lose them thanks to the Jacobin centralizing and homogenizing French government. In his book *Regionalism after Regionalisation: Spain, France and the United Kingdom*, Frans Schrijver explains, “This notion of a unitary state, subject to comprehensive standardized rules, facilitated the emergence of the concept of the abstract, impersonal state. Having broken with the personal identification of the monarch with the notion of sovereignty, the French Revolution provided the basic model for the depersonalized state, with a life and character of its own, separate from the government or ruler of the day” (Schrijver 172). Thus the regionalist movement, focused not only on decentralization itself, but also on the promotion of regional differences and particularities, can be seen as a reaction against the depersonalized state that was the product of the French Revolution. In fact, the depersonalization that continued, such

as the enforcement of the French language in schools, was often mentioned, first by the *félibrige* and then later in the regionalist writings of the early 20th-century that followed.

The French defeat in the Franco-Prussian war can also be seen as a catalyst for regionalism. The losses brought by the war caused a wave of national negativity among the French and increased the desire for protection from the “outside” and for a redefinition of France. Two themes that were common to this redefinition of the nation were “enracinement” and “petite patrie”. Anne-Marie Thiesse states in her book *Ecrire la France: Le mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la Belle-Époque et la Libération* (1991), “Enracinement: le thème revient de manière de plus en plus lancinante à mesure que décline la position internationale de la France, ce que marquent les échecs militaires (celui de 1870, ravivé en 1940) et la montée de nouvelles puissances économiques” (13). Thiesse expands on this idea later on in her book, emphasizing the importance of the “bruised national ego” of France after the Franco-Prussian War. France no longer held a position of military, economic and intellectual power. It was no longer considered the first among nations and sought to redefine itself in a simpler fashion. This new definition Thiesse describes as follows: “Plus modeste, elle établit l’excellence du pays non pas sur une supériorité en force, ou sur une précellence en un domaine particulier, mais sur le rassemblement harmonieux de tous les éléments nécessaires au bonheur humain” (Thiesse, *Écrire la France* 243-244). Indeed the “petite patrie” was a term that became an important theme under the Third Republic after the war of 1870. Works such as *Le tour de la France par deux enfants*, published in 1878, exhibit this desire common under the Third Republic to instill in citizens the love of their “petite patrie” by understanding the uniqueness that is common to France. Regionalist writings echoed this theme of glorifying unity in diversity.

Coupled with the redefinition of France after the defeat of the Franco-Prussian war was the rise of modernization across Europe. Another important facet of regionalism was its reaction against this modernization. Thiesse explains that all countries were confronted with the question of modernity beginning in the late 19th-century and increasingly in the beginning of the 20th-century. Modernization began in particular with the Industrial Revolution, which brought significant changes to rural life including improvements in communication and technology. “L’accélération du processus, désormais, est vécue comme un bouleversement non maîtrisable. L’avenir s’ouvre sur l’inconnu et l’angoisse: le passé devient refuge” (Thiesse, *Écrire la France* 240). In this way, a nostalgia for a simpler way of life caused a shift towards an interest in the peasantry and rural regional cultures.

It is this nostalgia for traditions and rural life that led to the creation of associations promoting rural and regional traditions and tourism throughout the country. Museums of folklore and terroir opened in the provinces, touring clubs wrote guides assisting the bourgeois in their quest for regional culture and customs, and the focus of food shifted from the prestige of the *haute cuisine* of the Ancien Régime to rustic, regional food. It can thus be noted that regionalism had many catalysts and was both interacting with and reacting against the Third Republic. While it embraced the ideas of unity in diversity, the “petite patrie” and “enracinement”, it initially rejected both modernization and the depersonalization that were enhanced after the French Revolution and continued during the 19th-century (Thiesse 62-63).

Regionalism versus Decentralization

Regionalism is a complex movement and should not be reduced to only one of its elements, as scholars have tended to do. In particular, it was often confused with decentralization

both at its origins and during its development. This confusion still exists in analyses today. In *Le régionalisme* Jean Charles-Brun acknowledged this confusion, noting that Maurras himself often used the term decentralization for lack of a better one. Charles-Brun admitted that he himself found it quite unsuitable, because he saw regionalism as a more fluid concept. He then clarified the difference between regionalism and other terms with which it is often conflated, such as deconcentration and federalism.

In *Le mouvement régionaliste français*, Flory begins with a much-needed clarification of regionalism and summarizes the interpretation laid forth by Charles-Brun in *Le régionalisme*. He thus distinguishes regionalism at once from decentralization, deconcentration, federalism and autonomism. Flory explains that decentralization seeks to focus all powers on the local, taking them away from a central power. Deconcentration transfers power to local representatives. He adds that deconcentration does not create independent governing agents in the regions, but displaces decision-making. Federalism he sees as a much subtler differentiation from regionalism. Quite simply, he explains that Federalism is concerned with the subject of the state whereas regionalism is concerned with the subject of the region. Finally, autonomism he sees as the exact opposite, though it is often a caricature of regionalism, even leading to negative views of it. Contrarily to autonomism, regionalism does not attack national unity, but works within this unity and against uniformity. In *Un débat nouveau*, Paul-Boncour clarified why the creation of a new term, distinct from other political terms, was necessary: “[D]écentralisation’ sentait trop le droit administratif, et ‘fédéralisme’, le constitutionnel; l’un est trop négatif et l’autre trop abstrait; tous les deux imprécis, indiquaient seulement l’idée du mouvement par lequel on voulait relâcher les contraintes de l’Etat et créer des autonomies, tandis que ‘régionalisme’ lui substitue l’idée plus précise des réalités concrètes sur lesquelles on s’appuie pour relâcher ces contraintes,

l'indication très nette des groupements pour lesquels on revendique l'autonomie" (Paul-Boncour and Maurras 9-10). This reasoning deemphasizes a political and administrative definition of regionalism and stresses instead the specific character of the region itself and of the populations that inhabit it, their way of life, social conditions, artistic and architectural identity, etc., and the other axes of a definition of regionalism that were important to Charles-Brun's views of it, such as economy, culture, literature and art. Regionalist views on culture and the arts were particularly important to its foundation, as many of the first members of the FRF were originally *félibres*.

The *félibres* were a group of young southern French scholars founded in 1854 and led by Frédéric Mistral (1830-1914) that dedicated themselves initially to the creation of literary works in the "langue d'Oc". They saw the "centralization" of literature as the enemy of local culture. Because Occitan dialects were so debased and varied at the time, they also took the opportunity to normalize the language and "purify" it in order to make it ideal for literary expression. As the *félibrige* evolved, it also began to speak for the preservation of Occitan culture and society. This eventually led the *félibrige* to take on federalist politics in their writings with some members speaking out against republicanism and for monarchy and others taking a stance for a simpler decentralization of the current administration (Thiesse, *Écrire la France* 65-67).

Several members of what would later be the Fédération Régionaliste Française, such as Jean Charles-Brun and Charles Maurras, met as *félibres*, and that is when their interest in the ideas of regionalism, which had at the time not yet been defined or conceptualized, began. In fact, it was in 1882 that the young *félibres*, led by Maurras and Frédéric Amouretti, decided to take action and delivered a declaration stating that they would now focus their energies on "freeing the souls of the provinces from their cages".

Nous sommes autonomistes, nous sommes fédéralistes et si quelque part, dans la France du Nord, un peuple veut marcher avec nous, nous lui tendrons la main. Un

groupe de patriotes bretons vient de demander, pour leur illustre province, le rétablissement des anciens États. Nous sommes avec ces Bretons. Oui, nous voulons une assemblée souveraine à Bordeaux, à Toulouse, à Montpellier, nous en voulons une à Marseille ou à Aix. Et ces assemblées régiront notre administration, nos tribunaux, nos écoles, nos universités, nos travaux publics (Charles-Brun 275).⁵

One must take into account the importance of the explicit rejection of the legacy of the French Revolution in Maurras's words. He thus speaks for the sovereignty of French regions over their administration, laws and schools. One can consider this declaration as the official birth of the regionalist movement as it mentioned many of the characteristics defined later in *Le régionalisme* such as the strengthening of regional administration, cultural decentralization, the glorification of the independence of regions and the attachment to the earth and its richness, or as Maurras stated "la complète mise en valeur des merveilleuses richesses de notre sol" (Charles-Brun, *Le régionalisme* 276).

Both Charles-Brun and Maurras were greatly influenced by their *félibre* beginnings and this can be seen later on in their work. Maurras continued to speak against centralization and for a return to the provinces and for a country that more closely resembled the *Ancien Régime*. On the other hand, Charles-Brun advocated at once for administrative powers for the provinces and for continuing to promote the preservation of regional cultural traditions for much of his life. In fact, he played a large part in the construction and planning of the Regional Center for the 1937 Paris World's Fair.

⁵ The Déclaration des Félibres Fédéralistes of February 22nd, 1891, was cited in Charles-Brun's work, *Le régionalisme*, written in 1911.

Jean Charles-Brun: The Founder of Regionalism

Born in Marseille to a family of the “petite bourgeoisie”, Jean Charles-Brun (1870-1946) began his career as a high school teacher in Marseille. At the age of 18, Charles-Brun joined the *félibrige*, which inspired him to study medieval Occitan literature during his years in the university. After a scandal was caused by his relationship with an older, married woman, Jenny Maes, he moved with her to Paris in 1892. Upon moving to Paris to continue his studies at the Sorbonne in 1892, he joined the Parisian division of the *félibrige* and continued to work on the expansion of the *félibrige* throughout France. He passed his Agrégation de Lettres in 1893, making him the youngest *agrégé* in France of the time (Meyer 7-11). It is around this time that his interest in regionalism broadened and that he began to tout regional cultural awareness for all provinces throughout France along with decentralization. Not long after, in 1896, the Fédération Régionaliste Française was born. Charles-Brun remained an integral part of this organization and regularly held regional salons at his apartment in Paris until his death in 1946. He was highly esteemed as a poet, an intellectual and a journalist. Many of those who wrote to him addressed him with the honorific “Cher Maître” in their letters to him. He was thus not only an extremely important scholarly figure, but one integral to the foundation and maintenance of the regionalist movement (Thiesse, *Écrire la France* 94-95).

Another important aspect of Charles-Brun’s involvement in the regionalist movement was his contribution to cultural regionalism. *L’Action régionaliste* was a journal regularly published by the FRF directed by Charles-Brun. It played an important role in the spread of regionalism throughout France but also in encouraging cultural regionalism and not solely decentralization or administrative regionalism. In each issue it would announce various regionalist cultural shows such as local art exhibitions featuring folkloric or regional art and it

also promoted regional fairs and the publication of regional poetry. Anne-Marie Thiesse notes the importance of these publications, referring to them as Charles-Brun's ethnographic contributions to regionalism.

Charles-Brun was a faithful pupil of Frédéric Mistral, considered a conservative, who was one of the founders of the *félibrige*. However, he was also a follower of socialist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's works. In fact, Charles-Brun opens his book *Le régionalisme* with a quote by Proudhon, "Se définir, c'est exister" (61) and quotes him regularly in several chapters. Both Thiesse and Wright cite the influence of Proudhon in his writings on regionalism. In his works, he regularly quotes regionalist views from conservatives such as Maurras and Barrès to liberals like Paul-Boncour. Thus he showed a respect for all sides of the political spectrum during his most prolific periods. Though he seemed to lay low during World War I, he was heavily involved in the Vichy regime. He accepted a position on the Conseil national de Vichy as an advisor on the Comité national de Folklore. In 1944 he published an essay on regionalism in the series "Cahiers politiques de Vichy" in which he praised Pétain's support of the peasantry and the artisan. However, after the war, Charles-Brun later criticized the Vichy regime for its failure to promote regionalism in an essay titled "La faillite de Vichy en matière de régionalisme" given at a conference of the Ligue républicaine nationale (Guieu 5-6).

Conservative Regionalism: Charles Maurras & Maurice Barrès

Like Charles-Brun, Charles Maurras (1868-1952) began his interest in regionalism with the *félibrige*, where he was still considered a "jeune poète" (Thiesse, *Écrire la France* 18). After the Dreyfus Affair, the main section of the *félibrige* broke into two separate societies: the Ligue

de la Patrie Française, which Maurras followed, and the Ligue Occitane headed by Charles-Brun. According to Maurras, the Republic and regionalism were completely incompatible. His writings are littered with anti-parliamentarianism, anti-urbanism and anti-republicanism. According to Maurras, Republicanism was concerned only with the interests of the individual and he saw this as the cause for the decline in the birth rate in France and therefore for the weakening of the army, causing France to be both divided internally and susceptible to outside influences and the attacks of stronger armies across the border. Maurras believed that the centralization of the state stemmed directly from the Revolution and the creation of departments. He often wrote in support of a return to the provinces or “pays” of the old regime, referring to each as a “petite patrie”. However, as opposed to other extreme regionalists, Maurras was against separatism. He saw the monarchy as an ancient and established institution in which he put his faith. For this reason, Charles Maurras is most commonly associated with the extreme regionalism of the right and the nationalist-regionalist fusion that led to the movement’s critique.

A fellow contributor to the nationalist-regionalist fusion, Maurice Barrès (1862-1923), is often recognized as one of the founders of regionalism and is even credited by some as the creator of the term “regionalism”, though there is no concrete evidence to support this claim. His series *Le roman de l’énergie nationale* contained three books entitled *Les déracinés* (1897), *L’appel au soldat* (1900) and *Leurs figures* (1902) that were all written during the height of his involvement with the regionalist movement. Of these three, *Les déracinés* most significantly marked the literary and nationalist side of regionalism. In this work, Barrès emphasized an attachment to “la terre” that is reminiscent of the discourse of “retour à la terre” that was gaining popularity as a theme of the emerging regionalist movement.

Barrès also wrote on the notion of decentralization. In fact, in the same work, he attributed the loss of Alsace to centralization and viewed regionalism as an ideology of resistance. He championed the importance of “enracinement,” writing that one is the product of one’s past and that an individual discovers himself in family, race, and nation. According to his works, the individual is subordinate to the collectivity, which is best served by an authoritarian régime. However, he did not embrace the monarchist ideas of his *Action française* colleague, Charles Maurras. It was not a monarchy that would best serve the people’s needs, according to Barrès, but a strong authoritarian figure.

In his article “The Birth of Regionalism and the Crisis of Reason: France, Germany and Spain”, Eric Storm focuses on Barrès as representative of the regionalist movement in France. He writes that French regionalism emphasized the region itself as compared to German and Spanish regionalism. Storm concludes that cultural regionalism coincided with political and economic regionalism while all of these forms relied on notions of national roots, tradition and authenticity in their programs and concepts. These basic ideas of regionalism fostered the movement on both the national and the local levels. However, focusing on Barrès as the key figure of French regionalism seems to me a problematic choice. Barrès certainly played a part in the movement, but was by no means one of its founding fathers. Thus, in my thesis, I focus much more on Charles-Brun as he did the most to not only define the movement, but to dissociate it from a simply political or administrative identity. Charles-Brun’s leadership shaped and defined it as a concept that can and should be found in culture, society, economics, education and literature.

Liberal Regionalism - Joseph Paul-Boncour

Because of the popularity of the writings of Barrès and Maurras, their strong views shaped the way that many people saw regionalism at the beginning of the 20th-century, as a nationalist and ultra-conservative movement. However, as we have seen in Charles-Brun's writing, this was not the intention of regionalism and it was certainly a view that was not championed by all regionalists as the group evolved. Early regionalists often disagreed on the abstract concept, as well, and many others shared Charles-Brun's view of a more liberal and fluid regionalism, such as Joseph Paul-Boncour.

Paul-Boncour was a lawyer and politician best known for his relationship to president Waldeck-Rousseau (president from 1899-1902) for whom he worked as a private secretary. Paul-Boncour was known for his socialist political views. It is interesting to compare Paul-Boncour's socialism to the conservative regionalism of Maurras and Barrès. In his souvenirs entitled *Entre deux guerres* written in Paris in 1945, Paul-Boncour wrote of his views on regionalism in 1902 as follows:

[...] pour être solide, un État, qu'il soit républicain ou monarchiste, devait s'édifier sur des groupements sociaux, qui le soient également. Ceux-ci ne pouvaient l'être que s'ils disposaient d'une assez large autonomie... Un conglomérat d'individus n'est pas une société ; c'est leur groupement qui vaut ; et, à côté des groupements volontaires, auxquels la loi des associations de Waldeck-Rousseau venait de donner son statut dans la liberté, il y en avait de naturels et d'obligatoires, déterminés par la famille à laquelle on appartient, par le lieu où on vit, par la profession dans laquelle on travaille. J'avais doctriné le syndicat obligatoire. J'étais donc tout préparé à concevoir la nécessité d'élargir en régionalisme la revendication décentralisatrice, trop oubliée, des vieux républicains. Je retrouvais d'ailleurs là mes souvenirs Bretons. (Paul-Boncour 147)

His regionalist ideas were thus very much attached to decentralization. According to Julian Wright, Paul-Boncour blamed the Republican party's failure to decentralize France on its obsession with clericalism.

However, Paul-Boncour's regionalism was not limited to administrative decentralization. Like other socialists of his time, he also wrote about the need to create a social art movement. This movement exhibited clearly regionalist ideas. In his article "Joseph Paul-Boncour: Regionalism, Syndicalism and the Third Republic", Julian Wright writes, "Social art was an art that expressed the desires of all, in a happy and balanced society." Charles-Brun also called for the need of art to be socially engaged. Wright continues,

Here then is the connection between the social and the regionalist aspects of Paul-Boncour's thought. In order to understand his social politics, it is vital to appreciate his literary and artistic commentaries. Social art was an art that expressed the desires of all, in a happy and balanced society. What could make that society achieve this essential balance? The freedom to build up associations within the family, the profession, the village, the region and the race. (Wright, "Paul-Boncour" 80)

Of course, Wright admits that Paul-Boncour's opinion was not a majority one within the Third Republic, but a modern conception of the State and its involvement in regional life and the individual.

As several scholars have already shown, the regionalism of the first half of the 20th-century is often associated with conservative, right-wing political groups and the conservative Catholics. Though these groups often incorporated aspects of regionalism in their discourses, regionalism is a concept that was never meant to be affiliated with any given political movement and was certainly not an enemy of the Republicans. In *Le mouvement régionaliste français* (1966) Flory writes :

Le mouvement régionaliste a rassemblé et rassemble des personnalités de toutes les tendances politiques et de toutes les origines professionnelles. Des hommes politiques tels que Paul Deschanel, Paul Doumer, Albert Lebrun, Paul-Boncour, J. Hennessy, A. Ribot, L. Marin, E. Clémental, A. Tardieu. Des hommes de lettres et des artistes tels que Maurice Barrès, Frédéric Mistral et Vincent d'Indy. Des géographes tels que Vidal La Blanche et Jean Brunhes. Des juristes tels que les Professeurs Louis Rolland, Marcel Prélot et Liet-Veaux, MM. Maurice Brun et Bernard Appert. (Flory 3-4)

This list represents an interesting mix of political backgrounds mainly from the Center and Right. Of those mentioned that are known today, many were Democratic Republicans⁶ such as the jurist Louis Rolland, Paul Deschanel and Albert Lebrun, who was later the last president of the Third Republic, while Paul Doumer was part of the Radical Party and served as president of France from June 1931 to May 1932. André Tardieu was considered a moderate conservative. But the FRF certainly contained a number of more radically conservative members and nationalists as well, notably Maurice Barrès, Vincent d'Indy and Charles Maurras.⁷ Like Maurras, d'Indy was a committed monarchist, joining the Ligue de la Patrie Française during the Dreyfus Affair. Thus a diverse group of scholars came together to lead the beginnings of the regionalist movement. Interestingly, Charles-Brun refused to declare any political associations for the movement while he was leader of the FRF. Truly, the regionalist movement, though it was often used in a political context, was woven not only into administration, but into economics, culture and education. Regionalism was defined by Charles-Brun as a discipline rather than a political system. According to him, regionalism was a concept that tended towards decentralization and federalism, but was not always in agreement with either.

Timothy Baycroft's article "National Diversity, Regionalism and Decentralism in France", also appearing in Augusteijn and Storm's edited collection *Region and State in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, albeit focusing only on the political aspects of regionalism, contributes to the study by showing the opposition between the right and left and their views of the movement. He examines France between 1890 and 1914 in order to comprehend to what

⁶ The Democratic Republican Alliance was a center-left leaning party founded in the early 20th century by Gambetta and Poincaré.

⁷ It should be noted that all the members listed who hailed from the arts (Vincent d'Indy, Maurice Barrès and Frédéric Mistral) were right-wing.

extent reality coincided with the French myth of a centralized and harmonious France and to what extent regionalism, decentralization and separatism contributed to or negated this myth. His argument centers on Republicanism and its values of unification and centralization. Republicans for instance advocated and enforced the use of the French language in education. According to Baycroft, this conflicted with regionalism, which Republicanism saw as a threat to the unification of France.

While the Right had a history of appealing to rural voters and advocated for more regional autonomy, Republicanism was associated with modernization and a strong central state. As Baycroft points out, Republicans eventually embraced regional movements as a way to strengthen national identity through a discourse of regional diversity. However, other studies have gone much further to show that regionalism was much more politically fluid and did not conflict, at least not so overtly, with any particular political ideology, but was embraced at least in part by many parties and views. Baycroft analyzed just one area of regionalism and one type of Republicanism, but it was not overall so cut and dry. Rather, there was a regionalism of the Left and a regionalism of the Right.

Flory points out that Paul-Boncour and Charles Maurras had opposing views on the degree to which the success of the administrative movement depended on the political regime. Paul-Boncour believed the two were independent and that any political regime, including the republican, could regionalize itself, and he was famously quoted as advocating “décentralisons d’abord”. On the contrary, Maurras believed that only a monarchy could be regionalized (Flory 16). Paul-Boncour’s viewpoint was that the Republic needed to be modified and modernized, not overthrown. In a collaborative written debate between Maurras and Paul-Boncour on regionalism from 1905, entitled *Un débat nouveau*, Maurras wrote “La centralisation n’est pas la cause de la

défense républicaine: elle en est l'instrument. Tant qu'il y aura des partis républicains, ils ne pourront briser cet instrument précieux à moins de courir au suicide où ne court jamais un parti. Voilà pourquoi le 'décentralisons d'abord' de Paul-Boncour n'a aucune chance d'être entendu" (Paul-Boncour and Maurras 90). Charles-Brun refused to contribute to *Un débat nouveau* or even to write a conclusion for it. He did not encourage such debates and thought both viewpoints had a certain logic to them. For Charles-Brun, it was important to unite all concepts that sprung out of regionalism, including the Barrèsian theme of "la terre et les morts". Perhaps what makes Charles-Brun so important to regionalism was his democratic ability to indeed unite the various viewpoints of regionalism and search for the middle ground.

For the Left, regionalism often took on a very different form. Kyri Watson Claflin explains in her article "Le 'Retour à la terre' après la grande guerre: Politique agricole, cuisine et régionalisme", that while "retour à la terre" for the conservative Right represented a return to simplicity, to origins, and often hinted at a return to the monarchy, the leftist "retour à la terre", especially after the First World War, represented a return to agriculture (renaissance des campagnes) and rural reform, considered tools for the construction of a stronger, more democratic France (Claflin 216). With these rural reforms, the leftists sought to bring to the countryside a modern superstructure including science, new technologies and hygiene.

This "retour à la terre" was evident in Charles-Brun's work as well. He wrote in *Le régionalisme* that the subject is not just a concern for sociologists, but also for regionalists. "[Les régionalistes] ne se contentent point, s'ils sont poètes, de maudire les villes tentaculaires, ou de chanter, après Virgile, les délices de la vie rustique, ce qui est, d'ailleurs, une oeuvre fort méritoire" (51). He continued that these regionalists were pushing for several measures to be implemented in order to halt the rural exodus. First is propaganda. He briefly mentioned that

propaganda can be useful to show local populations the demands and dangers of city life, but clarified that the ideal solution is to improve life in the countryside by making it more productive and more pleasant so that propaganda isn't necessary in the first place. This brought him to his second point, improving intellectual entertainment. He suggested that much of the rural exodus was happening because young people were moving to city centers so that they could have access to distractions such as theater, concerts and cafés. If local festivals, libraries and theaters were improved, the peasant would feel more enriched intellectually by his surroundings and feel no desire to leave. Next, he stressed the need for access to decent housing and private property. He then mentioned the need for regions to organize on many levels by establishing local mutual banks (“*crédit agricole*”), unions, and regional associations. Finally, in a very nationalist tone, Charles-Brun wrote that we must praise and encourage small rural industries, in particular, rural artisans and folkloric products that are “*un véritable conservatoire du goût de notre race*” (Charles-Brun, *Le régionalisme* 51).

Cultural Regionalism

With an increasing insistence on the necessity to explore France and its riches, regionalism became more grounded in cultural particularities. “Il faut qu'on sache que le régionalisme artistique n'est pas plus une tâche de bibelotiers que d'embaumeurs, que nos provinces ont une âme ou, mieux, des nuances d'âmes particulières qu'il s'agit de fixer et de traduire, et que tout le reste est parade ou exploitation,” wrote Charles-Brun (*Le régionalisme* 39). Cultural regionalism was highlighted by the emphasis on regional diversity as a treasure of the nation and was very important to Charles-Brun's life work and writings. It is for this reason

that he was chosen to be the head of the regional committee of the 1937 International Exposition in Paris.

As we have seen, Charles-Brun often distanced himself from the political debates within regionalism and preferred an all-encompassing version inclusive of all political views and which embraced regionalist concepts of literature, economics, and, especially, culture. “L’originalité des positions de Charles-Brun,” writes Thiesse in her 1988 article « Le mouvement littéraire régionaliste (1900-1945) », “consiste à associer aux mesures économiques et politiques un programme en matière culturelle: Régionalisation de l’enseignement (développement de l’histoire et de la géographie locale; éventualité, bien que la question soit abordée avec prudence, de cours sur la langue régionale), créations de musées régionaux et d’écoles d’art mettant en valeur le patrimoine culturel local, développement des rubriques régionales de la presse de province, encouragements aux écrivains et aux artistes du cru” (Thiesse, « Le mouvement littéraire » 223). It was not the politicians that were the center of the regionalist movement, but the citizens of the region and those participating in and carrying on the traditions of the local culture.

In *Le régionalisme*, Charles-Brun thus clarified why it is the artisans that are the upholders of regionalism.

N’eussent-ils obéi qu’à de simples considérations scientifiques, ou, convaincus de la mort prochaine des variétés locales, n’eussent-ils été poussés que par le désir de colliger les vestiges d’un passé qu’il croyaient près de s’évanouir, les folkloristes qui ont recueilli les traditions, les chansons, les contes, les légendes, les superstitions mêmes; les amateurs du pittoresque qui ont souligné le mérite des costumes anciens, des beaux meubles, des faïences, des dentelles ou des émaux dus à l’ingéniosité de notre peuple, qui ont essayé de ressusciter les pompes et les fêtes abolies, ont fourni aux artistes et aux littérateurs la plus précieuse matière à mettre en oeuvre. Et, par ailleurs, ils ont rendu aux provinces françaises l’orgueil qui leur était indispensable et qu’elles étaient en train de perdre, tout assottées du

parisianisme le plus malfaisant et le plus monotone. (Charles-Brun, *Le régionalisme* 28-29)

Thus, the artists and artisans were the heart of the regionalist movement. They were essential to the movement as they were the ones that continued to keep the particular regionalist pasts alive and the harsh homogenizing influence of Paris at bay.

It can be easily seen how chefs, local cooks and even grandmothers passing down recipes were considered to be local artisans and therefore extremely important to the regionalist movement. This same theme is an image common in gastronomic texts of the first half of the 20th-century. “Curnonsky and Marcel Rouff’s gastronomic tour of the French provinces emphasized the homey virtues,” writes Ferguson in *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine* (2004), “the farmer’s wives who, like Proust’s Françoise, were ‘artists’ in the kitchen. As men of a certain age, they set themselves resolutely against the fast-changing, palpably modernizing world of the postwar years [...] For ‘Gastronomy is a Great School of Regionalism and Traditionalism,’ which, like the great artists, writers, and thinkers of France, ‘makes us feel, understand, and love the prodigious variety, all the fertile diversity of French earth’” (*Accounting for Taste* 146). Thus, the regionalist discourse is plainly present in the gastronomic texts of the interwar period that champion regional patrimony and the local culinary artisan.

The championing of regional patrimony can also be plainly seen in regionalist literature. Regionalist literature emerged much earlier than political regionalism, beginning in the 1860s and flourishing at the turn of the century, though it was not given the name “regionalist” until the creation of the term in the early 20th-century. This is not to say that literature set to a rural background or addressing regionalist themes did not exist before this time. In fact, images of provincial life are apparent in works such as Gustave Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* (1856) and

several of George Sand's novels, written and published roughly between 1846 and 1857, in which she wrote of her native province of Berry. Rather, regionalist literature became a real literary movement at the turn of the century when clubs and magazines were formed dedicating themselves to provincial literature expressing regionalist themes.

Anne-Marie Thiesse is considered one of the foremost scholars on regionalist literature. Her book *Écrire la France: Le mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la Belle-Époque et la Libération*, published in 1991, combines an analysis of regionalist literature from the early 20th-century with a study of regionalist political themes of the same period. In her work, she emphasizes the link between the *félibrige* and the "réveil littéraire provincial", but she is careful to note that, though the two have many similarities, they are not synonymous with each other and are, in fact, radically different movements (Thiesse, *Écrire la France* 26). She notes as an example the southern regionalist journals which did not ignore the existence of the *félibrige* and their cause, but were published in French and espoused themes that were ideologically centered and more concerned with national questions, such as *L'âme latine*. Many regionalist literary associations popped up throughout France in the first 30 years of the 20th-century beginning with anthologies of poetry, such as *Poètes du nord* (1880-1902) published in 1902 and *Les provinces poétiques* published in 1905, highlighting the sanity of rural life, the beauty of the regions and often infusing their poetry with local dialects.

Thiesse notes that authors of regionalist literature had different origins. First and foremost, education vastly improved, especially in the literary sector, as institutions of higher education increased their recruitment of teachers from 1875-1896 and thus modernized the system. More focus was given to the arts and especially literature and poetry. Consequentially, students during this period were responsible for the foundation of a great number of literary

societies. At the same time, many regionalists were influenced by their time as *félibres*, and were interested in creating a literature rooted in the south of France and using Occitan dialects.

According to Thiesse, some authors of regionalist literature even made their debuts in symbolist and Parnassian verse. The jump from these literary styles to regionalism is not obvious. While symbolism rarely makes references to reality and does not speak of a specific place, regionalist literature has a strong localization, has many realistic descriptions, paints scenes of “typical” rural or regional life and often borrows from local dialects or rural speech (Thiesse, “Le mouvement littéraire” 224). In addition, patriotism and moralism consistently appear as important to regionalist literature. “La littérature ‘parisienne’, tout d’abord, fait l’objet d’attaques très virulentes, à caractère moralisant et... patriotique : étalant complaisamment le vice, elle corromprait la jeunesse française et donnerait aux étrangers une piètre idée de notre pays. En revanche, le roman régionaliste serait à la fois sain et porteur de valeurs typiquement françaises puisqu’issues directement du sol” (Thiesse, *Écrire la France* 103), explains Thiesse.

Indeed, a very important theme of regionalist literature was the corruption of the city and the sincerity, sanity and wholesome morals of rural life. Often, the heroes of the story are presented with a temptation of life in the city that they refuse in order to embrace rural life, or they succumb to the temptation and corruption of the city only to happily return to a simpler rural life. Thiesse gives the example of *Aimée Villard, fille de France*, a Limousin book by Charles Silvestre who won the Jean Revel regionalist prize in 1924. In the book, the heroine must take over the family farm after her father dies prematurely. Despite the difficulties that the work entails, she refuses the offers of the town seamstress who wants to marry her off to her son who lives in the city (Limoges). In the end, she marries a simple and strong man who moves to

the farm to assist her. This example also highlights another defining factor of regionalist literature, the promotion of rural values and a “retour à la terre”.

What was especially important to regionalist literature was a nostalgic interest in rural life. As we have seen, regionalist writings championed the need for an increased investment in the rural areas in order to prevent the diaspora into the city centers in search of entertainment. Regionalist literature also reveals this interest in the rural migration. This was especially prevalent during the interwar period in France. These works were often referred to as *romans de terroir*, *romans du sol* or *littérature populaire*. Authors of this genre include Jean Giono (1895-1970) and Henri Pourrat (1897-1959). Thiesse writes “L’accent est porté sur la *diversité* du sol national: cela pourrait sembler paradoxal dans un pays où le très ancien sentiment d’unité nationale est associé au centralisme le plus extrême. Mais en fait, c’est précisément parce qu’unité et centralisme ont une force inébranlable que le régionalisme apparaît comme une forme ‘alternative’ de l’identité nationale” (Thiesse, *Écrire la France* 243). Thus, in these works the accent was placed on the diversity of the national rural culture, revealing once again the regionalist themes promoted by the Third Republic.

In this study, I hope to carry out an analysis that follows Thiesse’s perspective, combining a thorough study of gastronomy in relation to the main themes of regionalism during the early 20th-century. However, it is important to note that Thiesse’s book leaves out what can be seen as an important precursor to regionalist writing from the 19th-century, *Le tour de la France par deux enfants*, originally published in 1878. The book is especially significant to the cultural history of the early 20th-century as 6 million copies had been printed by 1901. It was regularly being used in schools of the Third Republic, and it represents an early precedent of a

regionalist Republican discourse advocating the need for national French unity (Ozouf & Ozouf 126).

Written by G. Bruno, pseudonym of Augustine Fouillée, *Le tour de la France par deux enfants* follows two young brothers from Lorraine (most of Alsace as well as the Moselle and part of the Meurthe departments of Lorraine had been recently annexed by the Prussians in 1871) who leave their village and travel throughout France in search of family. Along the way, the brothers visit almost every French region and learn about its people, economy and major resources and products. The book is extremely patriotic and embraces all regions and customs, displaying not just France's diversity, but the kindness, hospitality and great work ethic of its people. Absent from the book, however, is any conversation about a political need for decentralization. The book appears to be an early version of cultural or literary regionalism as opposed to outright administrative regionalism.

According to C. Fontaine's introduction to the 1901 edition of the book, the original title page explained that it was recommended for school libraries and was featured on a list of books offered free of charge by the city of Paris to its schools. The introduction served to clarify the intent of the work : "Sans omettre dans cet ouvrage aucune des connaissances morales et pratiques que nos maîtres désirent trouver dans un livre de lecture courante, nous avons décidé d'en introduire une que chacun de nous considère aujourd'hui comme absolument indispensable dans nos écoles : la connaissance de la patrie. La connaissance de la patrie est le fondement de toute véritable instruction civique" (Bruno 1). Thus, the book was a work of propaganda for school children offered by the Republic. The book gave each young French student a tour of their country or "petite patrie" much in a similar way that the gastronomic tour guides of the

20th-century offered a vision of unified and diverse France for a mostly bourgeois, Parisian audience.

Though food and agriculture are mentioned to a much smaller degree than they will be 30-40 years later when gastronomic tourism appears, much of the book portrays the importance of France through agriculture, food, and local customs tied into the regionalist discourse of unity in diversity. In this work, we see how the importance of regional French products begins to meld with regional diversity:

Elle servit à chacun une bonne assiette de soupe au poisson qui est le mets favori de la Provence. (88)

On chargea rapidement sur le navire des pains de sucre venant des importantes raffineries de la ville, des boîtes de sardines et de légumes fabriquées aussi à Nantes, et des vins blancs d'Angers et de Saumur. (106)

M. Gertal avait acheté la veille au soir des marchandises qu'il s'agissait de charger dans la voiture. Il y avait de ces « énormes fromages dits de *Gruyère* qu'on fait dans le Jura, et dont quelques-uns pèsent vingt-cinq kilogrammes... Notre seul département du Jura possède plus de cinquante mille caves et fabrique par an plus de quatre millions de kilogrammes de fromages. Et nous faisons tout cela en nous associant riches comme pauvres. (39-40)

In this way, *Le Tour de la France par deux enfants* was an important precursor for works of gastronomic regionalism in the early 20th-century.

Julian Wright has criticized Thiesse for not putting enough emphasis on politics in her study of literary regionalism. Wright notes that she avoids approaching Charles-Burn's political thought and chooses to take "his admission of doctrinal vagueness at face value" (Wright 7). Though Wright is correct to point out that Thiesse could spend a little more time on his political thought, I disagree that working with his vagueness is a negative point in Thiesse's work. In fact, as I have already shown, Charles-Brun's emphasis on the fluidity of regionalism and the

difficulty to define it is an important aspect of his thinking. Thiesse's main argument is that the importance of Charles-Brun's regionalism was its contribution to the creation of a literary and cultural renaissance. This I find to be absolutely accurate. Whereas other regionalists, Barrès in particular, are known to be literary regionalist authors, their contribution to regionalism has been by far more political than cultural. Charles-Brun's defining trait as opposed to that of other regionalist authors, was his attempt to accept political regionalism and its importance while emphasizing the significance of tradition, culture, literature and art in the definition and promulgation of the regionalist discourse.

Indeed, Charles-Brun's major contribution to regionalism was his emphasis on the value of "artistic regionalism" to the regionalist cause. In *Le régionalisme*, Charles-Brun paid homage to local cultural writing and thus elucidated upon his view of artistic regionalism:

Avec la variété propre à traduire l'esthétique de chaque région et à satisfaire ses besoins, s'y marquait l'ingéniosité de nos artisans les plus humbles. Vannerie, dentelles, produits du tissage à la main, poteries, bois sculptés, les objets où se complaisait le travail patient de nos aïeux avaient cet indéfinissable cachet que les nations voisines n'ont jamais su nous ravir. Ils utilisaient logiquement, sobrement, les matières fournies par le pays d'origine. Leurs modèles, tantôt conservés par lointaine tradition, tantôt rénovés par des adaptateurs au délicat génie, étaient souvent d'une grâce achevée. En tout cas, ils étaient honnêtes et probes. Les produits de la fabrication rurale, quand c'étaient des dentelles ou des tissus, se transmettaient par héritage. (Charles-Brun *Le régionalisme* 52)

In this way, Charles-Brun saw the artist as the translator of the essence of the region. An artist appreciates the culture and geography of a region to a deeper degree than the everyday person. Though he did not include them in this passage, one could easily add "chefs" and "cuisinier/ères" to the list of artists and "cuisine" to the list of arts. As a product of rural fabrication, cuisine was also transmitted by heritage using the products found in their region of origin. These themes will be found often reiterated in the writings of gastronomic regionalists such as Curnonsky, Marcel Rouff, Austin de Croze and most of their fellow writers.

The Touring Clubs of France – The Birth of Gastronomic Tourism

With the invention of the automobile and the increased interest in exploring France's rich, diverse regions by the upper-classes, touring clubs started appearing in the late 19th and especially in the early 20th century. These clubs were welcomed and embraced by regionalists who saw them as a catalyst for a wider appreciation of regional diversity. In fact, Shanny Peer points out in her book *France on Display: Peasants, Provincials, and Folklore in the 1937 Paris Exhibition* (1999) that Charles-Brun wrote a brochure on "Tourism and Regionalism" for the Touring-Club de France. In the brochure, he attempts to show the close relationship between tourism and regionalism and to clarify in this way how maintaining and developing regional diversity served the interests of tourism. "The partnership between regionalism and tourism produced regional guidebooks and literary anthologies, colorful local festivals like the Breton *pardons* that were 'improved' or recreated for tourists, 'regional' gastronomy, post cards and other souvenirs—all catering to a public of tourists that would expand by the time of the Popular Front to include the working classes" (Peer 75).

The Touring Club de France was the most well-known and prolific of the tourist clubs. Founded in 1890, it was modeled after the English Cyclist Touring Club, but quickly expanded its focus to many forms of tourism for the upper-classes including hiking, automobile tourism and eventually plane tourism. In 1900 it grew to 65,000 and by 1906 had already reached 104,000 members (Harp 55). In his book *Marketing Michelin: Advertising & Cultural Identity in Twentieth-Century France* (2001), Stephen Harp notes "Although ostensibly politically neutral, the TCF's political philosophy as revealed in the many articles of its monthly review, *La revue mensuelle du Touring Club*, was solidarist [...] although it is obvious that the group's sense of

solidarity included fellow group members but not society as a whole” (55). Harp defines solidarist as a middle road between a politics that favors no state intervention whatsoever and socialism without the extremes of either. The Touring Club de France was among the first of such groups to publish regular tour guides recommending hotels, trails, routes and eventually restaurants. In fact, Michelin’s free tour guides, which began in 1900, were a direct reflection of the foundations that the Touring Club de France had laid. These guides eventually expanded into an expertise of fine dining that is still well-respected today.

Another such touring club that was important to regionalism and gastronomy was the Club des Cent, founded in 1912. Upon its creation the club defined itself as “quelques camarades gourmets émérites et touristes convaincus” (Csergo 178). Julia Csergo’s article “Du discours gastronomique comme ‘propagande nationale’: Le Club des Cent 1912-1930”, appearing in the book *Gastronomie et identité culturelle française: Discours et représentations (XIXe – XXIe Siècles)* edited by Françoise Hache-Bissette and Denis Saillard, thoroughly examines not only this important gastronomic touring club and its foundations, but its contributions to and intersections with regionalism. The Club des Cent was both sport-centric and gastro-centric. The club derived its name from the fact that it allowed no more than 100 members at a time. No women were allowed. Most members resided in Paris and held bourgeois professions, such as doctors, bankers, journalists and a high number of lawyers and manufacturers (*industriels*). Csergo notes that, though the club’s focus was on the “sportif” and “gastronomique”, very few if any members were professionals in either fields (179-180). This background in the professions was very typical for touring clubs of the time. The Club des Cent, like most gastronomic clubs, typically held meetings in Paris and consisted of a largely Parisian-bourgeois membership, a point that deserves attention and will be addressed in a later chapter.

As these bourgeois and elite members toured around France and reviewed and recommended restaurants and other tourist activities, they centered their explorations on the “authentic” and especially on folklore and local culture. Csergo highlights the importance of food as regional tradition and folklore: “La nécessaire inscription de l’activité touristique dans la personnalité française, dans les traditions, le sol, le paysage, l’histoire, amène le Club à encourager, contre ‘*le repas international à prix fixe*’, les spécialités régionales: ‘*manger la choucroute en Alsace ou le homard au bord de la mer*’ devient un objectif majeur, alors même que les croisades en faveur des cuisines régionalistes se multiplient, dans un contexte idéologique favorable à l’éloge de la ‘petite patrie’ et à l’essor d’un mouvement folkloriste qui valorise la coutume locale” (Csergo 197). Indeed, the writing of the clubs began to intertwine regionalism with nationalism in the context of food. Thus, these bourgeois regionalists and gastronomic writers as well as local elites and tourists made traditional regional food an emerging object of formal defense and promotion. In this way, these groups, especially Touring Clubs and gastronomic clubs, made themselves the leading advocates of regional cultural expression, especially for cuisine. Like the *félibres*, who presented themselves as “speaking for the people” and more specifically, the peasant, these clubs and regionalist groups spoke for the food of the people, assisting them in defining it as a means of preservation. They thought of themselves as guardians of the simple, regional dishes.

Gastronomic texts were therefore deeply connected to the regionalist movement in the first half of the 20th-century and this connection greatly influenced the gastronomic discourse at an important time during its evolution. For this reason, a thorough study of regional gastronomic texts and their correlation with regionalism is an important and interesting contribution to the subject.

CHAPTER 2 – AUTHORS OF GASTRONOMIC REGIONALISM – CURNONSKY (1872-1956) AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

By the interwar period in France, gastronomy had fully incorporated regionalist themes, glorifying regional traditions. Gastronomes began promoting tourism in order to explore the richness and diversity of French cuisine and regionalists championed their efforts. The foundation of the Club des Cent in 1912 spurred the formation of countless other gastronomic societies, most if not all rooted in Paris with Parisian members, such as the Académie des Psychologues du Goût (1923), the Association des Gastronomes Régionalistes (1923) the Académie des Gastronomes (1928) and even women’s societies such as the Belles Perdrix (1928) and the Cercle des Gourmettes (1929).⁸

The popularity of gastronomic regionalism also incited the creation of an annual salon dedicated to the movement in 1923. The salon was organized by the Association des Gastronomes Régionalistes, founded by Count Austin de Croze. It united France’s best gastronomic authors including Curnonsky, Marcel Rouff, Escoffier, Prosper Montagné and even Colette. Other noteworthy people in attendance included Jean Charles-Brun, Louis Forest (Founder of the Club des Cent), Henri Chéron (the Minister of Agriculture), Louis Barthou (from the Académie Française), Baudry de Saunier (editor in chief of the *Revue du Touring Club de France*), and a gentleman referred to as simply “Barrillet”, said to be the president of the

⁸ The name “Perdrix” and the “ettes” ending of Gourmettes can be seen as diminishing the stature of female gastronomes. The defined purpose of these clubs further diminishes them: “de développer le goût de la saine cuisine familiale et la gastronomie régionale par des récompenses aux cuisiniers méritants, par l’échange, entre ses membres, de bonnes recettes.” Curnonsky et Gaston Derys. *Gaietés et curiosités gastronomiques*. p. 15.

Syndicat des Directeurs d'Hôtels et Restaurateurs Français) to name only a few (Croze, *Livret 1923* 3-4). All lectures were free and in principle open to the public, though, as usual, the members were largely upper-class and bourgeois as can be seen by the composition of its organizers. The salon was repeated once again in 1924 with a similar type of membership.

In order to understand the impact of works of gastronomic regionalism on the culinary discourse of the early 20th century and the interwar period in France, it is necessary to first identify those who wrote them. Many scholars on the subject agree that the main contributor to gastronomic regionalism was Curnonsky, pseudonym of Maurice Edmond Sailland (1872-1956), and for this reason he will be the focus of this chapter. However, the contributions of other gastronomes writers during this period, such as Austin de Croze (1866-1937), Gaston Derys (1875-1945), Maurice Des Ombiaux (1868-1943), Pampille, pseudonym of Marthe Daudet (1878-1960), and Marcel Rouff (1877-1936), should not be overlooked. These authors proposed a perspective on cuisine that was in the process of modernizing and evolving while its fundamental traditions remained intact. Even while sustaining these traditions, their writings acknowledged that the *grande cuisine* of the 18th and 19th centuries no longer defined French cuisine. Regional cuisine as a topic worthy of culinary study thus emerged in tandem with the advent of regionalism, as gastronomes began to explore the particularities of regional dishes and preparations of the provinces and often focused on a simpler style of cooking with local ingredients and seasonal menus.

Curnonsky

The gastronome Curnonsky (1872-1956), a culinary scholar and elected Prince des Gastronomes, will be the central author studied in this dissertation. The idea of cuisine being a French national treasure was not new at that time, but the works of Curnonsky [Maurice-Edmond Sailland], expressed the desire to present a unified vision of French cuisine that respected and highlighted the uniqueness of each province's cuisine, much like Republican themes of regionalism. Interestingly, Curnonsky, like many of his colleagues, managed to combine the principles of *grande cuisine* and those of regional cuisine—which is neither self-evident nor easy. The works that best display this approach are *La France gastronomique* (1921), *Le trésor gastronomique de la France* (1933), *Gaîtés et curiosités gastronomiques* (1933), and *Atlas de la gastronomie française* (1938). These works use regionalist thinking to promote cuisine as national identity in France.

Maurice Edmond Sailland (Curnonsky) was born in Angers on October 12th 1873 to a voluntarily bohemian father and a bourgeois mother who died during childbirth. Cuisine was an important part of his childhood and the cook of the home, Marie Chevalier, employed for forty years by the family, introduced the young Sailland to Angevine traditions. Simon Arbellot (1897-1965), a French journalist, author and close friend of Curnonsky who wrote his biography in 1965, noted that, because she was illiterate, « [elle] se bornait à retenir les recettes qu'elle avait vu préparer par sa mère. » He said of Madame Chevalier that she cooked « like the bird sings. » Arbellot emphasized, « Le grand-père Mazeran, » father of Curnonsky's mother, « avait ajouté la truculence méridionale à la douceur angevine et le moins qu'on puisse dire c'est que l'on se nourrissait bien chez les Sailland » (Arbellot 19). It is true that Curnonsky was raised in the dominant Angevine traditions to which he remained faithful during his lifetime.

In 1892, Curnonsky moved to Paris with his grandmother and Marie, the cook. He enrolled in the Collège Stanislas, but left before finishing his *licence ès lettres* to become a journalist. In 1895, he met Colette, with whom he developed a strong friendship, and was hired by her husband, Willy, as a *nègre*, or ghost writer. But his first gastro-touristic word, writes Arbellot, was for the *Guide Michelin*.

C'est là au bar du Journal que Cur eut ce mot qui allait sinon faire sa fortune, du moins affirmer sa réputation d'homme d'esprit. « Il y a quarante immortels à l'Académie Française, dit-il un jour, mais il n'y a qu'un seul increvable c'est chez Michelin. » M. Michelin à qui le mot fut rapporté le goûta fort. [...] On lui demande maintenant [*sic*] de rédiger chaque lundi un billet de publicité déguisé qu'il signera Bibendum. (Arbellot 37)⁹

This job started his career as a journalist specializing in tourism, which he would continue in his gastro-tourism writings later. Certainly the invention of the automobile was central to his success, for at this time, regionalism, tourism and cuisine entered into a clear interdependence. This “ménage à trois” is especially clear in the Michelin enterprise, for whom Bibendum represented the “French gentleman” interested in exploring the unique *patrimoine* of France.

As we know, Bibendum was not Sailland's first pseudonym. For a man who was so faithful to his Angevine heritage, Maurice-Edmond Sailland made a surprising choice when he settled on a pseudonym that was not even French in origin. Arbellot explains that Curnonsky was encouraged by his mentor, the humorist Alphonse Allais, to sign with a different name to be more fashionable. According to Arbellot, Allais said to Curnonsky « Maurice Sailland ce n'est pas une bonne signature. Trouvez-moi un pseudonyme, beaucoup de vos confrères en usent, de

⁹ Despite several different origin stories for the name Bibendum, Arbellot insists that it is Curnonsky who created this name for the character made up of tires drawn by artist O'Galop. According to Arbellot, Curnonsky stated « Bibendum, puisque le pneu Michelin boit tout, même l'obstacle, » the famous advertising catchline of the character. (See figure 2)

même au théâtre. C'est ce que nous appelons un nom de guerre. Allons, cherchons, tout est à la Russie en ce moment, le tsar vient à Paris, la flotte russe est à Toulon, Strawinsky est à l'affiche, pourquoi pas un nom en sky ? ». To which young Sailland, a lover of Latin, responded “Cur non sky”, Latin for “Why not sky” (Arbellot 24). By choosing a Russian name, Curnonsky elected a literary identity that was quite fashionable at the time but decidedly not French.

When Curnonsky met his idol Emile Zola for the first time after choosing his new name, Zola was instantly intrigued by it. However, Zola encouraged him to keep his birth name, which he thought was “bien français”. According to Arbellot, Zola said to him that Sailland was « Un nom si clair, si français! Et un nom qui promet! ». It is interesting to note that Zola himself kept his Italian name despite his sometimes-French nationalist-oriented writings.¹⁰ One can clearly note from this exchange the importance that French national identity had acquired, and that it was also a driver of conservative regionalism. In fact, Curnonsky supposedly responded to Zola « Justement, cher maître! il promet trop... et j'ai peur de ne pouvoir tenir! ». To which Zola retorted « Il ne faut jamais douter de soi, et il faut signer de son vrai nom. Votre pseudonyme, comment dire, exotique et bilingue risque de vous attirer plus tard des ennuis [...] Etre soi! et travailler! » (Arbellot 31). Curnonsky did not follow Zola's advice and, as predicted, the name caused some trouble throughout his life. When Curnonsky's name was proposed to the Legion of Honor, the minister looked at his dossier and saw the following written: « [...] Aventurier dangereux, a abrité chez lui des compagnons anarchistes pendant le procès des Trente. A été deux ans l'amant de la princesse russe W. anarchiste notoire, » and also « Sailland monarchiste à surveiller, a été secrétaire du duc de Montpensier et le commensal du duc de Guise avec lequel il

¹⁰ It should be noted, however, that Zola did perhaps alter his last name from Zolla to Zola, dropping one « L », perhaps to connect more easily to French culture.

dînait chez le restaurateur Poumeau et chez Mme Genot. A pris part à des réunions monarchistes organisées par son ami de jeunesse Léon Daudet et André Tardieu » (Arbellot 25). The last accusation was not altogether false. Léon Daudet was a good friend of Curnonsky and he often went to cafés with him and André Tardieu. In fact, Daudet also dabbled in gastronomic writings for *L'Action française*. He was also friends with the restaurateur Poumeau and Madame Genot. However, there is no further evidence that Curnonsky was the lover of the Russian Princess and he was neither an anarchist nor a spy.

Curnonsky's politics, as those of most of his colleagues, can be difficult to discern from his writings, but a quick look into his associates and friends can shed light on where he stood. Curnonsky met Léon Daudet, son of the well-known writer Alphonse Daudet and journalist who wrote for *L'Action française* at the end of the 19th-century. He had with Léon Daudet what was described as "amitié fraternelle" until his death. Arbellot says that Curnonsky persuaded him to vote for Daudet for the title of Prince de Gastronomes, the title that Curnonsky won in 1927, because he wanted to see that he was well thought of (Arbellot 77). It is Daudet who brought him to cafés, especially the café Weber, where he met many journalists and writers that became his familiars. Arbellot mentions that Curnonsky spent his time with Charles Maurras, Paul Bourget and Maurice Barrès, with whom he participated in journalistic groups. Thus, it seems that he had firm ties to members of *L'Action française*, a nationalist and conservative organization whose main spokesperson was Charles Maurras. Maurras, as Gordon Wright put it in his book *France in Modern Times*, led the organization to develop into an intensely nationalistic and authoritarian movement devoted to "saving France from such un-French elements as the Protestants, the Freemasons, and the Jews" (Wright 257). Both Maurras and Barrès were followers of the

conservative regionalist movement in France and Barrès, as we have seen (ch. 1), was even considered one of the leaders of this movement.

Certainly, a conservative regionalist discourse can be found in Curnonsky's gastronomic writings, however it cannot be said for certain whether or not Curnonsky shared the same politics as his friends and close colleagues. In fact, one can see that he was perhaps slightly separated from those politics through an excerpt of a letter from Marthe Daudet, wife of Léon Daudet and also a writer of gastronomic texts, that appeared in Arbellot's book. This letter implied that politics caused Curnonsky to put some distance between him and Daudet. « La vie et ses orages nous firent un peu perdre de vue ceux qui ne suivaient pas avec nous les rudes chemins de la politique et du journalisme de combat. Mais les gais compagnons du Weber ne furent jamais oubliés » (Arbellot 62).

Curnonsky's gastro-tourism guides arguably represent the most influential examples of this genre during the period. The first of his major works of gastro-tourism, entitled *La France gastronomique: Guide des merveilles culinaires et des bonnes auberges françaises*, was written in collaboration with Marcel Rouff. The work comprised 28 volumes, though 32 were anticipated, that detailed the gastronomic practices and traditions of different regions and it was published between 1921 and 1928. It categorized the best chefs, the best restaurants, and the most important regional products and their uses. The work contained few regional recipes and was in no means meant to be a regional cookbook. Instead it represented a celebration of regions in the way that Charles-Brun highlighted the importance of the appreciation of the local artisan in his regionalist writings. In this way, *La France gastronomique* included not only selected regional recipes, but it highlighted the culinary traditions, the most valued local products, the beauty of the landscape, the good morals of the locals, and incorporated stories of the authors'

favorite adventures in the regions. *La France gastronomique* is today the most respected text of the period that is dedicated to regional gastronomy, however few copies remain in circulation and no further editions were printed. However, the volume dedicated to Périgord was photocopied and released by Nabu Press in 2010.¹¹

Le trésor gastronomique de France (1933), written by Curnonsky in collaboration with Austin de Croze, is arguably the most thorough of his gastronomic tourism guides as it treats each region of France, including more obscure territories, such as Corsica. Corsica was perhaps a contribution by his co-author and folklorist Croze, who published a work on the folklore of Corsica in 1911 entitled *La chanson populaire de l'île de Corse*. It lists the culinary specialties of each region and includes almost all products, dishes and regional wines.

On the other hand, *Atlas de la gastronomie française* (1938) is a good example of a more general gastronomic tourism guide by Curnonsky, though its brevity and the fact that only a limited number of copies were produced ensured that no future editions were printed. The book is a more abridged version of the previous work and it is easy to pinpoint the regional culinary stereotypes it contains. Compared to the *Trésor*, this text allows one to understand how regions were generalized in a time when those in the center were just beginning to explore and categorize the regional culinary differences in France and to reinvent French Cuisine to include regional specialties.

Like many other gastronomic authors of his time, Curnonsky described cuisine as “folklore” in the *Atlas de la gastronomie* and refers to France as “paradis de la bonne chère”. In his introduction, he spoke of the French tradition of taste, of the “tradition millénaire de goût, de

¹¹ For this dissertation, I will also be using *The Yellow Guide for Epicures*, considered an English translation of the same work written for a British audience.

travail, de probité, d'honneur professionnel [...]”. By highlighting “folklore” in his introduction to the *Atlas*, Curnonsky alludes to an ethnographic approach to gastronomic writing, which is also evident in his introduction to the *Trésor*. He explained that he always began his research on a new province by surveying the local physicians in a region¹². By studying cuisine through “fieldwork”, he explored France and its provinces as an exotic culture. However, by analyzing cuisine in this way, he also marginalized it. When one deals with ethnographic research on a culture, it is necessary to understand that the author keeps and throws away what he wants. He filters his results. For example, by choosing medical doctors as his “culinary experts”, he excluded farmers and local chefs or cooks who could be more versed in the everyday local cuisine over the “elites”. Ferguson emphasizes that, in *La France gastronomique*, Curnonsky and Rouff warned the tourist who traveled to taste good local food and avoid the recommendations of the locals, unless they had “impeccable gourmet credentials”, as the food often preferred by locals was not refined enough for the Parisian palate.

Marcel Rouff

Marcel Rouff (1877-1936) was a co-founder of the Académie des Gastronomes with Curnonsky and one of the main champions for French regional cuisine during the early 20th-century. Rouff was born in Geneva in 1877, but his parents moved to Paris shortly after his birth. He lived in France for the majority of his time, but had dual citizenship to both Switzerland and

¹² Doctors have long been important to food and wine. In ancient Greek medicine, certain foods were prescribed to cure the imbalance of humors. In Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew*, this relationship is also evident as Petruchio becomes angry with his servant for serving him choleric food. At the time Curnonsky wrote, medical commentary was occasionally still present in texts. See for example Ali-Bab’s work *Gastronomie pratique: Etudes culinaires suivies du traitement de l’obésité des gourmands*.

France. His father, Jules Rouff, owned a publishing house in Paris, Éditions Rouff, which published most notably Jean Jaurès's *Histoire socialiste de la révolution française* (1900-1904) and had published much earlier Jules Michelet's *Histoire de France* (1847) and *Histoire de la révolution* (1855). Rouff was one of the collaborators on *Histoire socialiste* with Jaurès, which was published in multiple volumes between 1900 and 1904. According to Françoise Colin who wrote his biography in a chapter of *Et Marcel Rouff créa Dodin-Bouffant...* (1988), Rouff even adhered discretely with the Socialists during the Dreyfus Affair. In fact, his origins were Jewish, though non-practicing, and, according to Colin, he remained a fierce Germanophobe his entire life (Colin 22-23). On the other hand, he had a close friendship with Curnonsky, whose associates were largely conservatives and monarchists, and travelled with him throughout Europe, North America, the Middle-East and China. It is important to note that Rouff at no time declared himself socialist. Like Curnonsky, conclusions on his political views can only be inferred from the cross section of those he associated with and his contributions as an author.

Rouff is most famous for his co-authorship of *La France gastronomique* with Curnonsky and his novel *La vie et la passion de Dodin-Bouffant, gourmet* (1924). Though published in 1924, the novel was written before World War I, but its many editions, recent translation into English in 2002 and a reedited volume in French published in 2003 testify to its following. It was also made into a television movie in 1972.¹³ This novel is perhaps Rouff's longest-lived work. In his article "Savory Writing: Marcel Rouff's *Vie et passion de Dodin-Bouffant*" which appeared in the book *French Food: On the Table, On the Page, and in French Culture* (2001), Lawrence Schehr writes of *Dodin-Bouffant*, "Rouff's work is a happy, unexpected marriage between two sets of discourses: a straightforward narrative with an episodic and fairly predictable plot line

¹³ The film was a made for TV movie, made in France and directed by Edmond Tiborovsky.

and a developing discourse of gastronomy that reaches its own height in codification in this very time period” (125). The novel follows the quest of a gastronome to find a cook worthy of his kitchen and gourmet reputation. He finds his new cook in a woman named Adèle Pitou, who is described as “a robuste paysanne” (Colin 39). The moral highlight of the novel comes when the Prince D’Eurasie challenges Dodin-Bouffant to come for a meal at his home and to have his new cook prepare a meal for him in return. The prince’s meal contains many luxurious courses prepared by the very best chefs, but Dodin-Bouffant considers it overdone and in poor taste due to its lack of focus. The triumph comes when Adèle cooks a simple meal in return, which comprises most notably a basic *Pot-au-feu*, which transcends the extravagant meal produced by the cooks of the Prince d’Eurasie. As a result of this dinner, Dodin-Bouffant proposes to Adèle in order to keep her from taking a job with the prince.

The ending of the book is also significant to regional gastronomy as it addressed the other axis of gastronomic regionalism, the comparisons to supposedly inferior cuisines of foreign countries. In the final chapter, Dodin-Bouffant and his new wife take a trip to Germany. Of the dinner in Germany, Rouff wrote “He tasted—he tasted again and yet again—tirelessly tasted all the Teutonic rubbish offered to him which confirmed in every way his opinion of the heaviness, the lack of taste, and the prodigious stomach of the subjects of Prussia and their confederates” (142). The chapter seems to only have a place in the book in order to address this threat, as he roundly criticizes German cooking.

The choice of the name “Eurasie” is quite interesting. “Le vocable, courant de nos jours (une Eurasienne: métisse—charmante—d’Européen et d’Asiatique) n’a de signification que géographique puisque politiquement les deux continents comportent des États indépendants,” (52) explains Colin of the significance of the name. However, the name is much more significant

than Colin admits. The name represented perhaps the *fausse grande cuisine* lamented by Curnonsky, an overdone, overelaborate cuisine with no proper origin and no local ingredients. Both the theme of a female cook being among the best in France and the name “Eurasie” could also hint to Balzac’s novel *Splendeurs et misères courtesanes*, published between 1838 and 1847. In Balzac’s novel, the main character, Esther, is waited on by two servants, Asie and Europe. Asie is her cook and is regularly praised for her fine cooking in the same modern way that Curnonsky would praise women’s cooking some time later. “C’est [...] non pas une cuisinière, mais un cuisinier qui rendrait Carême fou” (Balzac 60). Rouff was a great admirer of Honoré de Balzac and named his chair at the Académie des Gastronomes for him (Arbellot 97).¹⁴ In addition, Rouff wrote a speech in praise of Balzac that was delivered at a meeting of the Académie des Gastronomes and published after Rouff’s death in 1939. Rouff refers to Balzac as the “dieu du roman” (Rouff *Balzac* 1). Clear inspiration for *Dodin-Bouffant* was derived from his passion for Balzac’s works.

Austin de Croze

Count Austin de Croze, founder of the Académie des Gastronomes Régionalistes and leader of the salons of 1923 and 1924, was an important writer of the time who, though he was quite prolific during the late 19th and early 20th-centuries, has fallen almost into obscurity. Though there is little biographic information available on Croze, it can be deduced that he was both a folklorist and journalist and was said to be friends with personalities such as Jules Bois,

¹⁴ Each of the 40 chairs at the Académie des Gastronomes was named for a famous contributor to French cuisine. Curnonsky’s chair was named for Brillat-Savarin. Other chairs included those named for Louis Pasteur, François Rabelais, Urbain Dubois, Grimod de la Reynière, Antonin Carême, and Dom Pérignon, to name but a few.

Verlaine, Huysmans, Saint-Pol-Roux and the composer Maurice Ravel. In fact, in 1895 Ravel assisted Croze in arranging several Corsican folksongs for a series of lectures at the Théâtre de la Bodinière (Nichols 22). One of his cult works was his *Calendrier magique*, published in 1895 and illustrated by Manuel Orazi, which can be found easily online today. It is unclear to this day whether Croze believed in what he was writing or if he created the calendar merely as an exercise. Most importantly, Croze made many significant contributions to gastronomic regionalism that should not be overlooked. He is perhaps best known today for co-authoring with Curnonsky the *Le trésor gastronomique de France*, though his works on regional gastronomy, *Les plats régionaux de France* (1928), *La psychologie de la table* (1928), and *What to Eat and Drink in France* (1931) are interesting representations of gastronomic regionalism.

What to Eat and Drink in France is one of the few works on regional gastronomy to have been written and published in English for an English audience travelling to France during this period. One explanation for the work could be that Austin de Croze was married to an English woman, Florence Sarah Morse. In fact, Croze dedicated the book to his young son, Joël de Croze, saying that he was “a future *gourmet* who, through this book of gastronomy, will learn the Geography, History, and Psychology of his native land in the language of a good friend country” (Croze, *What to Eat* n.p.).

One particularity of de Croze’s works that sets them apart from the works of his fellow gastronomic authors was his interest in the history of classic regional dishes, likely stemming from his background as a folklorist. In *What to Eat and Drink in France*, a gastro-tourism guide for the American and the English, Croze does not ignore the importance of England in the history of the wine trade in Bordeaux, even crediting the English for increasing the importance of these wines in both France and abroad (241-242). It is true that the English were important in

increasing the popularity of certain wines, especially Bordeaux and later Champagne. His praise for England's contributions to French gastronomy was not limited to his work created for an English audience, but was also given to the English in *Les plats régionaux de France*. This is unique as praising foreign nations for their contributions to French regional gastronomy was understandably rare during the early 20th-century. However, keeping the celebration of the French culinary tradition, in the style of regionalist texts, is still front and center in his works. "Le régionalisme de la Table? Si l'on en doute encore, il n'y a qu'à feuilleter ce premier recueil de recettes provinciales pour percevoir qu'il y a toujours, comme disait Barrès: 'quelque nuance d'âme entre chaque province' et pour comprendre toutes les parties de cet admirable ensemble orchestral que forme la cuisine traditionnelle française" (Croze, *Plats régionaux* 7). Certainly, this praise of French cuisine was typical for gastro-regionalist texts of the period and expresses the uniqueness of each province's contributions to a national cuisine.

Maurice Des Ombiaux

Maurice Des Ombiaux (1868-1943) wrote extensively during the interwar period on French food and wine, penning works such as *Le gotha des vins de France* (1925), *L'art de manger et son histoire* (1928), and *Traité de la table: Cuisine, recettes, vins, ornementation* (1932) to name only his most significant works. Notably, Des Ombiaux was the runner-up for Prince des Gastronomes, the title that Curnonsky won in 1927. The election was contested by Des Ombiaux supporters who insisted that it must have been rigged by Curnonsky's circle (Colin 26). Des Ombiaux was also one of the founders of the Académie des Gastronomes with Marcel Rouff and Curnonsky in 1928. His specialty was as much food as it was wine and he often spoke of wine as a significant part of the French gastronomic tradition.

Though he championed regional cuisine with the other members of the Académie des Gastronomes, his distaste for the *grande cuisine* of Paris was perhaps not as flagrant. Like Rouff's main character, Dodin-Bouffant, he appreciated the art of *grande cuisine*, but believed that the simplicity of regional cooking was the truest expression of the French tradition. "Le retour aux plats régionaux, à la bonne cuisine des provinces françaises a achevé la déroute de la prétendue grande cuisine, laquelle n'a, du reste, plus guère les moyens de s'exercer que dans les banquets. Or, les banquets, nous savons ce que c'est. La cuisine du restaurant, la cuisine de famille, ne s'accommodent pas de décorations inutiles au goût. Sans doute faut-il qu'un plat soit bien présenté, mais avec naturel et sans superfétation" (Des Ombiaux *Traité* 7-8).

What sets Des Ombiaux apart from his colleagues of French gastronomy is that he was born and raised in Belgium and never hid his Belgian upbringing. He regularly praises French cuisine as superior to all others in the patriotic manner of his colleagues, though perhaps his praise is a bit more subdued. During the Section Gastronomique Régionaliste of the 1924 Salon d'Automne, an interesting change took place in the focus of the salon as other countries, including Belgium, were included in the discussion. In the introduction, Belgium was even referred to as an extension of France itself: "il s'affirmera plus complet encore pour les chefs, qui, cette année, vont à notre tournoi culinaire représenter vingt régions françaises et un pays ami, lequel est—prolongement de la France—la Belgique," writes Austin de Croze, who was that year president of the Association des Gastronomes Régionalistes (Croze, *Livret* 1924 1). However, in the 1924 salon booklet, Des Ombiaux did not write about Belgium's regional culinary traditions, but on "La Bourgogne et Les Arts". He did defend his love of French cuisine, and especially Burgundian gastronomy, and he tied it to his Belgian upbringing and to the shared history of the region with early Renaissance Burgundy. "Si les vins de Bourgogne firent couler

des trésors de lyrisme dans le cerveau des Wallons et des Flamands, ceux-ci donnèrent généreusement à la Bourgogne, en oeuvres d'art: tableaux, tapisseries, sculptures, dinanderies, ce qu'elle avait contribué à inspirer. Un Belge n'est pas dépaysé quand il se promène dans Dijon, il y trouve un air d'étroite parenté avec ses villes glorieuses; un Bourguignon est chez lui en Belgique où le culte du vin entretient les joies dionisiaques" (Croze, *Livret 1924* 19). The fact that Belgium could be included in a salon on regional gastronomy at this time is nevertheless extremely interesting given the protectionism of the conservative regional discourse that was most prevalent during the interwar period, following the impact of the First World War on French society. This was perhaps because of Belgium's historic connection to France. Not only was Belgium under the rule of Burgundy in the 14th and 15th-centuries, but following the French Revolutionary Wars in 1794, Belgium was invaded and annexed by France and remained under French rule from 1794 to 1814. This historical and linguistic connection still does not lend a perfect explanation as to why Belgium was included in the Salon d'Automne and it is certainly possible that the suggestion of inclusion was either brought forth by Des Ombiaux himself or by his supporters, as he was extremely well-respected in the circles of Gastronomy.

Pampille

In 1913, Pampille, pseudonym of Marthe Daudet (1878-1960), second wife of Léon Daudet, published her book entitled *Les bons plats de France, cuisine régionale* (1913). The work contains a collection of recipes divided by regions, and, albeit thoroughly abridged, it can be an indication of what recipes were high enough in the hierarchy of regional dishes to be seen as worthy of the Parisian audience. Although it was not explicitly stated in her book, it can be assumed that Pampille's audience was made up of bourgeois housewives. First and foremost, she

spoke of traditions and recipes, wording typically reserved for the women's cooking, instead of regional cuisine as a grand art. "[...] Une bonne recette n'est pas tout pour réussir un bon plat et qu'il y a encore ce je ne sais quoi que l'on appelle le tour de main, qui fait la moitié de la réussite ; en général ce tour de main est donné aux grosses cuisinières plutôt qu'aux maigres ; ajoutons que la recette et le tour de main seraient encore insuffisants si l'on n'y joignait pas un peu d'amour" (Pampille 6). Typical readership of gastronomic regionalist texts, such as those of Curnonsky and Croze, were bourgeois masculine gastronomes who did not cook at home. Instead, these bourgeois men indulged in the national art in restaurants where food was prepared by great chefs or great cooks. On the other hand, Pampille implied that her readers were those executing the recipes themselves at home and did not need skill and a great recipe alone, but also to put into their cooking "a little bit of love". This "little bit of love" referred to a feminine tradition learned from mothers and grandmothers. Daudet also addressed the reader in the feminine plural "celles qui font la cuisine". Most importantly, works written by women at the time were not read and respected by male gastronomes. Two sectors existed, that of the male gastronome who expounded upon the gastronomic art and its importance to the French nation, and feminine cooking, made up of simple recipes and feminine tradition destined to the "maîtresse de maison" or the simple "cuisinière."

Nonetheless, Daudet's book is important enough to regional cuisine to have been republished several times, including recently in 2008 by the CNRS, unlike many of the works published during the same period. It also inspired a book by Shirley King, entitled *Pampille's Table: Recipes and Writings from the French Countryside from Marthe Daudet's Les Bons Plats de France* (2006), an adaption of Pampille's book for the modern table and for the broad public. Perhaps what has anchored Pampille's book into French culinary history is that Marcel Proust

referred to it in *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913). He wrote that one of his hostesses has her lobster grilled according to one of Pampille's "incomparable recipes", further evidence that her book was meant for the *maîtresse de maison* instead of the great chef. The work did much to transmit a sea of regional French recipes through a concise book that was easily digestible to a bourgeois and largely Parisian feminine audience.

However, Daudet's book abridged regional cuisine significantly by selecting very few recipes to represent the regions and often merging two regions together into a single chapter, and some scholars of gastronomy have therefore criticized it for this. Allen Weiss points out these exclusions in his book *Feast and Folly: Cuisine, Intoxication, and the Poetics of the Sublime* (2002). "It should be noted," he writes, "that when Pampille (Marthe Daudet) established her repertory of French cuisine in *Les bons plats de France* by dividing up the country according to its great soups—*pot-au-feu*, *soupe à l'oignon*, *soupe aux choux*, *soupe aux poireaux et aux choux*—the existence of Provençal cuisine is completely suppressed. No *soupe à l'ail*, no *soupe au pistou*, no *soupe de poisson*, no *bourride*, no *bouillabaise*—nothing that indicates the presence of a cuisine to the south of the great French culinary watershed marked by the butter / olive oil line, or otherwise stated, the great garlic divide" (Weiss 76). Weiss is right to point out these exclusions in Pampille's introduction, which she titled "Les plats nationaux", though he fails to take into account that Pampille did in fact include a section on Provençal cooking in a later chapter of her book. It was common, if not necessary, at this time to include only the highlights of regional cuisine as it would have been impossible to cover all recipes and preparations in a single work. In addition, careful selection of these highlights was necessary in order to appeal to a largely Parisian audience that was not accustomed to local preparations, which will be discussed in a later chapter. What Weiss doesn't take into account is that in other parts of the

book, Pampille praised Provençal cuisine as her favorite, “La cuisine provençale me paraît être la meilleure de toutes les cuisines; ce n’est pas pour faire de la peine aux autres provinces, mais c’est l’absolue vérité” (Pampille 22). Perhaps Daudet felt so close to Provençal cooking because her father-in-law was French novelist Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897). The majority of Alphonse Daudet’s novels were bucolic tales set in Provence, such as *Lettres de mon moulin* (1869) and *Tartarin de Tarascon* (1872). Though he died in 1897 before Marthe and Léon were married in 1903, Alphonse was Marthe’s uncle (she and Léon were cousins) and it is quite possible that he had an influence in her love for Provence.

In her article “Culinary Nationalism” (2010), Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson writes, “Pampille is such an emblematic figure because of her sense of herself as the culinary consciousness of France, a defender of tradition under siege in a rapidly modernizing world. All her work over a half-century casts women as the guardians of those traditions. Hers is the voice of culinary France. She does not write as a ‘creator.’ At the outset *Les bons plats de France* warns us that the recipes that follow are not, in fact, in any ordinary sense hers. [...] She has simply recorded what friends and acquaintances have passed on and what she herself has observed” (102). Indeed, though Pampille’s discourse mirrors that of gastronomic regionalists, writing of cuisine as art and of ingredients transmitting a culinary landscape, she is unique in writing from the perspective of a woman. This makes her one of the guardians of the French culinary tradition, instead of being a mere observer.

Defining Regional Cuisine: Patrimonialization and the Culinary Stereotype

Curnonsky defined regional cuisine as one of four types of cuisine: La Grande Cuisine, Bourgeois Cuisine, Regional Cuisine, and Peasant Cuisine (or, as he also calls it “impromptu cuisine”). Grande Cuisine “ne supporte pas la médiocrité”, wrote Curnonsky. It needed the talent of great chefs such as Carême, Escoffier, Montagné, Carton or Colombier (Curnonsky and Derys 64). He also noted that this type of cuisine cannot be copied outside of France as the great hotels were attempting to do. This, he said, was *fake* grande cuisine. It is interesting to note, however, that many great, well-respected French chefs of the period, such as Escoffier, often worked abroad in England in the great hotels, bringing in fact this Grande Cuisine abroad. Bourgeois cuisine, he defined as coming from chefs from “chez nous”. Curnonsky explained that this was “l’admirable cuisine, consciencieuse et mijotée, qui se fait avec du temps, du beurre (et du génie!). La cuisine où *les choses ont le goût de ce qu’elles sont* et ne portent pas de noms de batailles perdues ou de politicards oubliés” (Curnonsky and Derys 65).

Finally, an interesting contradiction arises in his definitions of peasant and regional cuisines. He first defined peasant cuisine, or “impromptu cuisine”, as made with whatever is available or “les moyens du bord”. This oversimplification of peasant cuisine is problematic, as it suggests a cuisine devoid of traditions because of poverty, which was not at all the case. In fact, many of the dishes that he listed in his guides, such as *cotriade*, a Breton fish stew with potatoes, or even the famous *cassoulet*, derived from peasant cooking. It is further complicated by the fact that he defined regional cooking separately from peasant cuisine in this way:

La Cuisine régionale, gloire consacrée de notre pays, la cuisine française par excellence, celle qui résume et synthétise les goûts de chacune de nos provinces, celle qui a inventé la bouillabaisse à Marseille, le cassoulet dans le Languedoc, le saupiquet dans le Nivernais, la cotriade en Bretagne, le beurre blanc et la fricassée en Anjou et en

Touraine, le jambon persillé à Dijon, les coulis d'écrevisses et les gâteaux de foies de volailles dans la Bresse, le gratin en Dauphiné, les confits d'oie en Périgord, la poitrine de veau farcie dans le Quercy.

Il me serait trop facile de poursuivre cette énumération, mais toutes les pages de ce livre n'y suffiraient pas. Une existence tout entière n'est pas de trop pour faire le Tour de France gastronomique. (Curnonsky and Derys 65)

How could regional cuisine, created with the precise taste of each province and local regional products, differ from peasant cuisine, which was made with the products that were at hand? It is his understanding of “tradition” that was the problem, as it was with many scholars studying regional culture in this time. It signals to a different definition of the word or an “invented tradition” that was popular at the time in regionalist texts.¹⁵ Furthermore, he homogenized the representation of the region into a classless entity where tradition was only worthy of mention if it was connected to a high-class performance of what he deemed to be the best display of the regional art, ignoring the level of difficulty of the recipes or their cost.

In order to further clarify the effect of gastro-tourism guides, it is useful to look at the history of the patrimonialization of the regional gastronomic specialty postulated by Julia Csergo in her article entitled “La constitution de la spécialité gastronomique comme objet patrimonial en France: Fin XVIIIe-XXe siècle” appearing in *L'esprit des lieux: Le patrimoine et la cité* edited by Daniel-Jacques Grange and Dominique Poulot. In her article, Csergo lists three stages in the evolution of a discourse of regional cuisine. The first begins at the end of the 18th century and early 19th century, when « la spécialité alimentaire locale – déjà repérable dans les recueils culinaires médiévaux et les ouvrages du 17^e et 18^e siècles – s'inscrit dans une pédagogie du territoire national » (Csergo, *Constitution de la spécialité* 185). During this period of culinary

¹⁵ The concept of “invented tradition” will be discussed at length in the chapters on Périgord and Paris.

regionalism, the restaurant was born and the first gastronomes began to write on the subject, namely Grimond de la Reynière and Brillat-Savarin. The first gastronomic map also appeared at this time, created by Cadet de Gassiourt, published in his work entitled *Cours gastronomique* in 1808. Products and bottles were drawn on a map of France and represented the typical cuisine of each province. The idea of the map was to inform and educate the reader, referring to it as a “cabinet de curiosité”, a term used in the antiques trade (Csergo, *Constitution de la spécialité* 186). The gastronomic map would later be important in Curnonsky’s works. In each of his guides, a gastronomic map indeed appeared, underlining local specialties (see Figure 1).

The second stage cited by Csergo extends itself through the 19th-century with the beginnings of the Third Republic. « La spécialité gastronomique devient désormais le lieu d’une mémoire historique, d’une conscience d’appartenance à une nation » (185), she explains. General works on culinary regions were published at this time, such as *L’ancienne Alsace à table* (1862) and *La cuisinière du Haut-Rhin* (1811). They contained not only recipes but also historic anecdotes on regional customs of the table. This allowed gastronomy to root itself in a place and in a specific time within that place’s history. In other words, these works valorized the patrimony of the country in relation to the table and its history, culinary memory and its transmission. (Csergo 188).

Finally, the last stage, according to Csergo, is revealed in the works of gastro-tourism written by Curnonsky and his colleagues. « Dès lors, en liaison avec l’évolution de pratiques culturelles comme le tourisme et la structuration de réseaux socioprofessionnels qui lui sont liés, s’énoncent, en étroite liaison avec la notion de site patrimonial, les procédures de ‘monumentalisation’ de la spécialité gastronomique, alors que se construisent les stéréotypes culinaires régionaux » (Csergo, « Constitution de la spécialité » 185). According to Csergo, it

was the creation of regional stereotypes that set this period apart from others. Due to the increased use of the automobile to explore the country and thus the creation of gastro-tourism guides, each region was reduced to its best parts or its « treasures ». As has been seen in the writings from the *Livret d'or de la section gastronomique* of 1923, regional gastronomy became an *œuvre d'art* and as an *œuvre d'art*, it was both honored and judged (and consumed).

These stereotypes are clear in works of gastronomic regionalism. Even if the authors attempted to glorify every product, they naturally favored specialties that have made French cuisine as a whole famous, as they admitted in their works. If one compares Curnonsky's various writings, the stereotypes became even more evident when he attempted to condense the list of products of a certain province. For example, in the *Atlas de la gastronomie française*, Curnonsky only mentioned *la cotriade* and *l'andouille* as specialties of Brittany and as sweets, *les crêpes*, *le far-sac'h* (*Far Breton*), *la galette* and *l'angélique*. However, in *Le Trésor gastronomique de France*, he listed seven pages of specialties with sub-titles, “sauces, farces, garnitures et condiments”, “potages et soupes”, “hors-d'œuvres froids”, “hors-d'œuvres chauds” ou “petites entrées”, « poissons », « viande », « légumes », « volaille », « fromages », « douceurs », et « confiserie ». Some sections were followed by a list of wines and ciders and three pages alluded to “villes bretonnes fameuses par une ou plusieurs spécialités gourmandes”. The culinary stereotypes are thus much more visible in the list of local specialties present in his *Atlas*. Despite a large section on native products and dishes in the *Trésor*, his choice in the *Atlas* was to focus on the generally known staples of Breton cuisine. Curnonsky seemed to express that, despite the fact that there are numerous local products and dishes, there were only a few that were “worth a detour” [mérite le détour] (Curnonsky and Croze 76-85).

This reduction to culinary stereotypes was common in all texts of regional cuisine of this time, and the authors sometimes admitted to the problem. Pampille wrote that she chose “les recettes des plats les plus caractéristiques de chaque province,” (Pampille 5) while Des Ombiaux explicitly singled out what he saw as the columns of French regional cuisine as “beurre, huile, crème, fromage, vin, eau-de-vie, truffe, champignons sont les colonnes de la bonne cuisine” (Des Ombiaux *Traité* 10). In *Les plats régionaux de France*, Croze suggested that his careful choices were meant to be easy to prepare at home for his reader:

Cet ouvrage étant un recueil de recettes et non pas un répertoire de produits alimentaires, il est évident que l'on ne pouvait y mentionner quantité de produits soit naturels, soit “manufacturés”, qui s'ajoutent à la richesse gastronomique de chaque province. C'est ainsi qu'aux Hors-d'Oeuvres on ne trouvera ni crevettes, ni coquillages, ni beurres, ni jambons, ni andouillettes, ni sardines à l'huile, mais seulement de ces amuse-bouche que l'on peut préparer chez soi. De même pour les Fromages, les Douceurs et les Liqueurs. De plus, l'auteur tient essentiellement à rappeler que les dimensions réduites de cet ouvrage de vulgarisation gastronomique régionale ne permettaient pas de donner, à chaque province, toutes les recettes locales de cette province, mais seulement les recettes réellement traditionnelles et les plus typiques de chaque province. (Croze *Les plats* 30)

His strategy to stereotype is clear, and his preferences for certain regional cuisines over others were not hidden. He wrote, “En revanche, on remarquera que sauf la Bourgogne et l'Alsace, les provinces fameuses par leur vin (ou bien—comme en Provence—les parties viticoles de ces provinces) sont relativement moins riches que les autres en recettes culinaires. De même que l'on notera la relative pauvreté culinaire des provinces du bassin de la Loire” (Croze *Les plats* 9).

The argument has been made, however, that these careful selections of certain dishes and their glorification through regionalism historicized French regional cuisine. Csergo explains that with globalization evolving between the two World Wars and the development of transportation and exchanges, it is possible that these stereotypes “saved” certain dishes and methods of regional cooking. The monumentalization of local cuisine caused tourists to begin to demand

certain specialties instead of others. With the historicization of cuisine, the gastronomic discourse that glorified regional stereotypes “fixed” local specialties and, though cuisine continued to change with the introduction of new products, the “monuments” of regional cuisine only changed slightly due to the valorization of the tradition of these dishes (Csergo, “Constitution de la spécialité” 191).

With the monumentalization of regional cuisine and the creation of a hierarchy of specialties, some products remained favorites, and these products became in turn evidence to sustain the nationalist cultural discourse. The products included in gastro-tourism guides by Curnonsky, Croze, Derys and Rouff are presented as offerings to the French state. In her article “L’émergence des cuisines régionales”, Julia Csergo notes that, in *La France gastronomique*, Curnonsky and Rouff described regional cuisines as belonging to the “culinary wealth” of France. Many products originating in France were still considered “treasures” (ex: truffles were nicknamed ‘black diamonds’). Though he mentioned almost all regional specialties, he highlighted certain products over others (truffles, foie gras, etc.).

The marriage of truffle and foie gras was thus described by Curnonsky and Derys as a culinary treasure in *Gaietés et curiosités*:

Se méfiant des talents des chefs alsaciens, [Le maréchal de Contades, sous Louis XVI,] avait amené son cuisinier avec lui, un jeune Normand de Caen, Jean-Pierre Clause, maître-queux de génie. Clause eut l’idée sublime d’envelopper les foies gras merveilleux que l’Alsace lui fournissait d’un fin maillot de lard et de veau, de les enclore d’une délicate cuirasse de pâte dorée, et, enfin, d’y insérer ces perles odorantes, ces magnifiques diamants de la cuisine que sont les truffes. (101)

This hierarchy was not new at the time that Curnonsky wrote, but the idea of a product as a “treasure” is a sign of the monumentalization of French cuisine that began early in the 18th-

century and gained particular strength during the early 20th-century as the popularity of regionalism increased. Further, it is the luxurious value conferred to these foodstuffs that transformed them into a rare, expensive object.

However, this monumentalization implies that a total exclusion or ignorance of certain regional dishes or ethnic preparations was taking place, as we have seen. Often, it was bourgeois society that took these “local treasures” and assimilated them to be suitable for their own style of cooking. However, those who were practicing it, believing that they were glorifying true regional cuisines, most often ignored this transformation of local dishes and products. This exclusion in gastro-tourism guides is significant, because it marks a paradox in culinary regionalism whereby some products were “saved” due to their inclusion, while other perhaps more common dishes and traditional practices were rejected because they did not assimilate well to the Parisian, bourgeois palate or kitchen. This subject will be discussed in length in a subsequent chapter focusing on Périgord.

We can also note that the discourse on regional wine ran parallel to that of regional food. There were clearly monuments of “regional wines” (Bordeaux from only the great châteaux, Champagne, Rhône, Burgundy (only best grand crus and premiers crus) and occasionally, though rarely, the Loire Valley and Alsace (normally just listed as “Rhin”). In this way, wine was an integral part of the table and represents a second, but equally important branch of gastronomy and regional cuisine. When Curnonsky and Rouff mentioned wine in *La France gastronomique* they also stuck to these monuments and rarely mentioned any other regional beverages at any length. For example, in the Bordeaux volume, there were many pages dedicated to the great châteaux, their best vintages, and service and pairings, but when a region’s wine was not considered to be as valuable to the French general public the chapter was extremely brief (for

instance their volume on Savoie). The wines were quickly mentioned and no detail went into describing them. The description « Les blancs sont frais, fins, piquants et gais ; les rouges ont du corps et du bouquet, ils sont chauds et, comme on dit en Anjou, ‘gouléyants’ » (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 22), preceded a simple list of the crus, far inferior to anything written in the Bordeaux or Burgundy volumes.

Gastronomic Regionalism

The salons of 1923 and 1924 represented the peak of the gastronomic regionalist movement led largely by Curnonsky, Austin de Croze, and Jean Charles-Brun. In fact, in Charles-Brun’s article featured in the salon’s official booklet, he stated, speaking of the term *gastronomic regionalism*, “Je crois bien que j’ai été le premier à accoupler ces deux mots, au temps où le régionalisme était moins à la mode qu’aujourd’hui” (Croze, *Livret 1923* 29). The salons were the newest in a series of conferences dedicated to the arts that began in 1903, cuisine being officially labeled as “the fifth art” in France in the early 20s. Certainly the theme of French cuisine as a national art and of cooks as artisans was prevalent at this time, linking cuisine to regional folklore, tradition and national patrimony. Like the more general regionalist movement led by Charles-Brun, gastronomic regionalism was not defined by its politics, but leaned both to the Left and to the Right depending on its subject and the goal of its author. While some expressed regional cuisine in the republican sense, speaking of regions as “petites patries,” others conveyed a conservative regionalism speaking of the importance of protecting regional cuisine from outside threats.

Certainly, gastronomic writings displayed a nationalist discourse that was prevalent on both sides. In her article « Les médias et la constitution d'un 'monde de la gastronomie' (1870-1940) », Sidonie Naulin states “Il va de pair avec la valorisation nouvelle des cuisines régionales, le discours gastronomique s’inscrivant dans le référentiel républicain de constitution de la nation à partir des ‘petites patries’. Héritier du nationalisme de la fin du XIXe siècle, le discours régionaliste de l’entre-deux-guerres inscrit durablement l’imaginaire gastronomique dans une défense de la tradition régionale” (26). Indeed, defending a French culinary tradition was of utmost importance to gastronomic regionalists who saw it as the unifying factor of the nation.

Gastronomic writings praised the superiority of French cuisine compared to the cuisines of other nations by highlighting the quality and diversity of the products and preparations offered by the provinces in a defense of the national culinary identity. As early as 1907, Ali-Bab, pseudonym of Henri Babinski, another rival of Curnonsky for the title of “Prince des Gastronomes,” published *Gastronomie pratique: Etudes culinaires suivies du traitement de l’obésité des gourmands*. It came out with a second edition published in 1928 that expanded the work to over 1000 pages. Unlike Curnonsky’s works, Ali-Bab’s was not broken into regions, but rather, much like most gastronomic texts of the time, lumped all recipes together without great distinction of place. His work included mainly French recipes, but also some from around the world including Switzerland, Italy and Spain, Poland, Portugal, Belgium and examples of “cuisine juive”. In his work, he expressed the idea of the superiority of French cuisine, while highlighting the importance of the connection to the earth, common in culinary regionalism:

L’art culinaire français semble être alors à son apogée. Sa supériorité se manifeste en tout, dans la perfection des mets, dans la composition des menus, dans le dressage des tables, dans le service. Cette supériorité est due à plusieurs causes : à la richesse du sol, dont les produits sont exquis ; à la compétence des agriculteurs, des jardiniers et des éleveurs qui ont créé, tant dans le règne végétal

que dans le règne animal, des variétés admirablement sélectionnées ; à l'art des fabricants de fromages et de conserves, et aussi à la préparation particulièrement soignée des jus et des coulis qui sont la base fondamentale de la bonne cuisine ; enfin, à nos vins, uniques au monde, qui en sont le complément. (Ali-Bab 32)

Ali-Bab's description of French cuisine echoes how Charles-Brun expressed the value of regional French artisanal products from *Le régionalisme*. Indeed, speaking of cuisine as an art was fundamental in its importance to regionalism.

Just as regionalism defended the French provinces from the centralization and homogenization of Paris, the gastronomic clubs, like the Académie des Gastronomes and the Association des Gastronomes Régionalistes, were formed to defend supposed threats to the tradition of real French cuisine, implied to be regional at its heart. Like literary regionalism, gastronomic regionalism defended local tradition and exuded patriotism and moralism by contrasting the regions with both the large cities and neighboring countries. It was the “centralized” cuisine of Paris and the other large cities that did not properly express what made French cuisine unique and therefore polluted the art. Charles-Brun wrote in the booklet to the 1924 salon:

Si l'Association des gastronomes régionalistes mène une vigoureuse campagne, c'est que nos traditions gastronomiques sont en danger, comme les autres. L'éducation du goût se perd. On mange vite et mal. Ainsi que les peuples pour le gouvernement, les clients ont la cuisine qu'ils méritent. Et d'autre part, la centralisation, là aussi exerce ses ravages: cuisine uniforme et en série, mépris des originalités savoureuses,—c'est le terme propre, en cette matière,—ignorance des ressources du terroir et des besoins de la race. Il est grand temps de réagir. (*Livret 1924* 3)

The themes that Charles-Brun presented are very similar to those seen in literary regionalism, suggesting that it is Paris, with its lack of culinary diversity and poor morals that is corrupting

the French culinary tradition. He also recommended a reconnection with the terroir (“retour à la terre”, as was the popular phrase at this time) in order to reeducate the French palate.

This threat against the French culinary tradition also came from outside of France. Curnonsky wrote, for example, of ‘*fausse grande cuisine*’, saying : “cette cuisine tarabiscotée et sophistiquée que l’on inflige aux touristes dans la plupart de Palaces et des Caravansérails du monde entier. Vous la retrouverez anonyme et toujours semblable à elle-même (hélas!) dans les hôtels à quarante-sept étages de New-York, dans tous les *Majestic’s*, *Cosmetic’s* et autres buildings *royaux* ou *impériaux* de Hong-Kong, de Los Angelès [sic], de Bénarès, du Caire ou de Constantinople” (Curnonsky and Derys 64-65). These foreign restaurants presenting a supposedly false *grande cuisine* were seen as a threat to the integrity of the French culinary tradition.

A careful look at the wording used to defend the culinary traditions of border regions as French can show the impact of gastronomic regionalism on French national identity. Alsace-Lorraine is one of the national symbols of victory for France after World War I, as it was reintegrated once again, unifying the country. This was accompanied with a surge in the political discourse of regionalism, a regained interest in the provinces of France as being unique, but all still very French. The culinary discourse echoed this regionalism and patriotism, preaching the “Frenchness” of Alsatian cuisine. Thus gastronomes produced writings on food littered with nationalist anecdotes. In *La France gastronomique*, for instance, Curnonsky and Rouff wrote:

Nous nous permettrons de donner un amical conseil à nos frères retrouvés. Sans renier leur langue natale (car la langue d’un pays est une chose intangible et sacrée), qu’ils apprennent la nôtre – celle de la grande Patrie qui a souffert et s’est sacrifiée pour eux... Le français a exprimé les plus nobles idées humaines : il reste l’incomparable instrument de la Pensée claire et précise et de la Raison

souveraine. Et il n'existe point au monde de plus joli langage pour parler à la table – et pour commander un menu ! (19-20)

Similar comments are found in Curnonsky's writings describing the cuisine of other provinces that perhaps had more in common with other countries than with France itself, such as Savoie, which will be addressed in a later chapter.

An inherent problem of gastronomic regionalism's attacks on foreign cuisines is that neither the borders of a country nor its regions are physically etched in the earth. Populations have always circulated between borders as have their culinary traditions. The exchange of products between regions and countries was thus evident in recipes and regional dishes. It was therefore a significant choice to speak of regions as completely separate entities when observing the passage of culinary ideas and products in this way. It is necessary to understand this fact when analyzing the influences of other countries. Gruyère appears prominently in recipes from both Savoie and Switzerland as has sauerkraut in Alsace and Germany. Basque traditions are evident in the cuisine of southwest France as they are in northern Spain. Gastronomes writing on regional cuisine seemed to ignore these influences in their writings, which can be interpreted as problematic, but this silence is nevertheless an interesting tool in analyzing the type of conservative regionalism that dominated the culinary texts of the early 20th-century.

In his article "Problèmes, sources et méthodes d'une histoire des pratiques et des goûts régionaux avant le XIXe siècle", written for the colloquium entitled "Cuisine, régimes alimentaires, espaces régionaux" in 1987, Jean-Louis Flandrin raises important questions for understanding regional cuisine. He suggests that regional cuisine differs from one family to the other. "On ne devrait ailleurs pas se contenter de vérifier que chacune des pratiques qui semblent caractéristiques d'une région existe aux différents niveaux de la hiérarchie sociale, mais établir si

une pratique peut être dite quotidienne ou festive à tous ces niveaux, ou si au contraire ce qui est festif pour les uns serait quotidien pour les autres” (Flandrin 348). Flandrin makes an interesting point when observing that cuisine is transformed on such a micro level. It is thus important to note for instance that, even if goose was considered a luxurious meal or rare meal for regional peasantry, it could always have been eaten traditionally for celebrations or holidays.

Finally, it is important to note that cuisine has evolved and continues to evolve. For example, the tomato was not introduced in Europe until the exploration of the New World in the 16th-century. Flandrin explains “pas de potée lorraine ni de gratin dauphinois avant l’introduction de la pomme de terre; pas de tomates à la provençale sans tomate; pas de cassoulet toulousain sans haricots; pas de piperade ni de poulet basquaise sans poivrons; etc » (349). It is thus necessary to understand that cuisine evolves constantly. When gastronomes spoke of regional cuisine in the early 20th-century, it is helpful to understand that they are speaking of a cuisine that they have frozen in time, even though they often used the regionalist tool of nostalgia in order to create a connection to simpler times. A fundamental observation remains that gastronomic tour guides exhibit a Parisian and bourgeois influence on the definition of regional cuisine, and on what will be accepted in this definition, as will be discussed in the chapter on Paris.

CHAPTER 3 – SAVOIE : THE CASE OF ADDRESSING BOUNDARIES IN GASTRONOMIC REGIONALISM

The concept of gastronomic regionalism and its sub-themes such as unity in diversity and the uniqueness of the regional French culinary tradition run into an immediate problem in that each region has its own history. Furthermore, France's modern geographical and political unity was relatively long in the making and often even in question, as several regions incorporated into France, such as Corsica (1789) or Brittany (1532), have historically spoken out for independence. Lorraine, in fact, only formally became part of France in the 18th century and the broad region of Alsace-Lorraine was disputed with Prussia and then Germany until well into the 20th century. Thus regionalists were faced with a challenge when highlighting the unique gastronomic differences of the provinces in their writings. It was necessary to express these differences without calling into question the unity of France and, ideally, while diminishing the importance of that province's ties to a neighboring country or countries. In the case of Savoie, long under the rule of the House of Savoie, its borders that historically straddled both Italy and France and its relationship with Switzerland were significant to its recent past, as the region's boundaries were in flux and its final integration into France only took place in 1860. Because of the region's history of cheese-making akin to the Swiss process and of pasta preparations similar to those of Italy, the Frenchness of Savoie had to be continuously affirmed in writings if its gastronomic specialties were to be described as part of the great, unified, French culinary architecture.

It is important to note that the so-called natural borders of France have played a part, but not necessarily always a defining one, in the formation of its identity. In his work *The Identity of*

France (1988) historian Fernand Braudel debunks the myth that it is France's geography that defined its borders and deduces through his analysis that it was history that created them and more specifically the strength of the administration centered in Paris. Indeed, France's geographical position as a European crossroads, standing as a crucial pathway between England, Spain, Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland, left it both vulnerable to invasion and, more significantly, to outside influences and cultural blending. Braudel argues that one of the curiosities of French regional culture is that it was able to maintain its own diversity despite attempts of centralization by Paris throughout its history.

The province of Savoie is located at the crossroads of Italy, Switzerland and France, three countries that marked their own identities onto that of Savoie from a very early period. For that reason, the case of the cultural identity of the Savoyards is in itself complicated, as the province was historically significant to all three countries. As we have seen, gastronomy became an extremely important theme in French identity since the 17th century and, therefore, it is not surprising that the national culinary discourse revealed conflicts around Savoie's fluid relation to the French nation. In order to understand the issues that Savoie's regional identity raised for France and how they can be perceived as imbedded in gastronomic texts of the time, it is important to first consider the history of the province's relations with both France and the neighboring geo-political regions that influenced it throughout its history. This will allow us to better recognize how regionalism and nationalism subtended apparently benign gastronomic discourse during the interwar period.

History of Savoie

Savoie has a rich and complex history within Western Europe. Due to its location as the gateway to the Alps, the region gained the utmost strategic and military importance early on as it provided access between France and Italian lands. The House of Savoie was founded in 1003 and is considered one of the oldest royal houses in Europe. In the Middle Ages the territory of Savoie exchanged hands several times between various princes and rulers. During the 14th century, and especially later with the decisive rise of the House of Savoie in the early 15th century as rulers over the region, the Duchy found itself linguistically and politically tied both to France and to the Italian Northern states. Its position could at time be very tenuous. This can be explained by the fact that part of it lay on the French side of the Alps and part on the other side. Furthermore, the dukes and their family married into the French royal family, as well as into that of the dukes of Milan and, with regularity, into the Montferrat marquisate.

Savoie became an independent and powerful Duchy under Amedeo VIII (1383–1451) in 1416. During the 15th century and into the 16th, the Savoie ducal house at once engaged in a foreign policy oriented to the Italian states through matrimonial alliances, while other alliances brought it starkly into the French orbit at the end of the century. The marriages of the many children of Louis, Duke of Savoie, (1413–1465) and Anna of Cyprus (1418–1462) reveal this double strategy. Their son Amedeo IX (1435-1472) became the next duke and married Yolande of France, sister of Louis XI, King of France, who in turn married Amedeo's sister, Charlotte of Savoie (1441-1483). At the same time, however, their daughter Bona of Savoie (1449-1503) married Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan (1444-1476). Amedeo IX's son Philibert I of Savoie (1472-1482) also married into the Milanese duchy, with young Bianca Maria Sforza, but he died at age 10. He was succeeded as Duke of Savoie by his brother Charles I the Warrior, (r.

1482-1490) who married Blanche of Montferrat. A younger scion of the Savoie family, Louise of Savoie (1476-1531) daughter of Philippe of Bresse (1438-1497) and Margaret of Bourbon (1438-1483), became the mother of Francis, future King of France as Francis I (1494-1547) and of Marguerite of Navarre [1492-1549].

However, the marriages did not always create solid alliances. Philippe de Bresse warred consistently against the rule of his sister-in-law Yolande of France who was regent for her husband Amadeo IX. As Amadeo IX suffered from chronic illness, Philippe believed that the duchy should belong to him, the healthier, and thus more powerful brother. Not only did he take up arms against his own House of Savoie, but he also created both enemies and alliances in France. While he forged an alliance with the Duke of Burgundy in 1467, he also had a tumultuous relationship with Louis XI (1461-1483) who was at times an enemy and at times a close ally. After the death of his brother, Philippe became the regent for his nephews who ruled for a short period of time. Finally, at the death of his nephew Charles II (r. 1490-1496), Philippe inherited the Duchy of Savoie and ruled for one year before his own death in 1497. Throughout this period, competing factions at the Savoie court favored French or Italian alliances, and even, into the 16th century, alliances with the Holy Roman Emperor: in fact Philippe of Bresse's son, Philibert the Handsome, had married Margaret of Austria, and his younger son, Charles III, married the sister of Emperor Charles V, Beatrice of Portugal (Colonna d'Istria 124-145).

Savoie's important strategic role as access route to Northern Italy increasingly fueled the conflicts between Spain and France, which remained at war on and off during a good part of the century. At the end of the Renaissance period the Duchy of Savoie extended from parts of modern-day Savoie, through the Val d'Aosta and Piedmont, and stretched south to Nice. Thus, when Emmanuel-Philibert (1528-1580), son of Charles III and grandson of Philippe of Bresse,

came to power in 1553, most of his family's territories were in French hands, and given his family's ties to the Habsburgs, it is not surprising that, in order to reclaim his territories, he offered to serve France's leading enemy, the House of Habsburg. Because Savoie was a guardian of the passage through the Alps, he saw its role as potentially crucial as an independent force in maintaining the political equilibrium of Europe (Guichonnet 233-234). According to historian Robert Colonna d'Istria in his book *Histoire de la Savoie* (2002), in order to modernize the organization of the state and centralize its power away from French influence, he moved the capital from Chambéry in modern-day Savoie to Turin in Italy and began a series of building projects in order to demonstrate the power of the Savoie house (Colonna d'Istria 153-154). The palace of the royal house of Savoie still stands in Turin to this day and is classified as a UNESCO site.

With the 1720 Treaty of London between Victor Amadeus II of Sardinia (1666-1732) and the Habsburgs, Savoie was absorbed into the Kingdom of Sardinia and Victor Amadeus became its Duke. After the French Revolution and during the ensuing wars between France and European powers, French forces occupied Savoie, though they were officially driven out around 1815 and the region went back to the Kingdom of Sardinia until it was finally annexed to France in 1860. It is thus important to note that during this long history, Savoie was invaded and occupied by French forces many times, including on four separate occasions between 1600 and 1713, by French kings Henri IV, Louis XIII and Louis XIV, and for a period during the post-Revolutionary wars.

When one considers the complexity of the relationship of the House of Savoie to both Italy and France, it becomes clear that the region had a double nature, expressed through both pro-French and pro-Italian factions. These events and other factors make it difficult to conclude

as to Savoie's actual cultural origins, as throughout its history it has expressed both linguistic and cultural affinities with regions that are now Switzerland, Italy and France proper. Nonetheless, although the larger part of the territory of the duchy became modern-day Italy, French relations were always quite important to it.

It was under the rule of emperor Napoleon III that annexation to France officially took place upon the signing of the Treaty of Turin in 1860. The Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sardinia, Camillo Cavour, met with the French emperor and gave the region to France in exchange for military support in the war against Austria (Guichonnet 227-228). Though the treaty officially declared Savoie to now be a French territory, a plebiscite was called shortly after in which the Savoyards were offered the option to vote for annexation to France or to reject annexation. Controversially, no options were given to vote for annexation to Switzerland, to gain independence, or to remain with Italy. On April 29th, 1860, the results of the plebiscite were published, showing a turnout of 130,839 out of 135,449 registered voters. Among these registered voters, only 235 votes were cast against annexation to France with six hundred abstentions due to reasons such as illness and 71 votes thrown out because they were write-in votes for annexation to Switzerland, which was not one of the options given (Ménabréa 348, Colonna d'Istria 231). The total number of votes for the treaty was counted at 130,533.

With such a strong proportion of the population voting in favor of annexation to France, the plebiscite immediately elicited controversy among the local population, with the neighboring country of Switzerland, and also with England and the United States who declared vote rigging and manipulation on the part of the French government. In an article entitled "On Some Points in International Law" originally published in the *Revue de droit international et de législation comparée* in 1871 and subsequently published in the *New York Evening Post* under the signature

Americus in that same year (Lieber 300), Francis Lieber, a German-American political philosopher wrote “The more we learn about the details of the vote by which Savoy and Nice were annexed to France, the more bitterly has the friend of men to regret the contradiction of the liberal form and the essential illiberality of a plebiscite under such circumstances. It becomes a mockery, and a very bitter farce” (Lieber 303). The treaty was especially controversial with respect to Switzerland, which had longstanding economic ties to the region of Savoie and, as we have seen, was not listed as an option in the plebiscite.

In the north of Savoie, where ties to Switzerland were more prominent and Savoyards feared that an attachment to France would cut them off from Geneva, some began an initiative to promote remaining with Switzerland. The *Journal de Genève* wrote extensively on the subject during the years surrounding the annexation. In an article by the Confédération Suisse published on May 3rd, 1860, the event was described as « la farce la plus abjecte qui ait jamais été jouée dans l’histoire des nations » (Confédération Suisse, May 3rd, 1860). The metaphor of the cat playing with the mouse was used, suggesting that the people of Savoie were manipulated and toyed with by France.

C’était l’espèce d’intérêt malsain qu’on éprouve à voir le chat jouer avec la souris qu’il a prise, à suivre les sauts et les reculs de la bête féline, lâchant un moment sa victime pour la saisir bientôt d’un coup de patte, se livrant à toutes sortes de drôleries, agitant sa queue, se couchant sur le ventre, puis sautant en l’air par un mouvement soudain, mais sans jamais perdre de vue le pauvre animal. Tout cela était d’abord assez amusant, mais la malheureuse souris était à la fin stupéfiée, lorsqu’un dernier coup de griffe vint la clouer à terre, que l’intérêt en était considérablement diminué. Le jeu étant ainsi d’un seul côté, le spectacle en devint bientôt plus repoussant que drôle. (Confédération Suisse, May 3rd, 1860)

In this way, the general sentiment in Switzerland was that the Savoyards were helpless in the situation and even tricked into voting in favor of annexation to France.

An earlier article from the *Journal de Genève* published on January 8th, 1860, listed reasons as to why the North of Savoie in particular had no reason to desire French nationality, but in fact historically had more in common with Switzerland and would have voted in favor of Swiss nationality had they been given the choice. The article put forward not only reasons of political and economic relations, such as the signing of the 1815 treaties by Sardinia and Switzerland, which guaranteed the northern provinces of Chablais, Faucigny and Genevois in the interest of Swiss neutrality, but geographical reasons as well. The article quoted a brochure entitled “La Suisse dans la question de la Savoie” thought to have been published by a Swiss historian, M. L. Vuillemin. It stated:

Déjà la nature les y a préparés. Comme le lac de Lucerne unit d’ancienneté les cantons primitifs, le Léman unit pareillement les peuples répandus autour de ses rivages. Sa rive méridionale comprend deux bassins : le Chablais est renfermé presque tout entier dans celui de la Dranse, et le Faucigny dans celui de l’Arve. Ces rivières et leurs affluents se dirigent vers le lac de Genève et vers la Suisse, comme au-delà des monts qui séparent le Faucigny du Genevois toutes les eaux coulent vers le Rhône et vers la France. Les rapports entre les populations se sont formés selon la direction des eaux. Les relations de la contrée qui descend vers la France sont avec la France, et celles des bassins compris dans l’horizon du Léman sont avec Genève et le canton de Vaud. Ces deux bassins occupent une superficie d’environ 145 lieues carrées et nourrissent une population de 160,000 à 170,000 âmes. Toute cette population séparée par les hautes Alpes du reste de la Savoie, n’a de communications habituelles qu’avec la Suisse, qui se déploie à l’entrée de ses vallons et le long de ses rivages. (Confédération Suisse, January 8th, 1860)

Many propaganda brochures arguing for the integration of Savoie into Switzerland began to circulate and petitions gathered 12,354 signatures in the communes of Faucigny, Chablais and Saint-Julien-en-Genevois (Guichonnet 394). Concerned about the expansion of the French empire, Great Britain favored the Swiss position.

In order to appeal to the local population and to silence voices in the North in favor of annexation to Switzerland, France offered to establish a free trade zone in the province. For this reason, the project to maintain a “zone franche,” which was originally agreed upon in 1816, was

promoted by both Switzerland and the Savoyards in order to maintain the economic ties that were so important to them. However, the free trade agreement was officially broken in 1919 after World War I, though it had technically already dissolved during the war, and this caused tension in the province with the French government (Ménabréa 380). This change was especially important for the gastronomic trade in the area, as it related to local products and foremost, cheese.

Thus, the history of Savoie lent itself to the rise of a conservative French regionalist discourse on the importance of unity in relation to this province so rich with influences from and ties to neighboring countries, but yet still unique in its situation within France. It is indeed clear that Savoie was susceptible to very different spheres of influence, Italian, French, Swiss and even German in its early history. In his article “Mouvement régional et fondements territoriaux de l’identité sociale: Le mouvement régionaliste savoyard” (1979), Bernard Poche explains that at the time of the annexation, Savoie was in fact a coherent, but divided society that tended to resemble in each part the territory that was closest to it. “La Savoie semble en effet avoir toujours représenté le type d’une société intégrée, mais non isolée par sa propre représentation; une longue tradition d’émigration, le plus souvent saisonnière ou temporaire, conduisait les Savoyards aussi bien en France qu’en Piémont” (Poche 63-77). This influence extended to culinary practices including cheese production from Swiss territories and culinary techniques and products from Piedmont in Northern Italy. Not only was it going to be important to address its physical geographic position when proving the “Frenchness” of Savoie’s unique gastronomic traditions, but there was also going to be a need to rewrite its historical allegiances and to redefine those of its culinary products with foreign origins and influence.

How the Regional Cuisine of Savoie was Portrayed

Though regionalism sparked an interest in local culture that led to the publication of provincial cookbooks focusing on nearly every region, it is interesting to note that Savoie was a case that many gastronomes preferred to avoid. Savoyards remained quiet on their culinary tradition. Yet, regional culinary texts particular to other French regions were published throughout the country between 1900 and the 1930s. For example, several texts on regional Provençal cooking were published, such as *Mets de Provence, cuisine provençale* (1926) by Eugène Blancard and several editions of Jean-Baptiste Reboul's *La cuisinière provençale*, originally published in 1900. There was even a volume centered on another recently reintegrated region entitled *Les bonnes recettes de la cuisine lorraine* (1937) by Pol Ramber. After a thorough search, I have found no significant texts specifically on Savoyard cuisine appearing before 1978 when *Les meilleures recettes savoyardes* by Jean-Pierre Laverrière and *Cuisine savoyarde: Recettes traditionnelles et modernes* by Eugénie Julie were published. Perhaps not surprisingly, these appear right after an era that saw the rise of several regionalist Savoyard movements, which will be discussed later in the conclusion to this chapter.

One reason for this relative silence in specifically Savoyard publications could be that Savoie was a relatively new addition to France that had precisely many cultural similarities to other neighboring countries, such as Italy and Switzerland. Though regionalism sought to highlight unique local differences, it also sought to unify French identity. The inclusion of Savoie in the regional panorama in culinary texts on France as a whole served to defend its “Frenchness”, but many texts only brushed past the interesting and complex culinary history of the region. For example, while sections on other regions are more thorough in *Les bons plats de France*, Pampille combined Savoie and Dauphiné in a single section, discussing quickly the

superiority of river trout in the regions, and then listing only two recipes, one for *Le gratin dauphinois* and another for *Matefaim*. Interestingly, one ingredient given for *Matefaim* was Cognac, which is a specifically Bordelais spirit. What defined the gastronomy of Savoie and Dauphiné for Pampille were the products unique to the region because of its geographic location. Again, we find mentioned the fish of the rivers in the area: “Les truites de rivière sont exquises en Savoie et en Dauphiné rien ne peut donner une idée de la délicatesse de leur chair quand on les mange sur place. Car la truite de rivière ne voyage pas. Celles que nous avons à Paris, même transportées vivantes dans des viviers, sont des truites désenchantées. Elles n’ont plus ce bondissement de torrent, elles ne paraissent plus avoir fait joyeusement la culbute dans la poêle” (Pampille 148). Though these regions are neighbors and share many similarities, the choice to push them together seems in this case a way to fill the chapter as there was not much to be said regarding Savoie alone, and as no other region featured in the collection shared a chapter with another. Perhaps the only culinary commonality between them is the river Isère alluded to in Pampille’s introduction to the chapter. One speculation for this could be that Dauphiné was more historically French, so grouping it together diluted the “foreignness” of Savoie.

In his book *Gastronomie pratique: Etudes culinaires suivies du traitement de l’obésité des gourmands* (1907), Ali-Bab did include several simple dishes noted specifically as ‘savoyard’, such as *gratin savoyard* and *biscuits de Savoie*; however, other local specialties highlighted by Curnonsky in his work and identified as staples of Savoyard cooking either do not appear in Ali-Bab’s collection, in the case for instance of Curnonsky’s *fricassée de caïon* or *saucisson de lièvre*, or appear with no mention as a Savoie specialty, as is the case with *oeufs brouillés aux morilles* or *rissoles*.

By the interwar period when Curnonsky and Rouff published their work on French gastronomy, regionalism had taken a nationalist turn and anecdotes underscoring national identity and protectionism became much more prevalent in culinary treatises. Mentions of Savoie appeared tainted with tangential pronouncements on loyalty and unity, insisting upon the “Frenchness” of Savoie and providing the culinary evidence to back up this assertion. In the *Atlas de la gastronomie française*, published in 1938, Curnonsky took up exactly this position:

La Savoie fut toujours française de cœur... même avant ce plébiscite de 1860 où l'unanimité de sa population vota son annexion au pays préféré. Et sa cuisine même le démontre, car elle n'a rien de piémontais ni de Sarde.

La cuisine savoyarde est pleinement originale, tout en restant proche de la nôtre, et inspirée par du même goût sain, direct et probe [...] La cuisine savoyarde est saine, agreste et loyale. (Curnonsky, *Atlas* n.p.)

As we have seen, the plebiscite of 1860 that he spoke of was thought to be the result of manipulations on the part of France, which confers an odd tint to Curnonsky's use of words like “probe” and “loyale.” Just after the First World War, in 1919, France had transgressed the Treaty of Turin with the suppression of the *Grande zone* of Savoie and its military occupation. As a result, anti-French feeling was not uncommon among many Savoyards, and reinforcing French patriotism became a very important political tool in the region. Curnonsky's writings on cuisine thus reveal an insistence on the unification of the country and seek to bolster the French patriotic discourse.

Curnonsky and Rouff had already expressed similar views in *La France gastronomique*, in which they dedicated an entire volume to Savoie. In the introduction Curnonsky wrote, “Et voici qu'une étude sérieuse et comparée de la destinée et de la cuisine savoyarde nous révèle que si, en 1860, les Savoyards, d'un mouvement unanime, se sont jetés dans les bras de la France, c'est que de longue date leur civilisation incarnée dans leurs casseroles, les prédestinait à cette union.” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 7). Clearly, according to Curnonsky, the identity of

Savoie was ingrained in its cooking. *La France gastronomique* is by far the most thorough work on the gastronomy of Savoie written during the first half of the 20th-century. In fact, as publishing on regional gastronomy was a relatively new concept during the early 20th-century, and Savoie itself was a French region with a very brief official history, one can surmise that the absence of any book written on the cuisine of Savoie before this point was not due to the fact that such texts were lost throughout history, but that they were indeed not published until Curnonsky travelled to the province to explore its local gastronomy. The full volume of *La France gastronomique* dedicated to the region thus exposes the discourse of conservative regionalism adopted by Curnonsky that laid the groundwork for his introduction and subsequent chapters. Curnonsky began by highlighting the geographical position of Savoie and its contiguity with its two neighboring countries. Interestingly, he did not list this as a threat to the identity of Savoie, but rather uses it as further proof of the region's « Frenchness ». He wrote:

Comment demeurer hors de la grande famille française quand, au Sud, on a des voisins qui, comme vous, pratiquent (avec quelques modifications) le gratin de pommes de terre ; quand on sait que, tout autour de soi, des cousins germains aiment à travailler selon sa propre tradition, les mets à la crème ; quand on mange les mêmes truites, les mêmes écrevisses, le même gibier que les frères du Nord et de l'Ouest ? Il y avait là une communauté stomacale qui appelait l'unité politique. La loi que nous avons posée est donc, en Savoie, amplement justifiée. (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 8)

Thus, proof of Savoie's French identity lay in its similarity to the cuisines of France. Curnonsky announced that despite the fact that Savoie shared the Alps with both Switzerland and Italy, its people shared the same “communal stomach” with France, which only proved their Frenchness. The logic behind his argument was especially interesting. First, he posited a series of familial relationships between the Savoyards and their various French neighbors (frères, cousins), and concluded that culinary similarities within these family networks justified the “loi” that the French imposed. In order to more precisely prove the connection of Savoie with neighboring

French regions while at the same time maintaining its uniqueness, Curnonsky demonstrated the unity of French cuisine through a list of commonalities with Savoie, thus reducing each culinary practice and specialty to a sign of 'Frenchness'. This technique was common in all works of gastronomic regionalism of the time, as the uniqueness of regional culture was reduced to a series of staple products and customs.

Jean Baudrillard's chapter on the concept of the chain of signs in *Société de consommation: Ses mythes, ses structures* (1970) may further illuminate this process. In this chapter Baudrillard analyzes the way meaning is invested into everyday life through consumption. Items become signs with no inherent use-value in themselves, but rather a chain of signifiers that symbolizes a greater meaning or identity, a sign-value, in this case, that of "Frenchness". In the case of French identity and cuisine, a social identity is created through the consumption of food-signs. In this manner, recipes, culinary products, regional specialties as sign-values take on meaning according to their place in the system of signs just as words take on meaning according to their function and position in language. Baudrillard writes, "Le principe démocratique est transféré alors d'une égalité réelle, des capacités, des responsabilités, des chances sociales, du bonheur (au sens plein du terme) à une égalité devant l'Objet et autres signes évidents de la réussite sociale et du bonheur" (Baudrillard 60).

Curnonsky did not separate rural cooking from bourgeois cooking, thus making all cuisines as signs equal in their relation to "Frenchness". Further evidence of this approach in Curnonsky's work is seen a page later in this same volume on Savoie from *La France gastronomique*. Curnonsky wrote "C'est égal, nous disions-nous au Montenvers, quand on pense que ce décor formidable et la Pointe du Raz, que les langoustes bretonnes et les lièvres savoyards, que le Château-Yquem et le Chambertin sont dans les limites d'un seul pays !... Quel

pays ! ” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 10). In this excerpt one can note immediately that the food-signs with no inherent use-value in themselves become a chain of signifiers that symbolizes French identity. Though *lièvres savoyards* and *langoustes bretonnes* were regional specialties from two distant ends of the country, and Château-Yquem, a sweet wine from Bordeaux, and Chambertin, a Grand Cru Burgundian vineyard, were two wines of very different styles and from locations quite far from each other, Curnonsky linked them together under the definition of French gastronomy. Thus his approach was a form of consumerism, selling the cuisine of each region to his bourgeois, largely Parisian consumers. It comes as no surprise, then, that gastronomic texts displayed the same signs and images as advertisements themselves, promoting national identity along with cuisine.

Another form of mercantilism highlighted by Baudrillard, the drugstore, relates to the chain of signs much in the same way as gastronomic texts. Baudrillard writes, “Le drugstore, lui, a un tout autre sens: il ne juxtapose pas des catégories de marchandises, il pratique l’*amalgame des signes*, de toutes les catégories de biens considérés comme champs partiels d’une totalité consommatrice de signes”. He further clarifies that the drugstore offers, “le récital subtil de la consommation, dont tout ‘l’art’, précisément, consiste à jouer sur l’ambiguïté du signe dans les objets, et à sublimer leur statut d’utilité et de marchandise en un jeu d’ambiance” (Baudrillard 21-22). This can be related to the approach of regionalism and the promotion of “Frenchness” through the display of regional products in Curnonsky’s all-encompassing works on regional gastronomy. France can indeed be considered as a “drug-store of cuisine”. In this case, each region, though different, is considered *French* because it is located *in France* the same way that items in a drugstore are understood to belong there because that is where they are located. When Curnonsky listed the similarities of the regional cuisine of Savoie with its French neighbors, each

was displayed in one amalgam of signs the way each object in the drugstore is laid out in the window according to its vague similarities with the objects that surround it. This was, in fact, the strategy of gastronomic writings seeking to highlight the differences of the provinces without destroying the unity of France. It was a technique used both in Republican regionalism, seeking to bolster French national identity through a discourse of regional diversity, and also in the more conservative regionalism championed by writers such as Barrès, who saw regions as a source of local and national pride that needed protection from centralized Paris and foreign influences.

It is interesting to note that dishes commonly associated with the cuisine of Switzerland are found listed as gastronomic staples of Savoie as well, especially cheeses such as *gruyère* and the more specific *gratin de cardons* listed as one of the few *chefs d'oeuvres* of the cuisine of Savoie in Curnonsky's *Atlas de la gastronomie française* (1938) (Curnonsky, *Atlas*, n.p.). The *gratin de cardons* is, in fact, often listed as a culinary specialty of Switzerland as well, one that dates back to the medieval period (Klein and Tempelmann 38). *Cardons*, known as Cardoons or Artichoke Thistle in English, are a thistle like-plant common to the Mediterranean and popular in the autumn months in the Geneva region and in several regions of Italy. Several websites dedicated to Swiss culture and cuisine not only mention this vegetable and its seasonal popularity in Swiss markets, but also mention it as a common addition to a Christmas dinner when prepared as a gratin. In this way, it plays a very important part in Swiss culture. Curnonsky refused to acknowledge the Swiss influence on the cuisine of Savoie, choosing instead to highlight that it belonged in the category of French cuisine because it was a sign within its borders, much the way that items in a drugstore relate to each other.

Joseph de Maistre as Representative of Savoie

In order to understand the type of regionalism, republican or conservative, that Curnonsky is promoting, it is important to also note the literary and political figures that he highlighted in his writings on Savoie. In a passage where he described the villages of Savoie, he mentioned two prominent figures from the region: Joseph (1753-1821) and Xavier de Maistre (1763-1852). “La vieille ville a gardé son aspect pittoresque, ses rues étroites, ses maisons sardes. On sait qu’elle a donné naissance à deux écrivains illustres Joseph et Xavier de Maistre, dont l’un avait du génie et l’autre un gentil talent » (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 52). Politically Joseph de Maistre was a staunch monarchist who preached the preeminence of the aristocracy. De Maistre’s first book, *Les considérations sur la France* (1796) defended the legitimacy of the throne and denounced the French Revolution as immoral. According to Paul Guichonnet’s book, *Histoire de la Savoie* (1951), Joseph de Maistre wrote that the *noblesse* was ultimately a class open to merit. Guichonnet writes, « il compare la monarchie à ‘une aristocratie tournante qui élève successivement toutes les familles de l’Etat’ » (Guichonnet 321). Later in his life, his writings turned more towards theological philosophy, in defense of papal authority. What makes Curnonsky’s mention of De Maistre interesting, is that De Maistre’s philosophy went strikingly toward centralization and away from regional political administration. In De Maistre’s work it was God, the Pope and the monarch who should have authority to decide for all. Curnonsky’s inclusion of De Maistre does not indicate that Curnonsky did not support a regionalist philosophy, but rather that his works occasionally presented conflicting narratives due to a subtle tendency toward monarchist politics. It seems from this example that Curnonsky’s works thus tended to lean toward the views of his conservative and monarchist friends, such as Charles Maurras and Léon Daudet.

Furthermore, Curnonsky's mention of de Maistre is interesting in relation to his insistence on the "Frenchness" of Savoie. Though Joseph de Maistre is considered a French philosopher and writer and was born in Chambéry, the French-speaking capital of Savoie, he was never actually a French subject or citizen. As we have seen, the region of Savoie was in fact part of the Duchy of Savoie and a part of the Italian Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia (Lebrun 3). Curnonsky wrote of Joseph and Xavier De Maistre, "tous deux écrivaient un excellent français, bien avant la réunion de la Savoie à la France" (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 52). Both De Maistres' were tied by Curnonsky and Rouff to France through their proficiency in the French language alone, proving that they were French and not Italian. In the same way that Curnonsky proved the Frenchness of these well-known historical figures through a vague relationship to language, other gastronomic texts of the early 20th century searched for signs to connect Savoie's culinary traditions that had connections to neighboring cuisines, such as pasta, a well-known culinary staple of Italy, and *gruyère*, a cheese of Swiss origins, to French cuisine.

Pasta: Distinguishing the Cuisine of Savoie from Italy

Italy was the only country in Europe to have a real cuisine involving pasta, the beginnings of which developed as early as the Middle Ages according to Silvano Serventi and Françoise Sabban's book, *Pasta: The Story of a Universal Food* (2002) (Serventi and Sabban 37). However small pasta manufacturers also appeared in the region of Savoie in France just after the annexation, such as Chiron Moulins de Savoie near Chambéry, which began production in 1870 (Serventi and Sabban 183) and Bozon-Verduraz, which began in 1884 (Conseil Général de la Savoie, "Le patrimoine"). Bozon-Verduraz is an especially interesting example of a

company of Savoie origins, for whom identity featured prominently in the company's promotional language and subsequent advertising.

When production was commercialized in 1889, the company's legal name was listed as "Les Petites Savoyardes: Etablissement Bozon-Verduraz," featuring Savoie prominently in its commercial identity. The choice of "Petites Savoyardes" as title of the company raises questions as to the goal of the company. On one hand, it could have been embracing a regionalist image of the simplicity of rural life in Savoie, emphasizing the moral values of the region. It can be assumed that these advertisements were aimed at a similar audience as those of works of gastronomy, those buying food not as a necessity, but as a luxury for their home. "Petites Savoyardes" also suggests a woman of the region who cooked at home. This did not mean Curnonsky's "regional cordon bleus", but simple peasant women. In this way, the title could be seen as derogatory. However, it would resonate with upper class and bourgeois consumers searching for a more authentic product.

As we have seen, gastronomic texts often used methods of advertising which promoted patriotism through regional cuisine. When Bozon-Verduraz began advertising around the beginning of the 20th century, their ads featured an insistence that Savoie's identity was quite distinct from the region's neighbors. One advertisement (Figure 3) thought to date to 1925 featured a woman in traditional Savoie costume fighting a red eagle for a package of Bozon-Verduraz noodles. Yet another version of the same advertisement (Figure 4) featured her standing on the side of the Alps fighting off the eagle, which is golden this time. There are several major symbols that merit discussion in this poster. I will concentrate on the struggle with the eagle and the costume of the woman.

Bozon-Verduraz was very important to the region of Savoie from approximately 1900 until the mid 1930s as the construction of their factories was thought to have alleviated the strong rural exodus that was taking place. The company was also known for its employment of women in the factories during the beginning of the 20th-century. According to the website of the department of Savoie, Bozon-Verduraz set up a pension run by nuns that employed in part women in the factories who came from Maurienne or other further regions, such as Lorraine. Families were also lodged there and there were villas for the executives. In 1925, 700 workers were employed at the Saint-Etienne-de-Cuines factory. These factories, known as *usines-internat*, began to open at in the middle of the 19th-century in rural areas in the eastern regions of France, such as Savoie, Ain and Jura. Critics of these factories claimed that the women were malnourished, worked long hours and lived in poor conditions (Chatelain 389). These factories were nicknamed “cloître industriel” because of the strict control the nuns had over the women lodging there. In some cases, nuns not only constantly monitored the women, but had control over their finances, as well (Chatelain 379-380). Nevertheless, the presence of the factory in Savoie was extremely important economically, as it brought many jobs to the region during the early 20th-century.

The detail of the woman’s attire must not be overlooked as the company chose this specifically for the poster. It is, in fact, a very precise Tartentaise costume (Canziani 58). Because Bozon-Verduraz was not based in the Tartentaise Valley, the decision to picture a woman in the traditional and very specific costume of the area is politically significant. Indeed, the valley lies on the western side of the Alps bordering Italy. In this way, the traditional woman of Savoie is seemingly defending her region against Italy, straddling the important border that the Alps comprised and facing the neighboring threat.

The struggle with the eagle touches on many points of regionalist, and also blatantly patriotic, imagery important to both the identity of Savoie and the position of France in general during this time. The choice of the eagle is crucial to the discussion as it was an important symbol of the House of Savoie, but this was also often associated with Italy. The fact that the woman is struggling in a fight for noodles with the eagle could represent a depiction of Savoie holding on to its gastronomic identity and perhaps not allowing Italy to “claim rights” over that which is its own. It was during the interwar period and the rise of fascism that the eagle, a symbol of the House of Savoie, began to merge with the symbols of fascism. For example, Marla Stone, in her 1993 article, “Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution”, analyzes the 1932 exhibition put on by Benito Mussolini, a fascist propaganda event. The exhibition represented the years leading up to the fascist revolution, seeking validation for its rule. Artists were commissioned to design rooms to stage the story of the fascist rise to power. One room in particular exhibits the symbols of Italian fascism blended with the House of Savoie at the time. The room was designed by Mario Sironi and portrayed the 1922 March on Rome, which was thought to herald the arrival of fascism. “Sironi merged the symbols of fascism with those of the Italian nation-state. The ceiling was tricolor, as was the colour scheme of the entire room. The wall facing the entrance displayed three images: white letters with red borders, declaring LA MARCIA SU ROMA, below a bas-relief of a stylized eagle in flight which supported a relief of the national flag adorned with the cross of the House of Savoy. Together, the shapes of the flag and the eagle produced the silhouette of a *fascio*” (Stone 224). However, one cannot ignore that the eagle was rising as a dominating symbol of fascism, as well. The eagle was often used as a symbol of the threat of fascism in French propaganda and advertisements of the period. Two posters from the beginning of the Second World War clearly display the fight with the eagle as a

struggle against fascism (Figures 5 & 6). This theory is further strengthened by another version of the same poster in which the eagle is painted red. Red was a color chosen by many fascist movements due to its strength and its ability to stand out.

The Nazi flag with a red backdrop, white circle and black swastika appeared first in 1921 (Heller 19). Hitler further embellished this design to feature an imperial eagle with talons dug into a laurel-wreathed swastika. According to Steven Heller's book *Iron Fists: Branding the 20th-century Totalitarian State*, Hitler had read that the eagle was the 'Aryan' of the animal world (Heller 38). Both the eagle and the color red featured prominently in the imagery of many fascist regimes at this time, as both were symbols of power, such as with Italy under Mussolini. In response, regional symbols such as local costumes, landscapes and gastronomic specialties, featured prominently in advertisements and were a tool in the patriotic discourse of the interwar period promoting consumption through a reinforcing of French identity, as regionalism merged more prominently with a nationalist discourse.

Cheese: Distinguishing the Cuisine of Savoie from Switzerland

Just as pasta represented a troublesome dish present in Savoie's cooking, with its relation to Italian culinary tradition, many cheeses, such as *gruyère*, shared the troublesome relationship with their significant roots to Swiss tradition. Cheese was very important to the culinary identity of Savoie in particular as well as that of France as a whole. Not only was cheese a product made for sale but it was also regularly consumed in the household. *Gruyère* was arguably one of the most salient examples of a commercially significant cheese. Though its origins were distinctly Swiss, it had been produced in France in the bordering regions of the Jura, Franche-Comté and Savoie since the 17th-century. In fact, Swiss cheesemakers came to France after the 10 Years

War (1636-1643) when bouts of famine and sickness weakened the region of Franche-Comté. They came to assist the reconstruction of the dairy industry in the poorer regions (Vemus 81). The cheese henceforth produced according to the method of Swiss *gruyère* was given the name of *Vacherin façon gruyère* to distinguish it from its prestigious Swiss counterpart. Savoie also adopted the *gruyère* method and the cheese became quite important to the region. The website of the Archives Départementales de la Savoie notes the importance of the cheese stating,

Le mot "gruyère" apparaît dans les textes savoyards au XVIIIe siècle. Avant cette date, les archives ne parlent souvent que de "caseus", ce qui ne donne pas de précision sur l'aspect ou la composition du fromage. La production du gruyère a probablement débuté vers le XVIIe siècle, et plus particulièrement dans la région de Beaufort. C'est là en effet que des fromagers suisses sont employés, à cette époque, par les grands propriétaires nobles et religieux de la région pour s'occuper des troupeaux. (Conseil Général de la Savoie, "Boire et manger en Savoie").

Thus the identity of *gruyère* as a regional cheese of Savoie is defended to this very day.

When listing the specialties of Savoie in *La France gastronomique*, Curnonsky and Rouff did not brush over the culinary importance of cheese to the region, and highlighted three cheeses: *chevrette*, *reblochon* and *gruyère savoyard* (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie*, 15). *Gruyère savoyard* also appeared in his more thorough listing of gastronomic specialties in *Le trésor gastronomique* (1933). In fact, in this same work, Curnonsky gave a broad list of culinary specialties and included *Fondue au fromage savoyarde (au gruyère ou à la tomme)* under a list of *Hors d'oeuvres chauds ou petites entrées*. In this way, he not only classified *gruyère* as a Savoyard, and therefore French, cheese, but adopted the well-known Swiss specialty of fondue for the French, as well.

Curnonsky was not alone to highlight the importance of the cheese. His co-author of *La France gastronomique*, Austin de Croze, put *gruyère* front and center in his chapter on Savoie in *Les plats régionaux de France* (1928). Like Pampille, Croze lumped Savoie with Dauphiné, but

mentioned the region of origin for each recipe given. It is not difficult to distinguish the Savoyard recipes, as most have listed as an ingredient “un bon gruyère” including recipes titled *Les croûtes au fromage*, *La fondue au fromage savoyarde*, *L’omelette savoyarde*, *La fraise de veau au gratin de fromage*, *Le gratin savoyard* (Croze 344-347). It is not just the very Swiss *gruyère* that crept into the pages of “Savoyard” recipes, however, but also Italian specialties such as *parmesan* in his recipe for *Le pâté de fromage de chèvre Savoyard*. In addition, a recipe was added for *Le Vespetro*, a distinctly Italian liqueur. Naturally, Croze did not mention the origins of these ingredients and chose to list them under the category of « Savoie ».

It is important to note that the interwar period marked an especially poignant moment in the history of the dairy industry in Savoie and surrounding regions due to the economic crisis that hit the country starting in 1932. Not only was competition from neighboring regions a difficult challenge to overcome for the poor region of Savoie, but also competition with the Swiss was especially crippling for the sale of *gruyère*. In 1930, despite opposition by France, Switzerland created an Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée for *gruyère*, but the war prevented the French counter-offensive. This caused controversy in Savoie and the other *gruyère*-producing regions within the context of the general economic crisis of the 1930s. While the conflict itself was centered on producers in Franche-Comté, a neighboring region, it is still important to this study as *gruyère* was also produced in Savoie and it highlights the regional protectionism that was rampant in the gastronomy of the interwar period and spawned by regionalist discourse. Modernization caused tension between France and neighboring countries, as ease in transport meant more competition from foreign sources within France’s own boundaries and in countries that were important export destinations, such as the growing consumer base in the United States

of America. The Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée for French *gruyère* would have to wait until 2007 for official recognition.

French cheese makers did not hesitate to advertise their products as specifically French or mention them in region-specific cookbooks, as we have just seen. In a poster dated 1926 from the company La Vache Qui Rit (Figure 7) based in the neighboring area of the Jura, the company is referred to at the top as “La grande marque française” and at the bottom it promotes in large type “Gruyères de la Vache Que Rit: Les meilleurs en meules ou en boîtes”. Thus the cheese is not only suggested to be a French product, but it is the “meilleur” (“best”) that can be bought, thus outwardly diminishing the importance of the same product from Switzerland.

Though Curnonsky's colleague Ali-Bab mentioned *gruyère* in his work, *Gastronomie pratique*, he chose not to classify it with any country but does, however, classify *tomme* as an important specialty of the Vallée d'Herens, located in Switzerland. It is interesting that he classified it with Switzerland at this time, instead of including it as a specialty of France, as it was quite important in cheese production in Savoie. In fact, Curnonsky referred to the cheese as *Tomme de Savoie*, but a different problem arose in Curnonsky's writing on the subject. Curnonsky not only listed this cheese as a gastronomic specialty of Savoie in *Le trésor gastronomique de France*, but also mentioned the wealth of the cheese industry in Savoie. Yet, on the contrary, *tomme* originated as a scrap cheese destined for the poor. The Archives Départementale de Savoie state:

Pendant des siècles, la tomme est restée le fromage des pauvres. C'est celui que l'on fabriquait l'hiver, quand il n'y avait plus assez de lait pour fabriquer le gruyère. Les textes anciens citent rarement la tomme, bien que son origine soit lointaine, probablement parce qu'elle n'était pas, ou peu, commercialisée. Jean Guicherd, inspecteur général de l'agriculture, écrit en 1930 : "lorsque la quantité de lait reçue dans certains chalets n'est plus suffisante pour faire du gruyère, on remplace cette fabrication par celle de fromages à pâte molle, gras s'ils sont préparés avec le lait entier, demi-gras ou maigres si l'on emploie du lait plus ou

moins écrémé. Ce sont généralement des *tommes* diverses, servant surtout à la consommation locale. (Conseil Général de la Savoie, « Boire et manger en Savoie »)

However, in a contrasting statement by Curnonsky and Rouff in *La France gastronomique*, the importance of cheese as a commercial culinary product in the region was emphasized, and the economic status of the cheesemakers and of the herdsman was exaggerated. « Ces fromagers et ces pasteurs sont des gens forts riches. Avant 1914 un trésorier me disait qu’il payait annuellement, dans cette vallée, plusieurs centaines de mille francs de rente. Ah ! les Savoyards ne regrettent pas d’être devenus Français ! Ils l’ont bien prouvé pendant la guerre » (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 25). Curnonsky associated the successful economics status of those in the cheese industry with their status as French citizens and to the patriotic history of the recent war.

However, the state of commerce at the time was much more tumultuous than he suggests. Curnonsky’s claim of the financial affluence of French cheesemakers was indeed not accurate at the time for the Savoyards, as France took away the free trade zone in 1919. This caused much conflict in Savoie as competition with Switzerland became a greater threat. Curnonsky created a fantasy for the reader that painted Savoie as a picturesque place of gastronomic superiority, suggesting that both cheesemakers and shepherds were wealthy at the time. It can be assumed, however, that it was not the artisan cheesemakers, shepherds, or factory workers who benefited from the wealth of the industry, but the owners of the larger cooperative dairies buying milk. In his 1972 article “Les fruitières savoyardes,” Jean-Paul Guérin writes of the cheese production crisis that began in the interwar period and came to a height in the 1960s. The reason for the crisis was thought to be that the conditions for workers were considered to be the worst in the country: “On a souvent avancé, pour expliquer cette diminution, la difficulté du recrutement des fruitiers, les conditions de travail étant très rudes: pas de vacances, ni même de dimanches, il faut

fabriquer tous les jours” (464). A divide can also be noted between the reality of the origins of tomme, a scrap cheese made to take advantage of leftovers and Curnonsky’s portrayal of it. He makes inaccurate claims about the region’s cheese industry in order to appeal to the Parisian or upper class audience of his writings, thus skewing the reality of this food. This was a common quality of regionalist writings. In order to encourage interest in visiting the provinces, their situation was often exaggerated and the local products and specialties appeared as exquisite luxuries and are spoken of as national patrimony.

Women as the Culinary Artists of Savoie

Perhaps one of the most singular aspects of Curnonsky’s description of the cuisine of Savoie is the emphasis he placed on the importance of women to the region’s culinary tradition. « [C]e pays a ceci de particulier, qui le distingue des provinces voisines, patrie des grands chefs : c’est essentiellement un pays de cuisinières. C’est ici, dans des corps féminins, que—sauf exception, naturellement—descend la divine inspiration gastronomique » (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 12), he wrote in his volume dedicated to Savoie in *La France gastronomique*. Curnonsky further insisted on the strength of women’s cooking by providing a list of the best cuisinières of the region. In Brenthome, he recommended La Mère Gavard “Elle régnait incontestablement sur tout le plateau qui s’étend entre le lac de Genève et la montagne et nulle part sa royauté n’était mieux reconnue, proclamée, adorée, que dans la républicaine cité de Calvin. Quelle artiste ! » (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 13). La Mère Gavard’s cuisine here is directly shown to be than that of “Calvin’s republican city”, or Geneva. This suggests that the cuisine of Savoie reigns superior to that of the cuisine of Switzerland. He also mentioned La Mère Reverdy in Chambéry. « Nous en appelons à toi, fidèle compagnon de maintes explorations parisiennes, Gaston Félix,

toi qui reparais soudain et heureusement dans cette tournée gastronomique » (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 14). Despite the fact that Curnonsky considered his opinion on women cordon bleus as revolutionary and mentioned them as great artists, his works were repeatedly interspersed with mentions of women's cooking as 'folklorique' or 'traditionnelle'.

Curnonsky was not the first gastronome to underline the importance and talent of women cooks. In Brillat-Savarin's famous work *Physiologie du goût* (1825), a simple dish, the omelette, became a culinary treasure. This omelette was also prepared by a woman, the cook of the local vicar: « « C'est une omelette au thon, dit [le curé] ; ma cuisinière les entend à merveille, et peu de gens y goûtent sans s'en faire compliment. – Je n'en suis pas étonnée, répondit l'habitante de la Chaussée d'Antin ; et jamais omelette si appétissante ne parut sur nos tables mondaines » » (Brillat-Savarin 164).

The question we must ask is why does the feminine culinary tradition become so important and when? One can note the importance of the type of audience that is evoked in each type of cuisine. Ferguson observes « [Recipes] have the advantage of clarifying various constellations of culinary practices and explaining the persistence of certain associations—those, for example, that identify culinary creativity with men and routine cooking with women » (Ferguson 25). Ferguson explains here the discrimination that reigns in the culinary milieu in simple terms. *La Cuisine*, with a capital 'C', is men's cuisine, whereas *la cuisine*, with a lowercase 'c' is associated with women. As was common in Curnonsky's works, he brought in an intermediate category for women, that of "cordon bleu regional". It was one that was still perhaps devoid of real culinary innovation, fixed to traditional recipes of the region, but was still considered an art. However, though Curnonsky may have described a woman as a "cordon bleu regional" and "artiste" this was still in the context of simple, regional cooking. In the regionalist

tradition, he referred to the women as “artists” but still in a familial, and somewhat derogatory, sense as “Mère” or “mother”. This category, though still often considered inferior to the male culinary profession, is considered a progressive move on Curnonsky and Rouff’s part by scholars of gastronomy.

In the context of Savoie, a region whose poverty was reflected in its culinary specialties, the notion of the woman as the leader in gastronomy comes as no surprise. The traditions were simple and familial and, therefore, women reigned. Curnonsky did not simply end his analysis of women’s cooking so easily, but he proceeded to stake his position on the subject as such:

« Donc, la cuisinière est un des éléments de la gastronomie savoyarde. Et cela ravirait les féministes si nous n’ajoutions immédiatement que ces dames sont infiniment plus fières d’être au fourneau qu’au barreau ou au Conseil d’Etat. Et comme elles ont raison!” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Savoie* 14). Thus Curnonsky proved that the authors’ respect for women was not quite as revolutionary as some might suggest. Rather, he allowed them to enjoy respect where he saw it to belong, that of the leaders in familiar cooking and simple regional culinary traditions, while he excluded them from aspirations of belonging to professional classes.

Similar praise for the genius of women’s cooking can be found in Rouff’s novel *La vie et la passion de Dodin-Bouffant, gourmand*. After all, Adèle’s cooking reigned supreme over that of the Prince d’Eurasie’s many male chefs. So much so that the Prince attempted to hire Adèle for his own kitchen. Because Dodin-Bouffant has no money to offer that could compare to the salary that the Prince offered, he proposed marriage to Adèle. Though Rouff’s insistence on the superiority of a woman’s genius in the kitchen is evident, the misogynist tones in his novel remain. A chapter speaks of the difficulties Dodin-Bouffant encountered attempting to be faithful to his new bride because she was neither pretty nor young. Another chapter presents Dodin-

Bouffant admiring a woman's beauty so much so that he almost hired her over Adèle to cook, though she had no experience or talent. What remains reiterated is that Adèle's beauty laid in her genius in the kitchen alone.

Nevertheless, the importance of women returning to their roots is a common theme in literary regionalism, as we have seen, such as with the heroine of Charles Silvestre's book *Aimée Villard, fille de France* (1924). In a similar narrative as the one presented by Curnonsky, the regional "mères" fought for a simple tradition and "retour à la terre" in the province of Savoie. They are the *petites savoyardes* of Bozon-Verduraz that carried the tradition of good rural morals and brought that feeling to the home of the bourgeois and upper-class consumers touring the provinces or reading guides of gastronomic regionalism.

Savoie's Regionalist Movement after the Interwar Period

Though French discourse on regions exploited Savoie's identity as both a region and as being French, highlighting several of its culinary specialties and customs, it wasn't until twenty to thirty years later that the region itself saw an interior regionalist movement based on a regional identity linked to the internal social structure of the place itself. In a summary of his theory, Bernard Poche explains "One of the forms which constitute social identity is the image of membership founded on the collective interiorization of daily life. This form, linked to materiality and to the territory, maintains only contingent relations with the State and relational fluxes. Whenever exogenous regulation penetrates the microsocial domain, a conflict occurs in the form of regionalism, if the collective memory can provide evidence for proving the social logic of place" (Poche 63). Poche uses this theory to elucidate on the advent of regionalist movements in France during the 60s and 70s. He notes three precise movements in French

regionalist movements within the province. One occurs between 1960 and 1965 with the first associations for the defense of the Savoyard character, which ran parallel to movements for exterior decolonization. One such club was the “Club des Savoyards de Savoie”, a group of regional elites with the objective described as: “grouper, dans un but d'amitié et de solidarité, les personnes qui peuvent exciper de véritables ascendances savoyardes et qui veulent affirmer, revendiquer et maintenir la qualité de Savoyard, en la distinguant rigoureusement des qualifications abusives, arbitraires et fantaisistes” (Amoudry 27-31). It was a direct descendent of Charles-Brun’s regionalism, fighting to not only preserve authentic regional traditions and culture in the region, but speaking out for political independence, without separation from the French state.

A second period occurs in 1972-1973 following the passing of the 1972 regional law in which regional boundaries were once again redrawn and Savoie was lumped into the larger region of the Rhône-Alpes. One of the foremost arguments against the creation of this region was that it displaced the governing capital of the region to Lyon, where the interests of Savoie could not be properly represented. A final period occurs between 1975 and 1978 with a reinvestment in regionalism and a revalorization of local activities and traditions by a generation that witnessed the transformation of French society following the events of May 1968. In fact, it was in the 1970s that the first predominantly Savoie-specific regional cookbooks were published, with *La bonne cuisine des montagnes: Savoie-Dauphiné* (1974) by Charlotte Vanel, *Les meilleures recettes savoyardes* (1978) by Jean-Pierre Laverrière, and *Cuisine savoyarde: Recettes traditionnelles et modernes* (1978) by Julie Eugénie, followed by several more in the 1980s.

We can thus come back to the specificity of Savoie as a regional site during the interwar period. Because of its status as a relatively new region, and of its status as a coherent but divided

society tending toward different territorialities (Italy, French and Swiss), Savoie remained a quiet case study still waiting to be fully explored by gastronomic regionalists. It was Curnonsky and his colleagues who took up this task, introducing Savoie's culinary culture and traditions to France and proving both to Savoie and to the rest of France that it shared the national, "communal stomach" and culinary "loyalty" that defined its "Frenchness".

CHAPTER 4 – PÉRIGORD – THE CASE OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN REGIONAL COOKING

The political discourse that promoted national unity in France during the early 20th-century impacted many areas of culture, among them the formulation of a national cuisine. Texts on regional cooking from the 19th century were directly incorporated into definitions of French cuisine and great care went into selecting which dishes from each region “deserved” to be included in its definition. This definition was based on dishes that were considered suitable to be eaten by largely aristocratic and bourgeois consumers in Paris, and it incorporated fine products such as foie gras and truffles, these most famous of upper-class aliments. Although these products were cited as being from Périgord, it was their “Frenchness” that was emphasized in the new doctrine of a national cuisine that absorbed regional cuisines: they were in fact considered staples of French cuisine and not of their province of origin.

When one looks at what was included in these 19th-century texts, it becomes clear that they were dominated by an elitist sense of exclusivity. The only products mentioned from Périgord were ones that were not necessarily part of the daily diet of the rural populations. The food of the peasantry, with its simple *tourrain*, its chestnuts and vegetable-based dishes, was largely excluded or modified to conform to the bourgeois or upper-class palate. Foie gras and truffles, though originating in Périgord, mainly characterized the cuisine of Paris and the fine, yet very few, regional restaurants serving upper-class and well-off bourgeois patrons.

Addressing French Diversity

Though we have seen that an interest in regional cooking existed in gastronomic writings of the 19th century, a new form of exploring regional cuisines is evident in the beginning of the 20th century. These writings focused on the local, regional cuisine of specific provinces while following the regionalist theme of a return to the earth (*retour à la terre*) which had become popular in regionalist literature and which coincided with the rise of political regionalism in the early 20th century. As we have seen, this other, political, “retour à la terre” emphasized rural reform focused on improving living and working conditions through combining industrialization, science and hygiene, all the while maintaining and glorifying local traditions. Regions were not only seen as tourist destinations, but as social, economic and political entities. Suddenly, regions were not just glorified for their “Frenchness”, but also praised for their differences, their political, economic and folk traditions. Instead of a France without boundaries and difference, it was the variety of the regions that became inherently French, and, especially, a purported “tradition” of the love of fine cuisine.

As the “retour à la terre” found its way into gastronomic texts, French cuisine began to be referred to as “la bonne chère” by gastronomic authors such as Curnonsky and Marcel Rouff, emphasizing an attachment to both a simple rural tradition and the perfection of the art by fine chefs. Kyri Watson Claflin writes, “La ‘bonne chère’, qui était pour les premiers gastronomes le royaume distinct du bourgeois de la ville, devient un symbole possédant le pouvoir d’unifier des éléments jusque-là antagoniques de la nation : d’un côté, le passé rural, une géographie variée produisant l’abondance, une paysannerie habile, de l’autre, le raffinement urbain, un goût pour le luxe et une réputation d’excellence culinaire” (Claflin 218). This allowed cuisine to become a symbolic domain that regionalists of both the Right and the Left could agree on. It embodied

both national unity and the beauty of regional differences. A connection to the past and the glorification of the peasantry were especially prominent in regionalist texts, both in literature and in gastronomic works.

In reality, regional French cooking varies greatly even today, due to the profound diversity of French regions. This diversity was especially apparent during the early 20th century between classes and between rural and city populations. In fact, Henriette Walter's book *Le français dans tous les sens* explains that in the 19th century, eighty percent of French citizens still spoke their maternal patois in most circumstances. This percentage marked a gain in the population that spoke French, mainly due to the introduction of elementary schools into rural areas. However, Walter also notes that school children still spoke patois at home with their family and with their schoolmates during recess. According to Walter, it was the First World War that had the greatest effect on the usage of French in the rural areas. After France suffered huge losses during the beginning of the war, soldiers were regrouped into new units that brought together soldiers from all areas of the country. Therefore, the French learned in elementary schools became necessary for communication. Nonetheless, though the usage of patois declined just after the First World War, its usage was still strong in rural areas of some regions, such as the Pays d'Oc, Limousin and Bretagne (Walter 124-128).

While the revolutionaries of 1789 saw regional dialects and languages as a threat to national unity and attempted to destroy them through the creation of mandatory elementary school education and teaching through the "national idiom," over a century later, regionalists such as Charles-Brun argued that local idioms were a rich contribution to the beauty of national diversity in France. The maintenance of local idioms was a primary concern of certain branches of regionalism, such as *bardes* in Bretagne and the *félibres* of the Pays d'Oc. These groups

wanted to guarantee that their local idioms were not erased from schools, but taught in conjunction with French. Although Charles-Brun agreed on the importance of local idioms to cultural and social regionalism, he reminded regionalists that, as long as there was a powerful center dictating that French was to be used for both administration and education, it was a useless effort to put language at the forefront of the regionalist fight. Instead, it was important to work at decentralizing the government first. As soon as regions had more administrative power, they would be free to advocate for not only the teaching of local idioms, but also their use in local administration (Charles-Brun, *Le régionalisme* 160-163).

Cultural diversity remained a dominant feature in France for quite some time and remains significant still today. For this reason, the notion of “French cuisine” does not merely represent an existing reality, but a particular political and social discourse, fine-tuned throughout French history since the 17th century, that has carefully created it. This relation to diversity has been emphasized by the works of Fernand Braudel who argued that it was not the geography of France that created its diversity in unity, but the people living in its different spaces that created its diversity and perpetuated it, while the strength of the French center, or French state, maintained its unity. The same can be said for its cuisine. While people continued to maintain their local culinary customs, it is the French center, the bourgeois and upper-class gastronomes, who assisted in creating the unity of French cuisine through the idea of the national appetite or the French passion for food.

Due in part to a strengthening regionalist movement, differences were finally praised in the early 20th century, though entrenched stereotypes of regional cooking endured. Authors began to praise even the simple peasant cuisine of Périgord, but a clear preference remained for the fine ingredients produced in that region, truffles and foie gras, considered more desirable

than the rougher peasant food. The typical daily diet of the peasant in Périgord was much more meager. Though truffle and goose liver were eaten on special occasions, they were not commonly consumed on a daily basis. According to historian Eugen Weber who studied peasant life from 1870 to 1914, in *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France* (1976), peasants largely sold the best ingredients that were to be found in their area, including meat and the best nuts and produce, and lived on what was left, such as snails, mushrooms, and chestnuts (134). As in Vivarais, Corsica and Cantal, Périgord's main source of nourishment for the peasantry was chestnuts, explains Weber. Though forests of chestnut trees were decimated by what was known as "la maladie de l'encre" at the end of the 19th century (Weber 138-139), they remained the fundamental cornerstone of peasant cooking. He also notes that the peasantry was largely vegetarian compared to those living in cities. "In 1900 the peasant still ate just a quarter of the average meat ration of the city dweller, and only a fifth of what the Parisian consumed. Indeed, the great divide between vegetarian peasants and carnivorous townsmen survived to the Second World War" (Weber 213).

There are thus several serious problems with the point of view that the gastronomes took when writing about the cuisine of Périgord in the early 20th century that may cause us to question the continued effects of their choices today. First, the typical ingredients of Périgord that were most commonly included in recipes, namely truffle and foie gras, were anything but typical. Instead, these ingredients were selected for their quality and uniqueness and regularly extolled by gastronomes, creating this typicality. The peasantry was praised for its cooking, but it is clear that "artistic license" was used in the way texts were presented in order to entice the reading audience of cookbook and gastronomic writing. For example, the cooking of Périgord was often depicted in a *mise-en-scène* of the peasantry, which was regularly portrayed as quasi-barbarous.

These same scenes were also infused with snatches of traditions, rituals and folklore that created a sense of false nostalgia for the reader. It is evident that the gastronomic authors sought to portray a side of the peasantry that was inaccurate, by creating settings of the peasants in their daily life that played to bourgeois consumers in Paris, a technique also used often by regionalists attempting to gain appreciation for local regional customs. In addition, the cuisine of the peasantry was both conflated with and listed next to bourgeois cooking. A series of inclusions and exclusions thus arose, as the authors decide what is considered exceptional, or even just decent cooking, worthy to be eaten by the bourgeoisie.

Authors of the Regional Cuisine of Périgord

Alongside Curnonsky, Croze and Pampille, who wrote more general texts on regional cuisine, two authors during the first half of the 20th-century dedicated their works specifically to the culture and culinary customs of the Périgord, Georges Rocal (1881-1967) and La Mazille (1891-1984). Georges Rocal, pseudonym of the Abbé Julien, was a catholic priest and historian of Périgord. He was born in Périgueux in 1881 and ordained in the Diocèse of Périgueux in 1904. He was active in the Sillon movement, a political and ideological movement founded by Marc Sangnier (1873-1950) that aimed to bring French Catholicism and the Republic closer together by offering workers an alternative to leftist and anticlerical movements. After World War II, he was honored with the Hebrew title *Hasid Ummot Ha-'Olam*, or Righteous Among the Nations, for hiding a Jewish family in his home for the entirety of the Occupation. Rocal is known for his ethnographic texts on peasant culture in Périgord which include detailed descriptions of local culinary customs. His works on the subject include *Les vieilles coutumes*

dévoieuses et magiques du Périgord (1922) and *Le vieux Périgord* (1927), which was renamed *Croquants du Périgord* in a 1934 reedition.

Though born in Puteaux near Paris, Andrée Mallet-Maze (1891-1984), or La Mazille, is considered one of the foremost contributors to publications on the cuisine of Périgord. Her family came from Neuvic in Dordogne and she spent her childhood between Paris and Périgord. She attained success with her book *La bonne cuisine du Périgord* (1929), which was reedited approximately every 10 to 20 years from its publication to today, including most recently in 2013 by Flammarion. She explained that her recipes were obtained from women living in the region who learned them through oral transmission. “‘Je sais joliment vous renseigner’, vous disent-elles, la plupart du temps. Et ce n’est qu’à force de patience, de surprises, d’études de comparaison et de lente persévérance qu’on arrive à saisir leurs procédés et leur tour de main” (La Mazille 10). Thus, a unique contribution of her book is that it is written from the perspective of women from Périgord instead of from the recommendations of great regional chefs or upper-class gastronomes, such as the doctors and lawyers important to Curnonsky’s works. Later in her life, La Mazille wrote stories and short novels, such as *Au coin du feu* (1971) and *Où la chèvre est attachée* (1973), which have fallen into obscurity. Today, a literary prize entitled Prix La Mazille is still given in her honor for works on French gastronomy written or translated into French. Her book is still considered one of the foremost contributions to Périgord cuisine and she played an essential role in shaping the discourse on this region’s cooking during the interwar period in France.

History of Périgord

In order to understand the Périgord's role in texts of regional gastronomy during the early 20th century, it is first necessary to briefly summarize its history in France. During Roman times, the area that is now Périgord was inhabited by a branch of the Gauls known as the Pétrocores. It is thought that the name "Périgord" derives from this Gaulois tribe. In the 8th century, it officially became an earldom under the control of Duchy of Aquitaine. Because of its association with the Duchy of Aquitaine, it went under English rule in 1152 when Aliénor d'Aquitaine married king Henri II. In 1360, Périgord officially became an English territory with the Treaty of Brétigny. Around this time, it was handed to Charles d'Orléans, who became the count of Périgord, but was imprisoned after the Battle of Azincourt in 1415. In 1470 Périgord was transferred to the House of Albret, which was later inherited by the crown of Navarre. The earldom of Périgord was given back to the French crown upon the death of Catherine de Bourbon, sister of Henry IV, who had no heirs, in 1604. Thus, control of Périgord shifted mainly from France to England, but also between other kingdoms for much of the Middle Ages.¹⁶

Though Périgord had a history as an earldom under both French and English rule, it is the peasantry that remains important to the region and its history. The "croquant rebellions" were a series of peasant-led revolts in the late 16th and early 17th centuries that took place primarily in Périgord, Quercy and Limousin. The revolts were against abuse of power by the nobles and the monarchy, such as extreme taxation, during a time of starvation and poverty after a series of wars, including the French wars of religion and a war against the Habsburgs in Spain. According to Georges Rocal in his book *Croquants du Périgord*, the peasant leaders of these rebellions presented to Henri IV their "Cahier des Doléances" in St.-Germain-en-Laye, demanding "un

¹⁶ On the history of Périgord in the Middle Ages, see Guy Penaud's *Le grand livre de Périgueux* [2005] and Léon Dessalles's *Histoire du Périgord*, published in 1880.

pardon pour avoir fait des assemblées avec armes sans permission, la suppression d'un nombre d'officiers superflu et principalement de ceux qui manioient les deniers du roy, le rabais de tailles, permission d'eslire un syndic d'entre les habitans dudict plat pays et de tenir les champs, pour courir sus et contraindre les ennemis de sa Majesté à se soubsmettre à son obéissance” (80). The king gave in to part of their demands, doing away with taxes for one year. In addition, he appointed a superintendent to address peasant complaints of abuses by nobles.

By the early 20th century, the lower classes of Périgord, including the peasantry, were largely in a state of poverty. “All over Limousin at that time, and until the war at least, most village artisans accepted payment in services or in kind (potatoes, chestnuts, sometimes even the raw materials they needed). André Armengaud has noted, as Audiganne has of Périgord, that the agricultural workers of nineteenth-century Aquitaine were seldom paid in cash,” explains Weber (36). Weber also writes that texts of the late 19th century describe the peasantry sleeping six to eight people in a single room and using as few beds as possible so they had less sheets to wash (163). Thus, conditions going into the 20th century were far from ideal for the lower classes and peasantry of the region.

Historically speaking, Périgord has experienced a great division between upper classes and lower. Class differences were therefore quite significant when addressing the culinary stereotypes of the region. It is curious then, that foie gras and truffle, two upper-class ingredients, become known as not only typical of the region as a whole, but a prerequisite to the definition of food labeled “Périgourdin” and producing the famed “Périgueux” manner. As the gastronomes began defining French cuisine and determining what was worthy of being deemed typical of a region, the choices of finer ingredients and preparations as opposed to the simpler food of the

peasantry are noteworthy. What became problematic was that these gastronomes often failed to distinguish between upper-class dishes and those of the peasantry.

Defining Typicality: Truffle and Foie Gras

The display of the typical was central to works of gastronomic tourism or regional cookbooks from the early to mid 20th century. In *What to Eat and Drink in France*, Austin de Croze writes: “In every province we give *the very best and the most typical of the traditional ‘gourmandises’* still in use, and the best wines—those which will make the tourist enjoy immensely a tour in any part of France, and give him the true characteristics of the French family cookery in every corner of the country” (Croze, *What to Eat* vii). Croze thus implied that it is through zeroing in on the purportedly typical cuisine that the tourist would most enjoy himself. For Périgord, this zeroing in naturally focused on the two richest ingredients. “In the same way as the word ‘Provence’ immediately evokes memories of ‘La Bouillabaisse’ or ‘Auvergne’ ‘La Soupe aux choux,’ the word ‘Périgord’ recalls for any epicure the flavor of truffles and the savour of goose’s fat liver” (Croze, *What to Eat* 228). Indeed, as we have seen, truffle and foie gras had for some time been featured as typical French foods originating in Périgord and become metonymic of that cuisine.

In her article “The Contents of Typical Food Products: Tradition, Myth, Memory - Some Notes on Nostalgia Marketing,” appearing in the volume *European Food Issues: Typicality in History: Tradition, Innovation and Terroir*, edited by Giovanni Ceccarelli, Alberto Grandi and Stefano Magagnoli, Maura Franchi lists the building blocks of typicality: these are distinctiveness and an ability to recall the past. She writes, “The two ingredients that we mentioned – *uniqueness* and *nostalgia* – are the result of a social construction and a storytelling

about every typical food product (e.g. where it came from, how people consumed it in the past, the habits connected with its consumption) and are based on the myth of memory” (45). Indeed, gastronomes abundantly used notions of uniqueness and nostalgia in order to construct a story around certain regional ingredients, anchoring them as “typical.” The storytelling done by gastronomic regionalists such as Curnonsky, was what made regional texts of this period unique. Though truffles and foie gras existed in cuisine well before the 20th century, it was the texts of gastronomes during this period that anchored these foodstuffs as typical of Périgord and not just of French cooking.¹⁷ Thus, gastronomes and other writers of culinary texts were as necessary to the discourse of regional French cuisine as the actual recipes and food products themselves.

Many scholars, such as Franchi, Gilles Laferté, Philip Whalen and Eugen Weber, agree that in order for a product to be considered “typical” it must be anchored in a locale. Thus, in order to create the idea of uniqueness and nostalgia in the typical food products of a region, the gastronomes had to center the products on a territory (making them unique to a region or village) and a tradition (creating nostalgia). Gastronomes accomplished this categorization in several ways. Often, detailed maps appeared at the beginning of each chapter of gastronomic tour guides and the food products listed were centered as specifically as possible in a location, whether a general area of the region or one village. In other texts, descriptions of the regional landscape were infused with typical food products.

Par l’Angoumois, Ruffec et Barbézieux, nous avons connu les places avancées du royaume de l’Oie, l’oie des confits et des foies gras; par Saint-Affrique du Rouergue et Figeac du Quercy nous sommes dans la place, mais en Périgord, dans tout le Périgord, nous sommes au coeur même de ce royaume épuléen, coeur tout parfumé de truffes.

¹⁷ Foie gras was also made in Alsace, and this was not ignored in gastronomic texts of the period. In fact, Curnonsky and Derys mentioned that it is impossible to say which is better, the foie gras of Strasbourg or the foie gras of Périgord. However, Périgord was praised for having two “treasures” of French cuisine in one region: Truffle and foie gras.

Plus loin, au sud, de l'Atlantique à la Méditerranée, Gascogne, pays Basque, Béarn, Roussillon et Languedoc rivaliseront de ferveur dans le culte de l'oie, mais le Périgord en restera le sanctuaire.

Certes, les causses rocailleux du Rouergue et du Quercy ont une grandeur tragique alors que le Périgord n'offre que paysages riants ou de noble ampleur ; mais, des fameux pâturages rouergats du Larzac aux sept poissonneuses rivières périgourdines, des Causses bêlant de Gramat, (Haut-Quercy) aux vignes de la Lomagne (Bas-Quercy), partout, par les midis pleins d'angélus ou par les fins de crépuscules tintant de sonnaillles, partout, de toutes les chaumines, de toutes les maisons, de tous les châteaux, partout s'exhale l'appétissante odeur, tant apéritive, de cette cuisine à la graisse d'oie qui triomphe jusque dans les pâtisseries locales ! (Curnonsky and Croze 161)

Curnonsky thus categorized goose as typical of a broader set of regions, such as Gascogne, the Basque country, Béarn, Roussillon and Languedoc. More specifically, one can note the importance of cooking fat used in this region, which helps to define its cuisine. Cuisine of the South West of France is done primarily with goose fat, as opposed to the butter of the north or the olive oil of the south. What is most significant, though, is that Curnonsky and Croze eliminated all class distinction in their description, lumping together everything from *chaumines* (small rural houses) to the *châteaux*. This suggests that the location of a household gave it more culinary commonalities than its class.

The categorization of the unique landscape of a region and its singular traditions was also important in regionalist writing. Examining these elements as they relate to the cuisine of Périgord can help us understand how political regionalism was closely connected to how the region was portrayed in gastronomic texts of the early 20th-century before World War II. In fact, all aspects of intellectual or artistic regionalism were inseparable from the geography of their region of origin. Charles-Brun explained regularly in his writings that the physical geography, geology or climate of a region was not just an inspiration for artists, but that it dictated the style and type of their works.

La connaissance approfondie d'une région, dans son passé, ses traditions, ses moeurs; la traduction de la sensibilité particulière à cette région, car disions-nous, un Languedocien

n'entend pas de même qu'un Breton la nature, l'amour, l'infini ou la mort; [...] pour l'architecte, l'accommodation au climat, au sol, aux matériaux; pour le peintre, la notion de l'éclairage; pour le sculpteur, le décorateur, la stylisation de la faune et de la flore du pays [...]; tel était, en bref, le programme que nous tracions et qui commence à être suivi. (Charles-Brun, *Le régionalisme* 52)

The region is thus defined as much by its tradition, history and culture as it is by its physical borders.

Categorization by location further appeared in the naming of dishes, such as: “Sauce Périgueux”, “Haricots à la Périgourdine” or “Barbeau à la mode du Périgord” (Curnonsky and Croze 164-166). These names of dishes tied into certain products used in the creation of the dish, namely goose fat, foie gras or truffles. Thus, locality rooted the cuisine and the ingredients and through this sense of place, defined it. It answered both the question of where is it from and from what is it made. Furthermore, naming the dishes so that they are ascribed to a specific area or city created a myth that suggested a tradition of making the food product in this way for a long time.

Myth in Typicality – The Mise-en-Scène of Peasant Life

As the gastronomes wrote of the provinces, a certain mythology of consumption arose. In *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France*, Rosalind H. Williams identifies the critical period of the transformation into consumerism as having started around 1850 and lasting up to the First World War. She cites a steady increase in purchasing power, the availability of credit, as well as changes in technology to be the main indicators of the beginnings of this consumer society in France. However, other scholars, such as Ellen Furlough in her book *Consumer Cooperation in France: The Politics of Consumption, 1834-1930*, argue that the beginnings of consumerism occurred much earlier, starting in the 18th-century, and

should not be tied directly to economics, but to cultural and social factors. She cites in particular Thorstein Veblen who theorized that goods began to indicate a person's social status and wealth, and Jean Baudrillard who explained consumerism as "the celebration of the object". Furlough explains that Baudrillard saw consumerism as a spectacle of abundance that served to demonstrate a person's social standing (Furlough 2-3). Certainly it is important to take into account both the economic as well as the social and cultural factors that led to consumerism in order to understand how a mythology of consumption arose in regional gastronomic texts. Consumerism intensified in the 19th century with improvements in manufacturing technology and transportation, the creation of the department store and the increased use of advertising (Stearns 47-49).

Changes in diet can be an indicator that transformation to a consumer society was beginning to take place in the rural areas as well. "In the 1860s there were still large regional differences in provincial consumer habits: in Provence a peasant ate wheat bread; in the north he ate potatoes and rye bread; and in the center of the country, he ate chestnuts and potatoes. By 1900, they all ate wheat bread" (Williams, *Dream Worlds* 11). Indeed, in representing the provinces, gastronomic authors began to portray the province and its peasantry as a *fait divers* of consumption. Baudrillard in fact explains the *fait divers* as a phenomenon precisely related to a consumption society. « [La société] est tout entière actualisée, c'est-à-dire dramatisée sur le mode spectaculaire – et tout entière inactualisée, c'est-à-dire distancée par le médium de la communication et réduite à des signes » (31). While the gastronomic writers of this age began to focus on the peasantry in order to evoke the inherent "Frenchness" of cuisine in all classes, the peasantry, its cuisine and their way of life became so extremely generalized that they and their culinary traditions were reduced to signs. "By the 1920s, the notion of the 'consumer citizen' had

emerged to signify the fulfillment of the liberal ethos—unlimited mass consumption and the blurring of class distinction” (Furlough, *Consumer Cooperation in France: The Politics of Consumption 1834-1930*, 5). Indeed, class distinctions were quite blurred in regional gastronomic texts. Regional cuisine was reduced to signs, such as truffle, foie gras, as traditional, authentic for Périgord. As the peasantry was portrayed in a *mise-en-scène* of their daily life, their everyday foods were reduced to what gastronomes deemed to be “typical” of their diet. However, these typical dishes were often not everyday foods and more often served in restaurants or in upper-class households.

Their portrayal of the peasantry was indeed something of a phantasm. As authors sought the truth, they became more and more distanced from the truth, and they fell prey to stereotypes of the peasantry and to the mythology of “truth”. Baudrillard explains that curiosity is the relation of the consumer to the “real world”: it is our unawareness of reality that drives us to consume, and it was what led the gastronomes to the provinces to consume with the peasantry. Being that the everyday is the privileged space of consumption, the gastronomes were especially eager to relate their patterns and experiences of consumption, which had largely gone beyond the everyday, to that of the peasantry, which was, on the other hand, largely bound to consuming in the everyday, just to get by.

In *Croquants du Périgord* (1934), Rocal thus created a fantasy, or imaginary, of peasant cuisine for the traveler or the city-dwellers visiting the province. He described peasant life in Périgord in a series of chapters, of which two are dedicated to the famous culinary products of the region: truffles and goose. Another chapter is composed of a long essay describing the typical dinner of a peasant. This description married appetizing foods with crude rituals and manners. It is a way of over simplifying the peasant of Périgord possibly to the point of abjectification, a

technique that was quite common in regionalist texts. Rocal used patois, song, and customs to paint a picturesque scene for the Parisian reader. Not only did he start his chapter with a drinking song written in patois and translated into French which portrayed drunken peasants who cannot control their drink, but the dinner ended with a description of peasant behavior which verged on the grotesque: “La goutte lampée à larges goulées vermillonne les visages, aiguise les regards, énerve les gestes, empâte la langue. Le repas est terminé. Les paysans se curent les dents de la pointe de leurs couteaux ; d’un coup de langue ils en nettoient la lame, puis l’essuient sur la manche du veston. Ils se lèvent et leur marche est lourde” (Rocal 153). This rather crude picture described an excess that was not altogether accurate for peasant life at this time. It implied that peasants ate heartily and well and had the means to drink excessive amounts of wine and eau-de-vie. In opposition to this tableau, Claflin quotes the socialist writer Émile Buré who wrote in a 1905 article, that regionalism is a “caricature”.

Indeed, descriptions of the peasantry, including that of Rocal, inflated the crudeness of peasant life in a gross misrepresentation. Though he explained shortly after “les paysans ne sont pas assez fortunés et, même aisés, ils pratiquent le régime sévère des ancêtres” (153), Rocal also explained that the women do not have the time or even “le goût” to cook. For the Parisian reader, it was not as amusing to hear that the peasant diet was much more simple and basic than the sometimes decadent bourgeois diet. Therefore, after mentioning the typical lunchtime meal of a working peasant, specifically a raw onion or pepper, to amuse his audience, Rocal explained that it was during carnival that the tables are cornucopias of gastronomy.

According to Baudrillard, authors who fell into the trap of myth-making used signs to explain an imagined reality. These signs, often amounting to stereotypes, are recognizable in the description of the daily life of the peasantry. While gastronomic writers regularly praised the

rural populations for their cuisine, they often paired this praise with descriptions of stereotypically grotesque behavior and rural folklore. The picture painted by these authors is in some respect paired with myth. Claflin mentions that a minister of the interwar period noted that French farmers did not need a “respect fétichiste”. As has been shown, “fetishist respect” was inherent to these descriptions meant to amuse the Parisian, unfamiliar with the harsh realities of peasant life.

While the authors normally praised the cooking and appetite of the peasantry, they also created an “otherness” to their subject. In *Rural Revolution in France*, Gordon Wright notes that the peasantry harbored a great resentment towards politicians after the First World War. Though many Frenchmen touted the War as an event that “bridged the gap” between urban and rural citizens, in reality it added new tensions. The peasantry sacrificed many of their men during the War and draft deferments were rare exceptions. Wright writes “three-fifths of all men actively engaged in agriculture were mobilized, and most of these recruits were assigned to the infantry” (29). He adds “The peasants felt that they had earned not only the admiration and gratitude of the city-dwellers, but a fully recognized equality of status in French society. Instead, the urbanites complained of the high price of food in the immediate postwar years, and grumbled at the well-fed, grasping ‘peasant profiteer’” (30). Through readings of regionalist texts, one notes that the urban impression of the peasantry was only of an “imagined equality” and a “fetishist respect” instead of the real admiration and gratitude sought by the rural population. This can especially be seen in descriptions of rural traditions and rituals.

In *La bonne cuisine du Périgord*, La Mazille illustrated several traditions and rituals that involved cuisine in Périgord. These traditions followed the recipe section in the book and came at the end in their own highlighted section. Each ritual and tradition was accompanied by stories

and songs in patois in order to create the same sort of mise-en-scène evident in the work of Georges Rocal. As in Rocal's work, these were implied to be barbarous and rude. Of a marriage custom involving le *tourain*, a peppery soup, La Mazille explained "Les mariés font quelquefois plusieurs kilomètres pour aller se cacher dans une maison amie et se dérober à ces farces grossières, un peu barbares, qui tendent à disparaître » (442). Curnonsky and Marcel Rouff wrote of the same ritual in the « Périgord » edition of *La France gastronomique*.

En Périgord, une coutume encore en honneur, établit qu'au milieu de la nuit, alors qu'ils se sont retirés depuis longtemps, on se met à la recherche des mariés pour leur offrir... une soupe : le tourain – le tourain-club, disent les modernes facétieux – soupe aux tomates et à l'oignon ; ou, dans quelques régions, le caboussat, soupe au vin. Quand on a découvert le toit qui abrite les amours du nouveau couple, on le réveille et, solennellement, on lui offre successivement de l'eau pour laver les mains et le potage en question. Goûtez le tourain. (34)

This description is quite different from that of La Mazille. While La Mazille put peasant rituals on display as grotesque and primitive acts, Curnonsky and Rouff inflated the ritual in a much different manner, changing it slightly to seem less barbaric. In an accompanying drawing, the ritual was set in a seemingly well-off house and, instead of forcing the newlyweds to eat a peppery soup, the intruders served a soup that was a gastronomic delight displaying the qualities of true dedication to the culinary art. For Curnonsky and Rouff, the ritual itself was proof of the French culinary tradition, but all the same, this portrayal remained a caricature.

Anthropologist Yvonne Verdier discusses the wedding tradition of bringing food to the bride and groom in their wedding bed in her book *Façons de dire, façons de faire: La laveuse, la couturière, la cuisinière*. She explains that this tradition was popular throughout much of France. Each region had its own particular version of the dish and its own name for it: "La composition du plat se prêtait autrefois aux diverses variations régionales: soupe à l'oignon en Poitou, soupe au lait en Bretagne, vin chaud en Bourgogne, salade en Dauphiné, soupe à l'ail en Périgord; et la

coutume était désignée du nom local de la préparation: “rôtie” en Berry ou “trempee” en Bourgogne pour le vin sucré et épicé servi sur des tranches de pain, “tourrin” en Périgord pour la soupe à l’ail” (294). Verdier’s analysis of the wedding custom is a view of this ritual by an ethnologist interested in its importance to local culture without abjectifying the practice. She describes it as a “riche utilisation du code culinaire qui joue sur la complémentarité des substances comme métaphore de la conception” (301). Indeed, it was a tradition filled with culinary symbolism as the over-spicing of the soup and the theatrical mise-en-scène of its service marked the “seasoning” of the bride by the community.

Just as ritual was used to create a mise-en-scène of peasant life, La Mazille chose to pair her account of cracking walnuts on Christmas Eve with traditional language and song in order to create a folklore of food for the reader. She titled this entry “L’eynoujia” in the Périgordian “patois”. She set the scene by describing some details of the peasant house mentioning “Quelques lampes à pétrole, fumeuses, sont allumées, car nous ne sommes plus au temps des “chaleils”. Le progrès est venu...” Then in a footnote she explained that petrol lamps were no longer used because electricity was now present in all of Dordogne. It is possible that La Mazille knew she was propagating the myth of the peasantry as simple and unrefined, but also that she desired to let her readers know of this inaccuracy. She was playing to the reader, creating a fantasy through myth, but also making sure that she did not lose her reputation as an “expert” on the Périgordian culture. She then explained that the Périgordians sing a specific song while cooking the walnuts:

—Quond les mionés seront sonâdos,
Faudra fêta lou réveillou,
Et per finir lo sérénado
Feront sauta lous coutillous.
Et pioû, et paô, et cacho, cacho, cacho, cocaô.

Quand les minuits seront sonnés,
Il faudra fêter le réveillon,
Et pour finir la serenade,
Nous ferons sauter les cotillons.
Et pioû et paô, et casse, casse, casse les noix. (455-456)

The song has many interesting folkloric implications. It combines a holiday ritual (the cracking of walnuts on Christmas Eve) with sexual innuendos. “Les cotillons” are a metonym for petticoats and this eroticizes the practice of shelling walnuts.

In fact, the cracking of walnuts, or “casser les noix”, is an erotic phrase that dates back to the early modern period (and even to medieval texts. “ecailler noix” is decidedly medieval and vulgar, as in the 15th-century *Adevineaux amoureux*, “Dame, ailleurs avez escaillié noix”). In his 1903 book *Flore populaire ou histoire naturelle des plantes dans leurs rapports avec la linguistique et le folklore*, Eugène Rolland traced *casser les noix* to a 1602 verse by Louis Richer from the *Ovide Bouffon*.

“Alla conter au bon Orchame
Que sa fille estoit une infame,
Qu’un galant luy cassoit des noix,
Qu’elle en tenoit pour ses neuf noix” (58)

The inclusion of this reference by La Mazille is thus quite interesting as it is quite possible that the phrase would be known by her urban audience as well and thus provided a source of amusement. In fact, La Mazille ends her description of the cracking of walnuts by explaining that the preparation is primitive and amusing. As a self-acclaimed Périgord native, she accorded herself power of interpretation and inclusion. This intention is clear from the first page, where La Mazille dedicated the book to her father, “qui m’a appris à connaître et à aimer ‘Notre Périgord’” (5). By starting her book with this phrase she first conferred authority on herself and then proceeded to appropriate customs and their content to present them as amusing or odd.

The erotic content associated with the aliments of Périgord is also evident in the writings of Curnonsky and Marcel Rouff. In the *France gastronomique*, the authors often paired cuisine with misogynistic and erotic comments. Curnonsky and Rouff explained that, in lieu of romancing a Périgordian woman, complimenting her on her confit would be a more effective method of seduction. In doing so, the authors reduced the Périgordian woman to her cooking. The simple woman would perhaps not understand the complexity of great poetry enough to appreciate aesthetics. They implied that cooking was the form of art that she understood.

S'il vous arrive d'aventure d'éprouver un petit pincement au cœur en voyant passer une belle fille du pays, n'essayez point de lui parler de ses dents blanches, de ses yeux rieurs, de ses cheveux vaporeux ; faites-vous inviter à déjeuner et vantez-lui son confit. Vous aurez bien plus de chance de trouver le chemin de son amour qu'en lui récitant des vers de Lamartine ou en lui offrant votre photographie. (39-40)

Curnonsky and Rouff also warned about sitting down for a dinner of truffles with a prude spouse, since truffles were a well-known aphrodisiac (43). These are but a few examples of bourgeois voice indulging in the erotic insinuations associated with rural cooking and folklore interspersed in these gastronomic writings and that would call for a more extensive study.

Memory - Nostalgia in Regional Cuisine

Subtler in regional descriptions is the use of nostalgia to connect the reader to a time and place with which they may not be familiar. Arjun Appadurai writes of modern merchandising in a chapter entitled “Consumption, Duration, and History” from his book *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Nostalgia is a central feature of modern merchandising. Advertising plays upon the power of memory in order to entice the consumer to purchase goods and services. He notes that creating nostalgia is not normally directed towards people who have really lost something, but rather at creating the illusion of loss, which he terms “imagined

nostalgia”. “Rather than expecting the consumer to supply memories while the merchandiser supplies the lubricant of nostalgia, now the viewer need only bring the faculty of nostalgia to an image that will supply the memory of a loss he or she has never suffered” (Appadurai 78). Appadurai uses the example of catalogs that exploit the colonial experience to explain his theory of “imagined nostalgia”. Appadurai is referring specifically to catalogues by the company Banana Republic, mentioned in Paul Smith’s 1988 article, “Visiting the Banana Republic”, which appeared in Andrew Ross’s collection entitled *Universal Abandon: The Politics of Postmodernism*. Appadurai notes that these catalogs exploited the colonial experience by toying with the end of history. Such catalogs suggest a positive impact of the colonial “*mission civilisatrice*” (Appadurai 78). An analogy can be made with the regionalist exploration of cooking and culinary customs in the provinces. The gastronomic texts were also types of catalogs, as they “sold” regional cooking to an well-off audience. They portrayed an extremely positive and modified version of reality. Not only did they experiment with an imagined nostalgia, creating the idea of experiencing a tradition that one never had in the first place, but they implied that tourism had helped to improve peasant cooking by bringing a more sophisticated taste to their primitive dishes.

Many gastronomic writers featured women cooking in a household setting, creating a sense of familial nostalgia. However, was it not the *grands chefs* of Paris and, though less often, of the regional cities, that made these ingredients famous? Gastronomic authors of the interwar period, such as La Mazille and Georges Rocal, seem almost uninterested in the contributions of these chefs to the products that have made the region famous. It is possible that this is due to political and cultural regionalism, nostalgia and desire for “a simple life” that fueled the tourism to the provinces. These authors were trying to discover the “heart” of regional cooking, and this

heart had its origins in the memories of provincial living and cooking that the Parisians desired to experience. Though it may have been the great chefs that modified the local fare for cuisine to become the monument for which France is known, the power of nostalgia caused tourists to make a “retour à la terre”, obeying the “advertisements” spurred by political agendas.

The 19th century saw a major migration to the cities due to the industrial revolution and the availability of jobs. Therefore, by the early 20th century, the desire to reconnect with regional roots caused many city-dwellers to perpetuate nostalgia for regional culinary traditions. This “imagined nostalgia”, discussed by Appadurai (77), is also detected in the works of the gastronomic writers of the interwar period in France. This same notion of imagined nostalgia is displayed in the concept of the “invention of tradition” postulated by Eric Hobsbawm. Though we have seen that La Mazille and Rocal used descriptions of local peasant life and rituals to create a *mise-en-scène* of the simple life that is lost to the Parisian tourist, it is almost certain that these Parisian tourists were never familiar with the peasant way of life. Rocal wrote that the peasants of Périgord “pratiquent le régime sévère des ancêtres” (153) A mention of the “régime des ancêtres” was also a call to an imagined nostalgia. By mentioning a connection to ancestors, readers of Rocal’s book imagined that they were “witnesses” to the diet of modern day ancestors that they never had. Furthermore, qualifying the diet as “sévère” implied that the food eaten by the peasantry was not at all rich and opulent, but typically stark, rough, or restricted to what is at hand.

It is the women that often do the cooking in stories of regional cooking. The common, even standard, scene of a woman cooking in a lower-class household was nonetheless a powerful harbinger of that feeling of familial nostalgia. Simple families were portrayed in their household settings cooking the famous food of Périgord. It brought the reader back to the traditional roles

of “mother” and “father” during a time when women were increasingly working in the factories. When men returned home after the First World War, they took back many of their previous jobs and women were pressured to return to their traditional roles. Encouraging the traditional roles of men and women (especially during an era that promoted a discourse of births to replenish France’s supply of men) was a rather important dimension of conservative discourse (Darrow 211-212). It can be also looked at as what Appadurai names a “nostalgia for the present”. The reader looked at the simple rural life of the peasantry as representative of a past that was lost or no longer accessible to the city dweller.

Inclusion and Exclusion in Périgord recipes and texts

In *L’ordre du discours*, Michel Foucault explains that discourses elaborate and change throughout history due to what he calls the “événements du discours”. The culinary discourse is an example of how a long-lived discourse can change because of the politics and society of the era. One of the most significant aspects of the culinary discourse that evolved during the 19th and 20th centuries was its system of exclusions. Though the French Revolution aided in transforming the *haute cuisine* or *grande cuisine* of the courts into a cuisine more accessible to the people, its inclusiveness was mostly an illusion. It was the bourgeois that took control of the discourse and began to appropriate it into their own society and culture. Though culinary writings began to adopt the regionalist discourse during the early 20th century, focusing on rural traditions and a simpler form of life, an elite exclusivity remained in force.

Foucault’s theory of discourse provides an important tool in understanding the phenomenon of inclusion and exclusion that occurred when gastronomes focused on the provinces. Regionalism indeed aimed at creating an illusion of inclusion. As gastronomes

focused on praising the food of the peasant, they also redefined it in order to “improve upon it” and to fit it into a bourgeois diet, thus excluding the actual peasants from participating in their own cuisine. For example, in her article “The Emergence of Regional Cuisine”, Julia Csergo notes Curnonsky’s and Austin Croze’s selection of what was accepted and rejected in regional cuisine.

In addition to regional cuisine, « the glory of our country...which epitomizes the tastes of each of our provinces, » and peasant cooking, « which is improvised in the blink of an eye with whatever ingredients happen to be at hand, » Curnonsky identified a third category, consisting of local dishes apt to become part of the national cuisine « because they are within reach of ordinary mortals, » such as *confit* and *foie gras* from Périgord. Certain other local specialties, such as *garbure* and *crucharde* from the same region, he dismissed as unsuited to become « national » dishes because « it takes many generations to be able to digest them. » (506)

Not all local specialties were thus worthy of being shared with the Parisian elites. Precise selection was used to determine what was considered a “treasure” of local French cuisine and what was considered unacceptable.

We have seen that the importance of truffle and foie gras was emphasized from an early time as French cuisine defined itself. During the early 20th-century, as the gastronomes focused on the regions and their unique contributions within the regionalist and gastronomic fusion, these two ingredients were not only treated as treasures of French cuisine in general, but they created a lore of the fine cuisine of the Périgord region. The richness of typical Périgord products and recipes was emphasized in all regional texts of the time. “Lorsque vous prononcez le mot magique de Périgord, vous voyez tout de suite les yeux briller de convoitise avec au fond un regret nostalgique de ne pouvoir être transporté d’un coup de baguette sur cette terre bénie où pousse la truffe, où ‘naissent’ les pâtés de foie gras et les savoureux confits,” writes La Mazille

in the first pages of *La bonne cuisine de Périgord* (9). Thus, these two ingredients became naturalized and metonymic of the region.

In more abridged versions of Périgord cuisine, such as Pampille's *Les bons plats de France*, dishes listed under Périgord included *Surprise de gibier Périgoureux* and *Sauce Périgoureux*. The link between these two dishes was an abundant helping of truffles. Surprisingly, both recipes also included Madeira (madère), a Portuguese dessert wine that was likely difficult to come by at the time. Another common recipe appearing in texts such as *Le trésor gastronomique*, by Curnonsky and Croze, and also in Croze's work *Les plats régionaux*, was "Oeufs à la Périgourdine," which was listed as simply oeufs "durs, farcis de fois gras truffé, poêlés". Other dishes of Périgord listed in *Le trésor*, such as "Omelette périgourdine aux cèpes (à la graisse d'oie)", "Ragoût de légumes périgourdin (à la graisse d'oie, gratiné)", and "*Enchaud* (filet) Périgourdine (truffé, farci, rôti)" pointed to a common denominator, the use of goose fat and truffle to turn a regular dish from a general one to one specifically from Périgord. It is thus clear that the definition of Périgord in regional cuisine was appropriate for a very select audience, one that could regularly afford the luxuries of truffle, foie gras and goose fat.

As we have seen, the regional culinary discourse belonged primarily to the gastronomic clubs. These clubs, though boasting to support all "levels" of good cuisine and all levels of society consisted almost entirely of the wealthy bourgeois. In 1929, of the 132 members of the Club de Cents, 112 were from Paris and eight from the surrounding areas of Paris, whereas only 12 came from provincial towns (Csergo 179). Therefore, those commenting on peasant cuisine were often not from the same region and certainly not of the same class as their subject.

Gastronomic tourism brought an added elitist criticism to regional fare.

For this reason, commentary on and criticism of rural cooking was often problematic. According to Pierre Bourdieu, and as many other theorists suggest, consumption is a bodily act and one must take note of a group's diet in order to fully comprehend its patterns of consumption. According to Bourdieu, one is "born" into a taste. Because of the diet established from a very young age, our bodies are accustomed to eating certain things and unable to tolerate others. Bourdieu uses the terms *taste of luxury* and *taste of necessity* to explain differences in the daily consumption habits of different classes and castes.

Le véritable principe des différences qui s'observent dans le domaine de la consommation et bien au-delà, est l'opposition entre les goûts de luxe (ou de liberté) et les goûts de nécessité : les premiers sont le propre des individus qui sont le produit de conditions matérielles d'existence définies par la distance à la nécessité, par les libertés ou, comme on dit parfois, les facilités qu'assure la possession d'un capital ; les seconds expriment, dans leur ajustement même, les nécessités dont ils sont le produit. (198)

In this way, peasant cuisine differed from bourgeois cuisine by its distance from necessity. As has been noted, though truffles were produced in Périgord, they were a luxury item eaten by the bourgeois consumer, particularly from Paris, and only fit into definitions of rural cooking by default, as Couffignal explains. It was therefore problematic and inappropriate to criticize the consumption patterns of a social group with which one was unfamiliar. One cannot simply discover peasant cuisine and "make it better" through changes in its recipe. This type of modification of tastes only transformed the dish to suit a bourgeois style.

Just as Foucault theorized on the inclusions and exclusions within a given discourse, so Baudrillard noted the illusion of inclusion as well. He explained that the discourse of inclusion and equality in consumption was based upon the notion of *bien-être*, which translates loosely to "wellness". The popular discourse during the 19th century, with the growth in power of the bourgeoisie, was that of equality vis-à-vis the Object. Everyone was able to obtain the Object

provided that he had the means. With the surge of tourism in the provinces, the bourgeoisie went on a quest to prove that even the peasantry accessed the culinary Object in this new, thriving, economy. However, it is probable that the peasantry did not consume foods such as confit, truffle and foie gras except in the rare occurrence for during holidays and celebrations. The consumption of these aliments was a fantasy of the bourgeoisie. In actuality, rural fare was quite modest. In this way, authors inflated the *bien-être* of the peasantry in order to satisfy the myths that the audience of their gastronomic writings believed.

In the *Le trésor gastronomique de France*, Austin de Croze and Curnonsky exaggerated the existence of the culinary monuments of Périgord. However, when he and Curnonsky listed the typical « menu items » of a Périgordian meal, the cooking of the peasantry appeared side by side with that of the bourgeois classes. For example, “Tourin des mariés (bouillon très épicé, aux tomates)” is listed not far from a « Sauce Périgueux » said to consist of « graisse d’oie, échalotes, vin blanc, bouillon, truffes, jus de rôti ». Curnonsky and Croze mixed two very different cuisines and the fact that they made no distinction between the two is quite startling, being that bourgeois cuisine and peasant cooking were hardly similar, and that both classes had, not only access to different ingredients, but a different structure of diet and taste. Is a spicy bouillon eaten particularly during marriage rituals to be compared and stand next to the “Oeufs à la Périgourdine” (Curnonsky and de Croze 161)?

This same issue arises in Croze’s work *What to Eat and Drink in France*. In a note preceding the recipes listed by region, he wrote “The dishes of which the names are printed in *Capitals* are those that are especially interesting and typical of the district. Those printed in *Italics* are given in the local dialect and are peculiar to the district” (Croze, *What to Eat* xx). Referring to them as being “in the local dialect” implied that they are recipes of the peasantry,

while “peculiar” implied that it was unique to this region and not found elsewhere in France. He continued by noting that an asterisk denoted a dish of “modest price”. One could therefore assume that a dish in italics followed by an asterisk was a very local dish, perhaps from the peasantry, and that was modest. However, a few observations signal a skewed reality. *Ballotine de dinde truffée** was listed as “boned turkey cut in pieces, covered with a mixture of pork chopped with goose’s fat liver and truffles; baked; covered with a stock made of bones; served cold in its jelly” while *Cou d’oie farci** was described as “a neck of goose marinated with spices and brandy; stuffed with forcemeat, chopped duck’s liver, truffles, sprinkled with white wine and the marinade; tied up and cooked as ‘confits’” (Croze, *What to Eat* 233). These dishes contained rather luxurious ingredients that were anything but moderate in price. They were also likely not a part of the modest cooking of the peasantry, with additions such as truffles, wine and confit of goose. In addition, those peasant dishes that took hours to prepare were modified to be cooked quickly by the busy Parisian. This is further complicated by other recipes that were mingled in the same pages and listed in the same way which were, in fact, more modest, such as *Porc aux châtaignes**, described as “pork browned, then simmered with spring onions and garlic; served with baked chestnuts cooked in its gravy” (Croze, *What to Eat* 232). Further research would be necessary to officially determine if some of these more lavish recipes were indeed prepared by the peasantry, but reserved for holiday or celebration cooking.

In his chapter dedicated to the truffle, Rocal noted that the peasantry kept truffles conserved in fat for family consumption. Though it is hard to determine whether this was fact or fiction, one thing remains certain. In a book dedicated to the consumption patterns of the peasantry of Périgord, truffles and goose had to enter in one form or another in order to please

the expectations of the audience. In *La cuisine des pays d'Oc* (1976), Huguette Couffignal explains,

Étant donné leur rareté et la cherté qui en découle, les truffes ne figurent dans les menus occitans que par chance. Tout comme dans le cas de l'oie d'ailleurs, volatile précieux entre tous, que l'on engraisse pour la vente des foies (ce qui amène les producteurs à ne garder pour leur consommation personnelle que les foies de canards), la truffe est avant tout destinée à la vente. (104)

In this way, Croze and Rocal's inclusion of truffle as part of a typical peasant diet was an example of the phantasm of "reality" noted by Baudrillard.

Conversely, in her *Avant-Propos*, La Mazille insisted that truffle and foie gras were not part of an everyday meal in Dordogne. "Cependant, tout n'est pas pour rien en Dordogne, la vie chère sévit comme partout et on ne se nourrit pas du matin au soir avec des volailles truffées ou des foies gras" (La Mazille 9). Indeed, there was unfortunately little differentiation between the peasantry or families of simpler means and well-off families in regional guides. La Mazille was one of the few authors to mention that these ingredients were considered more dear or expensive, though she often did so only in passing. For example, when she writes a piece about *foie gras truffé* she subtly made the distinction in this way: "Au mois de décembre, en Dordogne, toutes les familles aisées font leurs conserves de foie gras. Elles vont aux marchés les plus importants de Périgueux, Thiviers, Terrasson, Sarlat, etc., acheter les beaux foies rosés, et quelques truffes pour les piquer" (La Mazille 162). Thus we can see two different treatments of these products in gastronomic texts. Though they were mentioned as less common to poorer classes, La Mazille and most other authors, such as Rocal, Curnonsky and Croze, gave the readers exactly what they wanted to hear: stories of "equality" with regard to the culinary Object that they then associated with the peasantry.

The *mise-en-scènes* of peasant life and the inclusion of peasant cooking with that of the bourgeois can also be looked at as the effect of the proliferation of a discourse of modern consumption. It was a way of showing “bonheur” and “equality” in relation to the Object, in this case French cuisine. These authors had already established that French cuisine was the best in the world, but their writings proved that even the peasantry had access to beautiful French cuisine. In fact, Rocal noted that the peasant dined quite well today as opposed to the recent past, noting that on the table today was pure wheat bread! “Le peuple se souvient des jours de famine où le grain manquait : puisse ce malheur ne plus exterminer les innocents ! Le paysan de nos jours se nourrit d’un pain excellent de pur froment, rarement de seigle, d’orge ou d’un mélange de ces farines” (156). Rocal went on to explain how peasant bread had evolved over the past centuries to make up for hard times, citing the addition of chestnuts and beans to the bread, as well as the addition of corn after its introduction in the 17th century. The fact that he used bread as proof of an imagined equality is quite significant. Bread had its own discourse attached to prosperity that had evolved since pre-modern times. “On gagne son pain, mais on peut se laisser enlever le pain de la bouche” (181), notes Maguelonne Toussaint-Samat. The consumption of bread was especially charged with meaning for the religious peasantry, who connected this food with the body of Christ (Toussaint-Samat 181-182). Therefore, the equality of classes in regard to such a significant aliment was an extremely important element in the discourse used by these authors. In this way, Rocal expressed the ability of the peasantry to come by food eaten by the bourgeois as proof of a modern society of consumption. He expressed an imagined equality in front of the Object, suggesting that a thriving economy of consumption aided to bring wealth to the table of the peasant as well.

This concept of equality is also evident in La Mazille's and, especially, Curnonsky's writings around the same time. Peasant food, according to these writers was, in some respects, "equal" to that of the bourgeois kitchen, though this equality is an obvious myth. Indeed, as peasant food was granted access to the cookbooks of fine French cuisine, it was modified to fit a bourgeois and upper-class palate. Not all food was noted as being "digestible" for the bourgeois diner and, therefore, some rejections were also at work. In this way, the food is completely transformed into a new style of cooking that remained far from the peasant preparation.

Although Curnonsky and Rouff promoted the exploration of "simple cooking", it is clear that the tourist had to proceed with caution. « Ne vous fiez pas trop aux renseignements des indigènes et des autochtones, à moins que vous n'ayez affaire à des gourmets éprouvés. En général les habitants d'une région ne sont pas enthousiastes de la cuisine locale, par la bonne raison qu'ils en mangent tout le temps et qu'ils sont trop habitués » (Curnonsky and Rouff 21). The « excuse » that follows is only somewhat convincing. They explained that people were too "used to" their own cooking to fully appreciate it. With the peasantry, however, it is almost certain that they would not have comparisons readily available against which they could measure their own cuisine. Not having access to cars and fine restaurants, the peasant would surely only appreciate what he or she had instead of comparing their cuisine to others. According to Curnonsky and Rouff, in fact, a clear exclusion of the peasant palate was necessary in order to appreciate the local fare. This is most likely because the peasant palate was so different from the bourgeois. What the peasant preferred to eat was not necessarily similar to what a Parisian palate would delight in.

However, the portrayal of local dishes, though often problematic, also had positive effects on rural life. It not only encouraged consumption within French borders, but encouraged agricultural production as well. Susan Carol Rogers explains:

In practice, because the designation of something as part of “heritage” necessarily implies recognition of its long-lasting value to some collectivity (in France, inevitably implying eligibility for public funds), the label is apt to be used with some promiscuity in official quarters as well as in common usage, generating in turn a welter of patrimonial subsets: *patrimoine naturel*, *patrimoine bâti*, *patrimoine industriel* *patrimoine culturel*, and so on. (478)

In this way, by establishing certain regional products as cultural patrimony, though often at the expense of the representation of the peasantry in the often abjectified *mise-en-scènes* of daily life, these products became more desirable across the country and production increased.

Therefore, what is most important to note, which also marks a significant difference from 19th-century regional gastronomic texts, is the impact of the consumer revolution that had been slowly gaining in France. In fact, the regionalist movement can often be seen as a form of the center “consuming” the regions. Not only does the use of imagined nostalgia and the *mise-en-scène* of peasant life mark a form of advertisement of rural populations, but it marks an imagined equality that was quite different from the imagined equality of the 19th century. These techniques were common in regionalist literature, advertising a “*retour à la terre*” or a return to a simple, traditional life far away from the influences of globalization. These interwar gastronomic texts displayed an equality in front of the culinary Object. Yet, as has been shown, this equality was a myth generated by a bourgeois society expressing a “fetishist respect” for the peasantry.

CHAPTER 5 – PARIS : REGIONALISM FROM THE CENTER

In the *Yellow Guide for Epicures* (1926), a translation of *La France gastronomique* for English readers, Curnonsky and Rouff addressed the question: “Does one eat as well in Paris as in the provinces?” They did not deny that Paris was at the top of the culinary world, but clearly the issue of where it stood vis à vis the provinces, to their minds, needed further clarification. “It is, however, but fair to make a remark here: if Paris unquestionably possesses the royalty of great cooking—which it shares, moreover, with a few provinces: Bugey, the Bordelais, Burgundy—we must leave to the provinces the sceptre for the good, comfortable, abundant, wholesome, savoury cooking of the inns and of the homes” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 22). Paris thus belonged to a very different sector of cuisine. In the description by Curnonsky and Rouff, its cuisine was superior to that of the provinces, embodying the “great” as opposed to the “good”. While Paris represented the professional cooking performed by the best-trained chefs, the provinces represented the traditional cooking performed by women or in the home. Curnonsky and Rouff summarized their argument by stating, “To put our idea into a nutshell: with the exception of a man in Pernollet, at Belley, for example, it is in Paris that are found the greatest *chefs*, in the provinces the *cordons-bleus*” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 23).

One of the paradoxes of regional culinary texts is that even Paris and its surroundings had to be addressed as a part of France and, therefore, also had to be featured as a region. However, regionalists had spent the early 20th-century labeling Paris as the “center” and separating it from the provinces. A carryover of Belle-Époque regionalism was the idea of the “réveil des provinces”, which continued into the interwar period. This theme emphasized the corruption of Paris versus the good character and simple lifestyle of the provinces. Theisse explains, “Les

attaques violentes contre la culture ‘parisienne’, déclarée décadente et morbide, se doublent d’une célébration de la province comme fondement d’une culture saine, riche, authentique, où la France peut trouver sa Renaissance” (Theisse, *Écrire la France* 48). The regionalist discourse criticized the capital and spoke of its corrupt morals and lack of authenticity. As a response, gastronomes emphasized the inferiority of quick, soulless preparations and lack of culinary traditions in Paris.

Pampille wrote in particular of this inferiority of Parisian cuisine in *Les bons plats de France*: “[R]econnaissons, pour être juste, que l’on mange beaucoup mieux dans les provinces, où toutes les bonnes traditions existent encore, qu’à Paris même, où des écoles modernes de cuisinières gâchent les cuisinières ; car on leur apprend à faire des petits plats chinois, des garnitures compliquées et longues, qui refroidissent pendant qu’on les prépare, et l’on néglige totalement les principes fondamentaux de la cuisine” (Pampille 50). Indeed, Paris presented an additional problem for gastronomes because it was a melting pot of not only regional French cultures, but of foreign culinary influences during a time of modernization that featured an increased ease in transportation in Europe and around the world. It therefore lacked a typical cuisine and specific culinary traditions related to its geographic location. Parisians were not thought to participate in the simple cooking done at home. Instead, Paris was synonymous with excess and impatience. It was viewed as a mix of people from all regions and even foreign countries coming together with no true sense of identity. Indeed, the modernization of cuisine in Paris was generally frowned upon by gastronomic regionalists who were therefore left with a question to answer. How was one to speak of Paris as a region if it had already been characterized as the “anti-region”?

Authors had to create a different way of speaking of Paris as a French culinary region when

featuring the city in their works. Often, regionalists took the Republican approach when addressing Paris as a gastronomic region, presenting it as the unifying element to the diversity of the French regions. It led the country in professional cooking and the refining of the art, while the provinces represented tradition.

For this chapter, I will be using in particular two texts that were published in English: *What to Eat and Drink in France* (1931), by Austin de Croze, and *Yellow Guide for Epicures: Paris and the Environs of Normandy* (1926), by Curnonsky and Marcel Rouff. While Croze's work was written by him in English for an English audience curious to explore French regional cuisine, Curnonsky and Rouff's book is considered a translation of the Paris and Normandy volumes of *La France gastronomique*, containing similar restaurant descriptions. No mention of a translator exists, and it is not clear whether the translation was done directly by Curnonsky and Rouff. Though they are not directly written for a French audience, their regionalist themes and connection to French culinary identity are consistent with other French works by the same authors. The fact that this volume of *La France gastronomique* was redone for an English audience not only attests to the importance of Paris as the culinary capital of France, but shows how successfully cosmopolitan Paris had been integrated into the discourse of gastronomic regionalism by the interwar period.

The Regional Cuisine in Paris Viewed by Food Scholars

Though many scholars have published on regionalism and regional cooking in the early 20th-century, little research has been completed thus far on regional cooking in Paris or how Paris was treated as a culinary region. Pricilla Parkhurt Ferguson dedicates a few pages of her book *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine* to the reconciliation of center versus

periphery in regional cuisine in the 19th and early 20th centuries. She emphasizes the importance of Paris as a cultural center in producing the idea of French cuisine and gives the capital much credit in the creation of the gastronomic discourse that featured regional cuisine. She mentions regional culinary restaurants in Paris by highlighting *Les Trois Frères Provençaux*, one of the oldest Parisian restaurants having opened its doors in 1786, but she does not look into other regional restaurants in the capital and into how they were represented. In addition, she does not focus on how Paris itself was treated as a region in works of gastronomic tourism or regional cookbooks, which is an important subject in order to fully understand how concepts of regionalism addressed gastronomy. This chapter will focus on both this question and the subject of regional restaurants in Paris.

In her book *France on Display: Peasants, Provincials, and Folklore in the 1937 Paris World's Fair*, published in 1998, Shanny Peer centers her argument specifically on how Paris displayed and reproduced the regions for the 1937 World's Fair. This World's Fair featured regional culture through crafts, dance performances, regional costumes and, at times, regional cuisine. It also showcased demonstrations of farm life and of how modernization in rural areas was bringing improvement to life in the country through a new focus on matters such as hygiene and technology. In this way, the peasant and folklore were put on display for the Parisian audience.

Peer insightfully addresses the complicated politics surrounding both international relations and interior treatment of the provinces. In fact, transfers of power from one regime to the next shaped the World's Fair into a fusion of discourses on French identity and regional politics. "Although plans for the Regional Center were completed under the center-Right coalitions in power from 1934 to early 1936," explains Peer, "it was the Popular Front government that

sponsored the Rural Center and founded the national folklore museum, thus appropriating icons and themes long dear to the conservative Right and recasting them in a populist, leftist mold” (Peer 3). Peer talks in detail of the part that regionalism played in the selection of how the peasantry and folklore were portrayed. In fact, regionalism played a central role in the fair as Jean Charles-Brun was named Director of Regional Life for the regional exhibitions.

Though Peer does mention the existence of regional gastronomy in the exhibitions, she does not specifically analyze what was presented and how to the Parisian public. She emphasizes the importance of regional specialization to both the Rural Center of the Paris World’s Fair and more generally to the discourse of regionalism during this time. In the Rural Center, each region’s pavilion was populated by a display of its culinary specialties. “Thus, for instance, Normandy exhibited the dairy products and other goods, such as Calvados, for which it was becoming nationally (And later internationally) known. When the Périgord was featured, specimens of ducks, geese, and turkeys were displayed, as well as the truffles and *foie gras* that now endear that region to gastronomers everywhere” (Peer 118). In this way, the Paris World’s Fair assisted in bringing regional specialization to a wider public, both French and international. Peer suggests that this obsession with specialization was a response to modernization. It allowed the regions to focus on products and market them both nationally and internationally. However, unlike American specialization, the French form steered away from automation and efficiency and instead emphasized quality, variety and tradition. As we have seen, these three concepts had already permeated conversations on French products including those related to regional gastronomy for quite some time due to the influence of regionalism.

In order to understand how Paris was treated by regionalists writing culinary texts, it is necessary to look not only at how intellectuals from Paris shaped the regional culinary discourse,

but at what sort of regional restaurants were present in Paris and how they were received in gastronomic regionalism. In addition, the analysis would not be complete without a look at how Paris was treated as a gastronomic region in its own right and how its cuisine was defined. Including these two important elements in an analysis of regional culinary discourse contributes to a more thorough understanding of the implications of regionalist discourse in the evolution of French cuisine.

Regional Restaurants in Paris

Though Curnonsky's works consistently recommended travelling to the provinces to taste the best of regional cuisine, he admitted that the best chefs were found in Paris and cooked as well as the "regional cordon-bleus". In *Six portraits gastronomiques*, published in 1938, Curnonsky created six personalities that represented different approaches to gastronomy. One of these personalities, Monsieur Laboujotte, seems to resemble the author himself. His short story described him in this way:

Monsieur Laboujotte is the most devoted as well as the most restless lover in the world. A bachelor and very nearly sixty, he spends much happy time visiting his loves, all the fair Provinces of France, paying due homage to the culinary charms and bacchic delights of all in turn.

Comfortably settled in his well-sprung car, with a prudent chauffeur, an old wartime friend, at the wheel, Monsieur Laboujotte relaxes gently as he leaves Marseilles, the Metropolis of the *Bouillabaisse*, for Rouen, the Metropolis of the *Sole Normande*; or Languedoc, the home of the *Cassoulet*, for Bretagne, the home of the *Cotriade*. The only cloud that ever drifts across the blue sky of his peaceful existence is the thought that he may not live long enough to taste every one of the regional dishes and local wines of his native France.

In Paris, his home port, he has found a Restaurant where the Chef is young but knows and loves to prepare French regional dishes according to the true and best local tradition.

Curnonsky thus stuck to his gastronomic regionalist agenda, claiming that the best culinary experience happened when one travelled to the provinces. However, he also freely admitted that

Paris had chefs of such talent that some could reproduce the provincial art. Not only could they reproduce regional cuisine, but they could also do it with authenticity, “to the true and best tradition.” Though there was a Belle-époque regionalism condemning the lack of values and traditions in Paris apparent in many gastronomic texts, as an interest in regional cooking spread, more and more regional restaurants appeared in the capital.

Many gastronomes indeed spoke of the advent of regional restaurants in Paris. In the livret to the Section Gastronomique Régionaliste of the Salon d’Automne in 1924, Charles-Brun wrote, “Auberges et restaurants régionalistes pullulent à Paris et se sont multipliés en province, et ce sera un chapitre de plus à ajouter à l’histoire de la Table que cette vogue du régionalisme dans l’art culinaire” (*Salon 1923 7*). Though regional restaurants multiplied during the first half of the 20th century, restaurants featuring regional cooking were not new to France. In fact, they appeared in France along with the first restaurants in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Les Trois Frères Provençaux has often been cited as being among the very first restaurants in France, having opened its doors in 1786 near the Palais-Royal. Ferguson emphasizes the significance of the restaurant, writing, “As the name [Les Trois Frères Provençaux] implies and as contemporaries corroborate, the three brothers (in-law) introduced Provençal dishes to the capital. On the other hand, those exotic elements had to be enhanced for the Parisian public” (Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste* 125). Paul H. Freedman also notes the importance of this restaurant in his book *Food: The History of Taste*, writing “From their native Marseilles they brought to Paris a splendid recipe for the Provençal brandade de morue (puréed salt-cod). It was the first stop in Paris for many foreigners on the nineteenth-century grand tour, especially for Americans, who admired its furnishings as much as its food” (Freedman 307). An engraving of the period, appearing in the same work, helps the modern reader to understand the paradox of the

establishment when the advent of regionalism alters the discourse on provincial cooking. With gilded chandeliers, white tablecloths and impeccably dressed upper-class patrons, the restaurant was not a home of simple, regional dishes prepared by cordon-bleus, but an interpretation rendered by professionally trained chefs in an extravagant setting which altered the dishes to conform to the Parisian palate.

By the time Curnonsky and Rouff published *La France gastronomique*, or *Yellow Guide for Epicures*, in the 1920s, the regionalist discourse was in a state of full fusion with the gastronomic. Their description of the restaurant focused on its importance and the regional specialties featured there instead of its gilded setting.

Les Trois Frères Provençaux, coming from the Durance, set up shop at the Palais-Royal and at once achieved a prodigious success. They were famous for their ragoûts à l'ail, their brandades de merluche and, in general, for their southern oil cooking. They made a specialty of côtelettes de mouton à la provençale and of poulet marengo. [...] They also prepared divinely saumon à la sauce provençale. (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 32)

Dishes chosen for the elite Parisian audience were therefore of the highest quality and reduced to those that could include the basics of garlic and olive oil and labeled as “à la Provençale.” More authentic dishes of the home, such as *Pieds et paquets* (sheeps trotters and tripe) or *Cayettes de sanglier* (wild boar's liver), seem to be absent. However, it must be noted that *Les Trois Frères Provençaux* was a very different sort of “regional” restaurant for the time, having opened its doors in the times of the *ancien régime*. The regional restaurants of Paris that began to open during the late 19th-century and were popularized further in the early 20th-century indeed represented a simpler style of cuisine.

As one looks through the regional gastronomic texts listing and describing Paris restaurants, such as the *Yellow Guide for Epicures*, by Curnonsky and Rouff, it is clear that restaurants with regional cuisine fell roughly into three categories. First there were more classic

Parisian restaurants featuring one or two regional specialties that had since become mainstream, such as *crêpes*, or *foie gras*, alongside more common restaurant dishes without regional designation, such as *Petit pois à la française* or *Ris de veau à l'ancienne*. An example of this is the restaurant *L'Escargot*, which still exists today, located on Rue Montorgueil near Les Halles and, according to Curnonsky and Rouff, one of the best restaurants in the city. “Perfection! — The only word which would suffice. At the moment, it is among the very best restaurants in Paris, one of those where the great French cooking can be enjoyed at its best” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide for Epicures* 52). Though considered a typically Parisian restaurant that featured “great French cooking,” which was generally professional cooking from a trained chef as opposed to the simpler regional cooking of a *cordon-bleu*, the authors did mention that their menu included *crêpes*, a common regional specialty of Bretagne. However, it is important to note that though *crêpes* were still listed as regional specialties of Normandy and Bretagne in regional guidebooks, the preparation seems to have been migrated to the mainstream in Parisian cooking by this time, as many restaurants featured them.

Another category of restaurant focused on regional specialties without any emphasis on one specific region. This category of restaurants, though not common, was an interesting addition to the Parisian restaurant scene. These restaurants capitalized on the public curiosity towards the provinces. An example of this is the restaurant the *Café de l'Univers*. “The *Café de l'Univers* has, instead of the classical *plat du jour*, conceived a programme of the most savoury regional specialties” wrote Curnonsky and Rouff (*Yellow Guide* 42-43). These regional specials varied from week to week, but the authors gave examples of such weekly specials. On Sunday, the *Café de l'Univers* featured the region of Nice with specials of *Rouget à la Niçoise*, *Ossobucco*; *Poulet sauté Côte d'Azur*. On Friday, Provence and Marseille are featured with *Morue*

sauté Provençale; Bouillabaisse Marseillaise; Pieds et paquets Marseillais. What is interesting about these regional specialties is that they combined only a few specific regional dishes, such as *Pieds et paquets*, while others were very vague in their preparation with only the name of the region in the dish connecting it to the province, for example, *Morue sauté Provençale* or *Poulet sauté Côte d'Azur*. It is likely that these were vague in order to give the chef flexibility in preparation and the ability to adapt the dish to the Parisian audience while still claiming authenticity. The chef could present the dishes as *Côte d'Azur* just by name, but use ingredients more readily at hand. Without having photographs or recipes of these dishes, it is nevertheless difficult to surmise just how true to regional cuisine they were.

A similar theme was adopted by at least one small *traiteur* of the time that focused on regional specialties. *Comestibles Yvoré*, located on the Chaussée d'Antin in Paris advertised their goods in the *Livret d'Or* for the 1924 Salon d'Automne. In their small ad, they mentioned their *Foies gras de Strasbourg*, their *Bouillabaise* and their *Pieds de Metz Truffés*. These specialties were from vastly different regions, Alsace, Provence and Moselle, but all located in one shop. *Comestibles Yvoré* was certainly not the only *traiteur* featuring regional specialties. *Au Bon Roy René*, also featured in the *Livret d'Or*, kept their description simpler: "Toutes les Spécialités Provinciales, tous les Grands Vins d'Anjou, tous les Grands Crus de France" (*Livret d'Or* 1924, 44). Interestingly, *Comestibles Yvoré* not only did "Livraison à Domicile" but also "Expéditions Province, Étranger" (*Livret d'Or* 1924, 28). Thus, Paris had become a hub for regional cuisine with the boom in transportation and technology. First the regional products were exported to the capital, the recipes and preparations came with them, and they were then exported back throughout the country and across the world as authentic regional specialties.

The *Livret d'Or* also contained an advertisement for a restaurant with a similar theme. The

Restaurant & Grill-Rom Saint-Michel, located on the Place Saint-Michel, though it remains in the same category of restaurants featuring multiple regional specialties, did specialize slightly more than the *Café de l'Univers* or *Comestibles Yvoré*. At the bottom, in perhaps the largest print of the advertisement was the name of the owner, “Édouard Rouzier, Périgourdin”. He proudly displayed his connection to the most gastronomically revered region of France. Like the *Café de l'Univers*, the *Grill-Room Saint-Michel* listed their weekly specials which had origins throughout France, including *La Matelote Bourguignonne*, *Le Confit d'Oie Sarladais*, *La Bouillabaisse Marseillaise*, *Le Poulet à la Paroissin*. In addition, specifically Périgordian specials, such as *Le Lièvre à la Royale* or *Le Baron d'Agneau Périgourdin* were highlighted on the menu (*Livret d'Or* 1924, 42).

Finally, there were restaurants focusing on a specific region's cuisine including that province's regional culinary specialties as well as its wines and spirits. A common example are crêperies, both Breton and Normand, such as *Ti Jos*, a Breton pub founded in 1937 at the time of the Paris Regional Expositions and likely at the height of public interest in authentic regional cuisine. Curnonsky and Rouff also mentioned *Pharamond*, *A la Petite Normande* in their *Yellow Guide*, where they wrote, “[R]ognons brochette (skewered kidneys) which melt in the mouth and thick juicy *châteaubriands aux pommes soufflées* (rump-steaks with puffed potatoes). The *crêpes* (pancakes), prepared in a chafing-dish on the table before you, are likewise delectable. Excellent Normandy cider and a good wine list” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 50). Crêpes were already among the most normalized of regional specialties and featured in both Parisian restaurants and regional restaurants, as we have already seen.

Also popular were Provençal or Marseillais restaurants. This is perhaps due to the popularity of *Les Trois Frères Provençaux* that brought the taste for Southern cooking to Paris.

In their *Yellow Guide*, Curnonsky and Rouff mentioned a *Restaurant Blanc*, which they described as “Good house. Makes a specialty of Marseilles dishes: *Bourride, aioli, bouillabaisse, estouffade, brandade, pieds et paquets*, etc. Excellent *soupe au poisson*. Wines of the Rhône and of Provence” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 50). Unlike *Les Trois Frères*, Provençal restaurants of the time began to focus on simpler regional cooking as the search for “authentic”, “traditional” and “typical” food altered the gastronomic discourse.

Alsatian restaurants also found particular success in the capital and represented a large percentage of regional restaurants throughout most arrondissements. The *Brasserie Lipp*, which opened in the 6th arrondissement in 1880, is one of several Alsatian restaurants that are still in business today. Curnonsky also mentioned a restaurant named *Alice* serving specialties such as “*Poulet à la crème* (creamed chicken), *faisans farcis* (stuffed pheasants), *canards* (ducks), *foie gras, choucroute* (sour-kroust) *strasbourgeoise*” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 41). He also praised it for its Alsatian wine list. Another notable restaurant according to Curnonsky and Rouff was *La Cigogne* in the 1st arrondissement. He described *La Cigogne* as “A charming little restaurant which makes a specialty of Alsatian dishes: *choucroute* (sourkroust) copiously garnished, *poulet aux navets et au foie gras* (chicken with turnips, etc.), *bécassine flambée* (blazed woodcock)” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 37). Stars of Alsatian cooking featured in restaurants were foie gras again, which had found great success as a “treasure” of French cuisine, and the more typical *choucroute*, a dish that was common as well in German cooking.

It is perhaps surprising to see Alsatian cuisine so prevalent in the capital and represented in many arrondissements. After all, its relationship to France was still controversial, as it had only been annexed back to France in 1919 after World War I. It had before that spent an almost fifty-year stint, from 1871 to 1919, as a Germany territory. However, in a patriotic tone, it

remained in regional culinary texts and was thought of as thoroughly French. In fact, gastronomic texts went to great length to prove the Frenchness of Alsace through its cuisine. “In spite of repeated and long invasions, wars and occupations, Alsace has always kept her own way of cooking, which is very original and, together with those of Provence, Languedoc, Lorraine, Ile-de-France, Normandy, and Burgundy, the most complete of the French provinces” (Croze *What to Eat* 42-43).

Even before 1919 and the annexation back to France, Alsace remained prominent in regionalist gastronomic texts. Ferguson highlights in particular *La cuisine française du XIVe au XXe siècle—L’art du bien manger* (1913), by gastronome Edmond Richardin (1846-1917) as an example of this phenomenon: “At a time when Germany held Alsace and part of Lorraine, ceded by the French after the defeat of 1870, it is understandable that Richardin included over thirty pages of foods from Lorraine. The province may have been lost to the French, but Richardin assures that its cooking will live in France” (Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste* 127). Thus, creating authentic Alsatian cooking and reiterating the Frenchness of the cuisine was important to French gastronomes. This could certainly be one of the reasons for so many Alsatian restaurants populating the capital.

Chez Jenny, which opened in 1931 and is still open today, serves as another example of an Alsatian restaurant that proved to be quite popular at the time. It was advertised for instance in *Le Petit Parisien*, a daily newspaper, on December 16th, 1932. The advertisement referred to *Chez Jenny* as “La vraie brasserie alsacienne”. The advertisement stated: “Vous souvenez-vous encore de la maison ‘Chez Jenny’ de l’Exposition Coloniale? Là où vous vous êtes tant régalé des véritables produits d’Alsace. Si oui!... La même maison est ouverte au 39, boulevard du Temple [...] Vous y trouverez un grand choix de plats spéciaux et tous les produits d’Alsace

garantis d'origine." The ad used terms such as "vrai," "véritables," and "garantis d'origine" to testify to the restaurant's authenticity in Paris. Themes of authenticity were a growing trend for restaurants removed from their region of origin. This guarantee of authenticity would be important to the Parisian audience who was in search of this nostalgic experience without the need to travel.

In his article "Authenticity" appearing in the journal *Gastronomica*, Alan Weiss explains that gastronomic authenticity is an extremely fluid concept often abused by writers.

"Gastronomic authenticity is a 'soft' concept, usually referring to the appropriateness of linking a specific ingredient, technique or recipe, or a relation between dishes or between a wine and a dish, to a particular time and place" (Weiss, "Authenticity" 74). However, Weiss adds that authenticity is largely related to cultural identity and to how the region defines itself. However, on the contrary, in regional cuisine of the early and mid 20th-century, it was not the culture itself that was defining what was authentic, but outsiders, often from Paris, who outlined an identity for the province. Weiss argues that, while tradition is a trajectory, authenticity becomes a function of genealogy and is an interpretation placed on the past. But it is not always an interpretation of the past put in place by the people associated with it. Rather, the notion authenticity indicates an urban appreciation of provincial cuisine.

Weiss further defines authenticity by separating it from "typical", as typical indicates a categorization by type while authenticity is a qualitative judgment defined by site and history (Weiss, "Authenticity" 75-76). When we discuss what is included in "typical cuisine", this mainly applies to a categorization of regional food. When regional restaurants appeared in the center, they were adding to the conversation not just what is typical, but expanding the topic to include what was deemed authentic.

Regional restaurants were clearly not uncommon by the interwar period and much of this interest can be due to the ease of transportation, bringing regional products and variety to Paris, but this category of restaurant could not have been so successful without an increasing interest in regional cooking due to the influence of regionalism as a political position. In fact, this increased interest in regional culture in Paris was quite popular after World War I and spread to art, architecture, literature, and more. In his article “L’architecture du régionalisme: Les origines du débat (1900-1950)”, architectural historian Jean-Claude Vigato writes, “Wasn’t it necessary to erase the disaster through reconstruction, to erase materially but also psychologically, the horror of the first great modern war in which the techniques of progress turned out to be the means of destruction? Wasn’t it best to return to the prewar period, that lost paradise?” (Vigato 35). Indeed, regional restaurants provided fodder for the nostalgia for a simpler provincial life craved by the French. Many ingredients were imported to Paris, allowing for close approximations to cuisine found in the provinces, but the style of dishes was changed for the new Parisian and international audience.

Regional Ingredients for a Parisian Audience

Gastronomes often argued that Paris received the very best goods that France had to offer. “Paris, l’endroit du monde où l’on peut, si l’on veut et si l’on sait, trouver les meilleures choses, Paris qui reçoit de toute la France les plus beaux fruits, les plus beaux légumes, les plus beaux poissons, et les plus belles volailles,” wrote Pampille in *Les bons plats de France* (Pampille 47). Indeed, the transportation system in France had made great advances by the interwar period, and the speed of transit allowed goods to come to Paris while they were still fresh. “The development

of the railroad system in midcentury speeded up the circulation of goods. The train routes primarily connected the provinces to the capital rather than to one another. More than ever, in the second half of the nineteenth century, Paris turned into a redistribution center. That tomatoes from Provence or Camembert from Normandy had to be procured via the capital placed chefs in the provinces at a clear disadvantage for all except local produce, while it gave the master chef in Paris the first choice of everything” (Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste* 124-125). This could explain why regional cooking was transplanted with such ease into the Parisian restaurants. However, the access to authentic regional goods did not guarantee that those eating in the city restaurants would understand the regional cooking that was based on them.

As we have already seen, it was very important for gastronomes to adapt recipes to the Parisian palate in their guides and cookbooks. The same had to be achieved by chefs in regional restaurants in Paris. “Perhaps, with its taste for smartness, it has wrought in them some transformation—improvements, it may be—and in that way has saved them from oblivion” (Croze *What to Eat* 10). Though gastronomes often praised the simple cooking of the provinces, some textual excerpts on regional ingredients and cooking in Paris implied that trained chefs were able to improve upon the recipes. Croze implied that these changes might even have saved a recipe by altering it to be suitable for a wider audience. The most common alteration in recipes affected Southern cooking. The French palate of the North was not used to strong tastes such as garlic, olive oil, and saffron.

Though garlic was beginning to find its regular presence in regional cookbooks, it was still met with caution by some consumers whose palates still rejected its strong taste. In the *Yellow Guide for Epicures*, Curnonsky and Rouff described the food at a restaurant named *Aux Bonnes Choses* to be “good southern dishes for epicures who are not afraid of a touch of garlic”

(Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 100). The consumer still had to be warned if restaurants presented dishes that were “too authentic”.

One common problem that arose in gastronomic writings was whether or not an authentic *Bouillabaisse* could be served in Paris. Though Pampille claimed that Paris received the very best fish, other gastronomes insisted that the authentic types of fish from the Mediterranean could not be found, thus making it impossible to recreate the dish. Nevertheless, the dish was quite commonly listed in restaurant descriptions, such as that of the *Restaurant Blanc* and the *Café de l’Univers* as we have seen, showing that it was not only served, but found success in Paris. Curnonsky and Rouff wrote that it was the ability to find these sorts of dishes in Paris that testified to its greatness as a culinary center.

How can anyone speak competently of a city which offers an epitome of all the eating and all the drinking in the world; where are found, under the shadow of the great gastronomic art belonging to no particular region and beneath the wine of the most marvellous wine cards, the creations of Périgord, the marvels of Bugey, the cider of Normandy, the *charcuterie* of Alsace, the *cujes* of Moscow, the grills and the whiskies of Great Britain, the Swiss *désaleys*, the Provençal *bouillabaisse*s, the Italian *grappas*, and how many other things besides...? (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 19)

Other gastronomes, such as Des Ombiaux, mentioned that the dish had several versions adapted to the area in which it was recreated. “Il y a plusieurs sortes de bouillabaisse. La marseillaise ne peut se faire que dans le Midi à cause de certains poissons qu’elle nécessite [...] Mais on fait à Paris une bouillabaisse qui est loin d’être à dédaigner” (Des Ombiaux, *Traité de la table* 86). Des Ombiaux was perhaps referring to *matelote*, a fish stew made with eel and other available fish from the Seine, though he classified it alongside the Provençal form of the dish. If a gastronomic expert like Des Ombiaux conflated the two, it could be that some *Bouillabaisse* featured in restaurants was in fact *Matelote*, considered a form of the dish adapted to Parisian fish and tastes.

Paris as Province: The Invention of Tradition

While we have seen that the typical dishes of each region were qualified by their geography and tradition, Paris embodied a lack of both of these elements. As a cosmopolitan region, its dishes were not linked to the foodstuffs produced in that region, but instead relied heavily on ingredients brought in from other regions. Paris was a melting pot of gastronomy, making it quite difficult to both define Parisian cuisine, and to summarize the cuisine that was to be found there. In their introduction to the *Yellow Guide for Epicures*, Curnonsky and Rouff wrote “Paris is, then, the Babel of cooking and the first difficulty which besets an epicure is resisting unhealthy curiosity, eliminating, from the start, an exoticism entirely foreign to the French cooking to which the present work is dedicated” (19). Thus, the *Yellow Guide for Epicures* presented to the reader a summary of all of the best French cooking, including regional cuisine, which was to be found in Paris. Eliminated were the foreign cuisines that represented both wonderful culinary contributions and those that corrupted the national palate.

With Paris’s lack of traditional cuisine, the idea of Paris as a region in gastronomic tour guides conflicted directly with the discourse of regionalism that had infused itself into writings on French cuisine. However, it still had to be addressed as a region of France. Gastronomes were thus forced to define the traditional cuisine of the city center, which had largely disappeared. For this reason, the Parisian gastronomic tradition can largely be seen as invented during this period. Writers pinpointed common recipes and preparations and infused them with history and typicality assigned to Paris.

The concept of “invented tradition” was formulated by Eric Hobsbawm in his introduction to the book *The Invention of Tradition*, which he edited in association with Terence Ranger. Hobsbawm writes, “‘Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed

by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (Hobsbawm 1). Food products marked as “à la Parisienne” or named as traditionally Parisian cuisine were not done so because the tradition was a longstanding one, but often because it was repeated as such. Dishes were found on restaurant menus, written into gastronomic texts and adopted by chefs, gastronomes and cuisinières in a short period of time during the definition of a Parisian cuisine. Hobsbawm adds that the connection with the past is most often fictitious. “In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition” (2). If one considers this definition, it is clear that many dishes featured in regional culinary texts were invented traditions. However, nowhere is this clearer than in the definition and categorization of the “traditional cuisine” of Paris. As we have seen, the connection with a past and nostalgia surrounding this connection were important for gastronomic regionalism, but this bucolic nostalgia was certainly lacking in Paris. To the regionalists, Paris represented industry, modernity and moral corruption as opposed to the home, the farm and humble traditions of the provinces.

As it was decided what was typical of the region, Parisian cuisine was reinvented as traditional. Paris was a melting pot of cultures and traditions from around France and the world, so a typical tradition of the home was non-existent. What often became defined as typical of Parisian cuisine were those recipes invented by chefs in great restaurants. The gastronomes who praised these dishes made them famous in Paris and therefore established them as famous dishes of the city. As the regionalist discourse defined Parisian cuisine, these famous recipes were redefined as typical.

The term “à la parisienne” thus followed a number of dishes in gastronomic texts. Common examples are *Salade parisienne*, *Petits pois à la parisienne*, though preparation and ingredients for both differ from recipe to recipe. It is difficult to pinpoint through recipes what qualified a dish as “Parisienne” for gastronomes of the early and mid 20th century. *Petits pois à la parisienne* was distinguished from *Petits pois à la française* in Croze’s book *What to Eat and Drink in France* by an addition of spring onions, parsley and egg yolks. However, this dish had only egg yolks, but no methods in common with *Rissoles à la parisienne*, made with chicken or other meats, battered with egg yolk and crumbs soaked in milk and fried. *Soupe au riz parisienne* was also quite different than the other recipes, being distinguished from *Soupe bonne femme* by only the addition of “much more rice and unskimmed milk” (13). Therefore, unlike recipes defined as *à la Périgord* or *périgourdine* with the addition of goose fat or truffles, those defined as *à la parisienne* did not have a concrete foundation.

It could be that these dishes found their thread in a more abstract concept, that of an *idea* of Parisian cooking. Croze wrote, “A dash of vinegar,’ ‘swiftly sauté,’ ‘lightly, browned,’ ‘quickly fried,’ ‘a taste of lemon juice, gherkins, and pepper’—that is what appeals to the innumerable artists, craftsmen, students, midinettes, clerks, hawkers, and working people of Paris” (Croze *What to Eat* 9). These preparations or methods of cooking initially appear unconnected, but they are related to a broader concept unique to Parisian cooking, that of speed. “Here there are few of those lovingly-simmered dishes to be found in nearly all the other provinces. [...] everyone is in a hurry, so cookery much be rapid. However, because cooking is still an art in every corner of France, Paris included, the rapid cooking of Paris does not mean bad cooking” (Croze *What to Eat* 9). Indeed, the themes of speed in cooking and artistry both found their place in most gastronomic texts addressing Paris. They fit the regional idea of Paris, the modern center that

lacked the bucolic serenity of the provinces with its culinary traditions. However, gastronomes still searched for culinary staples to include for the region.

Many gastronomes nonetheless found a way to insert nostalgia into descriptions of Parisian cuisine. This creation of a nostalgic and geographic connection is apparent in Pampille's description of *matelote* and of where and how it must be eaten.

La matelote, cette bouillabaisse du Nord, pour avoir toute sa saveur et tout son charme, doit se manger au bord de la Seine. Elle-même est un paysage. Elle évoque instantanément un fleuve d'eau profonde, au cours vif, un ciel gris et brumeux, une ligne d'horizon indécise, le clapotement de l'eau sur une marche de pierre, le grincement d'une chaîne retenant à la rive une petite barque, et l'étroit chemin de halage, et les grandes touffes de roseaux, qui forment des îles, et l'enchevêtrement des lianes et des herbes glissantes ployées dans l'eau ; et même le passage imprévu d'une souche de bois mort, d'un vieux chapeau ou d'un bouchon que l'on suit avec des yeux vagues, sans songer à rien, perdu dans cette rêverie si particulière des bords du fleuve. Oui, dans la matelote il y a tout cela ; et quand on l'apporte bleue et fumante sur la table, dans un grand plat creux en lourde porcelaine blanche, avec sa pyramide de croûtons frits, ses quartiers d'œufs durs, et les formes différentes des poissons qui la composent si le paysage que je vous ai dit n'entre pas avec elle, la matelote est ratée, ce n'est pas la peine d'y goûter. (55)

Pampille created for Paris a bucolic landscape that constructed nostalgia for the reader, thus fashioning it as a province instead of a modern center. She echoed the same structure that Curnonsky used often in *La France gastronomique* or *Le trésor gastronomique de France*, infusing descriptions of regional landscapes with their typical foods. Pampille used this technique in order to fit Paris into this same category of "province". *Matelote*, a fish stew often including eels and various other fish from the Seine, was a common inclusion in lists of typically Parisian dishes.

Another common dish referred to as typically Parisian is *Friture de goujons*, small fish from the Seine that are battered in milk and flour and then fried. Pampille wrote of *Friture de goujons*, "Elle n'est bonne que dans une guinguette au bord de la Seine, arrosée d'un chablis ordinaire un peu sec" (Pampille 55). The oddity of her statement is that she wrote that this

traditional “Paris region” dish was best served with a Burgundian wine, Chablis. While geography and the quick fried preparation linked it to its home city, the wine pairing did not. However, it was perhaps the melting pot of regional cooking that classified it as a perfect combination.

In addition to bucolic nostalgia, nostalgia for traditions lost was also invoked by gastronomes in their descriptions of Parisian cuisine. Curnonsky and Rouff lamented the loss of Parisian traditional cooking in the *Yellow Guide for Epicures*, stating “The centre of the Île-de-France being Paris, a city which exercises an irresistible attraction over the rest of the Republic (and over the whole world), the province surrounding it has naturally become an agglomerate of the inhabitants of Gascony, Provence, Picardy and Franche-Comté whose ancient customs, traditions, and peculiar systems of cooking, brought by them, have been diluted or, more accurately, have been organized there to please the immigrants and those who, inhabiting the capital, circulate about it. Hence the disappearance of regional cooking which must, however, have existed in former times” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 156). The authors suggested that it was not only regional dishes that were adapted to the Parisian palate in the capital, but Parisian dishes that were adapted to conform to the “immigrant” palate. Indeed, Parisian cuisine was not said to be absent, but to be a phenomenon of a modernizing Paris.

Though the best fruits, vegetables and meats were shipped into the city, the local agriculture was considered a dying breed. “The immediate Parisian *banlieue* used to be famous for its wines,” wrote Curnonsky and Rouff, “Today, Argenteuil is but an immense railway switching-station and an industrial city. The factories have invaded everything. Yet, no! There still remain, here and there, a few old vines which no longer produce wine but a delicious alcohol much appreciated by a few refined connoisseurs: the *Marc d’Argenteuil*” (Curnonsky and Rouff,

Yellow Guide 168). The authors linked a current gastronomic product, the *Marc d'Argenteuil* with a lost tradition, thus branding it as rare and special to the region. At the same time that Curnonsky and Rouff created this form of nostalgia, they also used the regionalist theme of the corruption or modernization of Paris to explain how it has affected Paris's regional cuisine of the past. Curiously, no mention of a *Marc d'Argenteuil* is evident in other gastronomic texts of the period. There is a possibility that this rare alcohol existed, but it could also be that this tradition was largely invented by Curnonsky in order to tie Paris and its outskirts to an agricultural practice.

The creation of some sort of past was important to the invention of traditional Parisian cooking. When most gastronomes highlighted what they referred to as traditionally Parisian dishes, they infused a history into the dish. An example of this is Curnonsky and Rouff's description of *sauce béarnaise*: "Evidently epicures interested in the question of origins are well aware that it is at the *Pavillon Henri IV* that the *sauce Béarnaise* was invented and that its great tradition has been maintained" (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 156). In another example, Croze linked the catacombs created from ancient quarries to traditional Parisian cuisine. "The old quarries—of which many have been catacombs—are used to grow mushrooms, cultivated mushrooms 'champignons de couche' or 'champignons de Paris,' and that is why that kind of mushroom has been, and is, lavishly used in the recipes of Ile-de-France" (Croze, *What to Eat* 9). It is no surprise that stories such as these populated regional writings on Parisian cooking.

This theme, continuity with the past, is a cornerstone of the "invention of tradition" outlined by Hobsbawm. In fact, one article in the book, "The Highland Tradition of Scotland", written by Hugh Trevor-Rope, outlines the importance of linked history to invented traditions. The essay traces the creation of the kilt and how the myth of its ancient origins came to be.

Trevor-Rope lists three stages in the creation of the Highland tradition and its imposition. The first stage was the cultural revolt against Ireland in which Scotland claimed to be the “mother-nation”. The second stage was the creation of new Highland traditions, presented as long-standing traditions, which were unique to the culture. Lastly, these new traditions were adopted by the different Scottish regions (Hobsbawm 16). This sequence can be used to understand traditional Parisian cooking’s path to becoming an invented tradition. The conflict that began this creation, or the first stage, was the new gastronomic regionalist discourse focusing on the provinces as unique that came into conflict with the way Paris was presented by regionalism. This conflict initiated the second step of uncovering foods that could be seen as traditional, and insisting on their historicity, whether real or created. Finally, these traditions were adopted by gastronomes and published in their works, therefore allowing them to enter and be inscribed in the myth of Parisian cuisine. This is not to say that cooking unique to Parisian didn’t exist before the gastronomes came to invent and categorize it. In fact, *sauce béarnaise* did exist in the 18th-century and *matelote* is also mentioned in 18th-century texts.¹⁸ Rather, the idea of Paris’s regional culinary traditions presented in a new way as old, culinary traditions like those of the provinces.

One example of this was the consistent selection of the *pomme de terre frite* as a traditionally Parisian dish. “If we wanted to cite the Parisian *plat* par excellence, well, I believe we would choose the *pomme de terre frite*, more familiarly called the *frite*” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide for Epicures* 21). Though Curnonsky and Rouff admitted that many have adopted this dish around the world, they affirmed that Parisians not only created it, but also truly mastered the technique. This technique was frying the potatoes not once, but twice. It had to be perfectly crisp, not too dry, and yet free of old oil drippings. It comes as no surprise that they

¹⁸ See for example, volume II of *Tableau de Paris*, written by Louis-Sébastien Mercier, published in 1783 by Imprimerie de Natthey & Compagnie, p.104

spoke with special disdain for the German version. “Oh the German fried potatoes! The Treaty of Versailles should have forbidden their fabrication across the Rhine at the same time as the manufacture of the war material. It is true that wise negotiators would simply have prohibited all cooking in that region...” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 21). By rejecting another country’s version of this simple dish, they insisted on its Frenchness. They did not, however, mention the Belgian version, argued by some to be the truly original French fry and the creator of the technique.

In his article “The Betrayal of *Moules-Frites*” appearing in the book *French Food: On the Table, On the Page, and in French Culture*, Stéphane Spoiden writes, “The case of French fries is evidently the most striking example of a French gastronomic hegemony over what is considered its cultural margins being imposed mainly by the forces of an international market, rather than by the French themselves who have always acknowledged the high quality of Belgian gastronomy” (Spoiden 158). As the popularity of the French fry spread to other countries, such as America and England, especially following World War I, the repetition of the name French fry, in general, contributed to the notion of the invention of this culinary, Parisian tradition. It then was absorbed into the myth of traditional French cooking.

Spoiden argues that the practice of cooking fries emerged more or less simultaneously in several places, not only in France and Belgium, but also in Germany and in Spain. He writes that what makes fries as we know them today Belgian by origin lies in fact in the method of cooking and serving them, which has been done since the 19th century. “It is notorious in Belgium that until the 1960s, the vast majority of French people had still not acquired the technique of double-frying and the majority of restaurateurs continued to prepare their fries in a pan, as still seen in some countries” (Spoiden 167).

It is thought by most scholars on the subject, including Spoiden, that the First World War was the catalyst for French fries being propagated outside of Belgium's borders as both American and French troops moved through the country during the war and took the technique and concept back to their own countries (Spoiden 167). As globalization caused French fries to be spread across the world, the *French* qualifier stuck with the dish. The consistent repetition of French nationality with the recipe infused it into the lore of French cuisine. But already when Pampille wrote her popular cookbook *Les bons plats de France*, the French fry had become a regular Parisian tradition to the gastronomes of the period. "Qu'est-ce qu'on appelle en effet 'le déjeuner de Paris': deux œufs sur le plat, une côtelette avec des pommes de terre frites, et un légume vert" (Pampille 49). Perhaps the reason for its success as a traditional Parisian preparation is that it epitomized the fusion of regional gastronomy with the Parisian style: quick and simple.

French fries and versions of fried potatoes represent perhaps the most successfully invented Parisian tradition. The insistence on the history of French fries in Parisian cooking has become anchored in the myth of French cuisine. By the interwar period it was widely accepted as an important part of Parisian culture. In the 1932 book *Voyage au bout de la nuit*, Louis Ferdinand Céline, wrote "C'est parisien le goût des frites" (Céline 399). Today, the tradition is still considered to be factual and the invented history of the dish is defended. In an article published on February 1st, 2013, in *Le Monde*, entitled "La frite est-elle Belge or Française", the author (not specified) writes "En France, est défendue la "pomme frite Pont-Neuf", qui aurait été inventée par des marchands ambulants sur le plus vieux pont de Paris au lendemain de la Révolution de 1789. 'Ils proposaient de la friture, des marrons chauds et des tranches de patate rissolées', explique l'historienne Madeleine Ferrière".

Yet, the question remains, why did this invention of a tradition take place? Hobsbawm indicated that invented traditions are symptom of a larger phenomenon occurring at a specific time. “[Invented traditions] are important symptoms and therefore indicators of problems which might not otherwise be recognized, and developments which are otherwise difficult to identify and to date” (Hobsbawm 12). We have noted that regionalism coincided with a very tumultuous period in French history following the devastating Franco Prussian War and later, World War I. These wars along with the internationalization of trade and culture and increased world competition for goods created a new landscape for France. Hobsbawm continues, “We should expect [the invention of tradition] to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which ‘old’ traditions had been designed, producing new ones to which they were not applicable, or when such old traditions and their institutional carriers and promulgators no longer prove sufficiently adaptable and flexible, or are otherwise eliminated” (Hobsbawm 4-5). In this way, the invention of regional culinary tradition in Paris was likely a reaction to the change in the culinary discourse.

Indeed, the old generation of French cuisine, *haute cuisine* or *grande cuisine*, was rapidly losing its fame as the epitome of fine French food. The gastronomic culture was undergoing major shifts in the early 20th century as regionalism fused with gastronomy in a reaction against the modernization and the centralization of the Third Republic. As the gastronomic shift occurred, the current structure of how Paris’s cuisine was discussed no longer fit the framework that was previously in place. Gastronomes began to speak differently of French cuisine, associating it with a nostalgic draw towards a simpler life and infusing descriptions of geography into cuisine in a creation of typicality. A new structure was necessary for how Parisian cuisine was portrayed. It had to fit the same regionalist discourse without negating the idea of the

modernized and somewhat corrupt Paris center.

As regionalists spoke of traditions of the home, typical of their region of origin, simpler dishes became synonymous with Parisian cooking, replacing what had before been deemed typically Parisian, such as the *pièce montées* of Antonin Carême or the complicated preparations and presentations of the top restaurants. Speaking of high-end Parisian cuisine, Curnonsky and Rouff expressed their disdain for the category, describing high-end Parisian restaurants as “the fashionable high-priced restaurant, which is sometimes excellent, sometimes good, but where, oftener than not, it must be admitted, the cooking is but an accessory and is sacrificed to more or less successfully picturesque clap-trap, to a more or less tasteful luxury—even to the inevitable jazz-band” (Curnonsky and Rouff, *Yellow Guide* 162). Des Ombiaux went further in his insistence that the gastronomic landscape was changing in France with the advent of regionalism. “Ces niaiseries décoratives appartiennent à un autre âge où tout, dans la haute société, n’était qu’apparat, représentation et convention, où tout petit prince avait des ambassadeurs, où tout marquis voulait avoir des pages. Nous n’en sommes plus là. L’amour du naturel, apparu à la fin de l’ancien régime, a changé l’ordre social et ce changement a eu sa répercussion sur la cuisine” (Des Ombiaux, *Traité de la table* 7). This excerpt from Des Ombiaux clearly shows ties to French Republican thought. It is important to remember that though Des Ombiaux was liberal in views, he was nevertheless dedicated to his home country of Belgium, which was still a monarchy at the time. In fact, during World War I, Des Ombiaux served as head of the ministry of foreign affairs under Charles de Broqueville. The choice of fried potatoes and fish stew as representative of simple foods found in Paris allowed regionalism to infuse gastronomy with a much needed connection to a simpler past longed for by many French citizens even in the Parisian urban context.

Another way of understanding the idea of the invented culinary tradition of Paris is through Baudrillard's theory of Simulacra and Simulation. In *Simulacra and Simulation*, published in 1981, Baudrillard defines simulation as an imitation that represents reality and simulacra as the substitution of signs of the real for the real. He writes, "When the real is no longer what it was, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. There is a plethora of myths of origin and of signs of reality—a plethora of truth, of secondary objectivity, and authenticity" (Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* 6-7). As we delve into the subject further, we see that regional Parisian cuisine was not just an invented tradition but a simulacrum, or a series of signs reflecting other signs that have no relation to reality. Thus, the simulacra of Parisian regional cuisine gave the reader nostalgia for a past that truly never existed. It told a story of origin and gave signs pointing to reality without that actual reality existing. The writings of gastronomes used signs such as food denoted "à la parisienne" and collected common culinary staples such as *matelote* and *French fries*, and created a simulacrum, a false reality of a longstanding Parisian regional tradition.

The notion of a traditional Parisian cuisine is linked to the glorification of regional cuisines throughout France. With the praise of the food and cuisine of the provinces, Paris, too, had to be recreated as province in order to justify its existence in guides and cookbooks on gastronomic regionalism, in a relationship of codependency. Ferguson argues that the Parisian interest in gastronomy was also important to regional cuisine as a whole. "Even so-called regional cuisines owed their existence to Paris. Not until the nineteenth century, and especially toward the middle and end of the century, did gastronomic interest seriously consider the provinces, and this despite the traditional dishes that in some cases can be traced to the Middle Ages" (Ferguson). It can be argued that gastronomic regionalism could not have seen such

success without the participation of Paris both in patronizing regional restaurants in Paris and in the creation of a traditional cuisine of its own.

CONCLUSION

During the first decades of the 20th-century until World War I, the categorization and simultaneous glorification of regional specialties led to a profound transformation of how French cuisine was represented and written about. By the interwar period, the *haute cuisine* of the 19th century, which represented one all-encompassing version of French cuisine that generally ignored regional differences, had largely faded, or was confined to the few fine restaurants serving upper-class patrons. Instead, French cuisine was defined by its incorporation of artisanal regional products with a focus on quality, tradition and variety. However, as we have seen, regions were seen by gastronomes and regionalists as imagined and idealized entities that rarely represented the reality of everyday life.

This was evident in how the provinces were represented at the 1937 World's Fair in Paris. The regional displays were considered the first official national demonstration of regionalism. Edmond Labbé (1868-1944), appointed general commissioner of the fair, explicitly stated that regionalism would be one of the central themes of the fair and appointed a committee consisting of regionalist artists, folklorists and members of the Touring Club. In addition, Jean Charles-Brun was appointed as the Director of Regional Life. Thus, those deciding what would be shown and how were largely committee members from the Parisian bourgeoisie or upper class. The regions each had an exhibition area where regional dance, costume, and artisanal products were showcased for the world to see. Local cuisine was central to many of these displays and was presented as wholesome and simple. The goal was to display the rich patrimony of France, but it mostly resulted in a contrived staging and therefore, in an idealization of French culture.

One factor of this idealization was the display of technologically advanced family farms at the rural center of the fair. This was a continuation of the theme of “réveil des provinces” that began in the first years of the 20th-century. At the same time as it extolled “tradition,” regionalism of the interwar period began to embrace modernization, adopting Third Republic themes of education and improvement of rural agriculture. Peer writes that farm displays showcased the views of the Popular Front presenting, “a vision of rural progress, modern comfort and ‘well-being’ meant to elevate the perceived social status of farmers and to encourage them to adopt these improvements in their farms and villages” (Peer 111). However, both the radical Left and the conservative Right claimed at once to be speaking for the people.

Another initiative of the regionalist “réveil des provinces” was the implementation of a rural education program called “cinéma agricole”. This program is outlined by Alison Murray Levine in her article “Projections of Rural Life: The Agricultural Film Initiative, 1919-1939.” The films were sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture, which funded the purchase of projectors for agricultural regions and created the films based on the themes it wanted to promote to the rural population, principally to farmers. The goal of this program was two-fold. The first was to increase production by educating farmers on modern technology and innovations, such as machinery, new farming techniques and hygiene. The other was to keep the rural populations on the farms and reduce the exodus to cities.

An example of a film shown through this program is *La bonne méthode* (1927), which opened with a map of France, referenced as “a great agricultural country”. The film also began with statistics stating how France’s harvests were much smaller per hectare than that of Belgium or Germany. The film centered on a farmer, Gaspard, who deserted his land for the city, but quickly returned when stress and pollution drove him back home. He chose to go back to school

to learn about agricultural progress and modern fertilization techniques. Gaspard reaped the rewards with bountiful harvests and thus increased his own wealth. The theme of this film could have easily been taken directly from the regionalist literature of the same period, echoing the ideas of the 'réveil des provinces', which preached the beauty and importance of rural agriculture and folk traditions, all the while emphasizing the negative implications of city life.

The desire to stop the rural exodus was important to both political Right and Left. Levine explains, "[C]onservatives viewed the rural population as a stable force that would counterbalance the dangers of revolution among the urban proletariat, while socialists defended small-town farmers as well as workers threatened by the perils of capitalism" (77). As we have seen, such concerns caused regionalist views to be adopted by both political sides in an effort to increase agricultural production, which was vital to France's economy, though their views of how to accomplish this varied. In her article "Le 'Retour à la terre' après la Grande Guerre: Politique agricole, cuisine, et régionalisme", Kyri Watson Clafin observes that the regionalism of the Left praised greater specialization in agricultural production which led to the professionalization of the farmer. "À gauche, les modernisateurs et les réformateurs des régions croient que la revitalisation de l'agriculture et la force économique régionale sont des garanties pour une moins forte disparité de la productivité et des conditions de vie dans les différents ensembles géographiques de l'hexagone" (Clafin 219). The Left also encouraged the creation of cooperatives for both farmers and consumers.

Economist Charles Gide (1847-1932) regularly advocated for cooperatives in the early 20th-century, following regionalist views. Gide was a socialist, and a champion of progressive politics during the late 19th and early 20th-century. Though he based his thought on writings of the Utopian Socialist Charles Fourier (1772-1837), his writings also echo in part Charles-Brun,

who wrote of the positive effect of cooperatives for regional agriculture. “Nous avons dit et nous redirons toute à l’heure, que l’organisation régionale professionnelle est un des titres principaux de notre programme. Les caisses de crédit agricole, les syndicats et les coopératives agricole (laiteries des Charentes et du Pitou, fruitières du Jura, Confédération générale des vignerons) sont dans l’esprit régionaliste, si, comme c’est le cas le plus ordinaire, ils embrassent toute une région” (Charles Brun, *Le régionalisme* 187). These themes of renovating agricultural production were important to gastronomic regionalism as well, creating increased specialization.

Furthermore, Gide saw cuisine as an important social institution in rural life. Cooperatives were not just important for farmers, but for consumers, as well. Already, the notion of “cuisine populaire”, or the change from haute cuisine to less complex preparations, was increasing access to the culinary object for the lower classes. Gide insisted that the creation of consumer cooperatives allowed additional access to food at a lower price while ensuring a fair price for producers (Claflin, “Retour à la terre” 222-223). According to Gide, gastronomy should be available to all classes because it was an important social aspect of French identity.

Another and very important example of political initiatives related to the intersection of regionalism and gastronomy was the creation of the Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée, or AOC. Winemakers of the early 20th-century faced a series of challenges known collectively as “la crise du vin”. This crisis started in the late 19th-century, when importations of American products brought foreign diseases to French vines, such as phylloxera, mildew (*plasmopora viticola*) and black-rot (*uncinula necator*) (Whalen 68). Phylloxera in particular destroyed virtually all of France’s vineyards beginning slowly in 1863 and lasting all the way into the early years of the 20th-century. It is estimated that during this period, 2.5 million hectares of vines were uprooted and had to be replanted, causing extreme debt among viticulturists (James Simpson 532). Added

to this biological crisis was the decrease in foreign demand due to the prohibitions in the United States and Scandinavia¹⁹, and the decrease in local demand with the economic depression of the 1930s. Technological advances, such as mechanical irrigation and tractors, were welcomed by larger wine producers, but caused overproduction during the time of decreased demand. In addition, these machines were not accessible to small, independent family farms that did not have the means to acquire them. This weakened the position of the small winegrower and favored merchants, which were larger companies that purchased grapes or juice from many sources in order to make and sell their own wine (Simpson 527-528). These tensions led to many demonstrations across France in the first decade of the 20th-century, notably in Champagne and Burgundy. Winemakers were angered at overproduction and concerned about the authenticity of products being sold under their region's name, particularly in Champagne, where a unique technique to create sparkling wines, now known as the *méthode champenoise*, was developed.

In *Le régionalisme*, Charles-Brun lamented the effects of modernization on regional gastronomy, but also implied that it had positive regionalist effects. He implied that railroads assisted the specialization of regions. “Le chemin de fer est un instrument de déracinement et de centralisation: c’est vite dit, et c’est assez vrai, en un sens. Cependant, le Cultivateur français observait récemment que, sous l’action des transports rapides, il s’est opéré sur presque toute l’étendue du territoire une décentralisation générale de la production agricole: les régions se sont spécialisées. Si l’on en croit de retentissants débats, la Champagne, l’Armagnac, le Beaujolais ne tiennent pas à perdre leur existence régionale, qui fait leur valeur sur le marché: ils réclament une

¹⁹United States prohibition officially lasted from 1920 to 1933. Versions of prohibition existed in Sweden, Iceland and Norway since the 19th-century, but became more severe between 1914 and 1920. Prohibition ended in Finland in 1932. Iceland lifted the ban of wine in 1922 and spirits in 1935. Norway’s ban on wine was lifted in 1923 and spirits in 1927. Sweden’s ban on spirits lasted from 1914 to 1955. All countries continue to have high controls on sales of alcoholic beverages.

délimitation officielle et la garantie de leur produits contre les empiétements voisins” (Charles-Brun, *Le régionalisme* 180-181). To Charles-Brun and his fellow regionalists, these concerns were the result of excessive centralization as each region had its own, specialized agricultural products and general laws and legislation could not be a one size-fits-all process. Decentralization and both political and cultural Regionalism were the regionalist’s response to these concerns.

After the economic crisis of the 1930s in France, the Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée was officially established as law in 1935, protecting French producers against overproduction and falsification. Because of the influence of regionalist discourse of the period, the AOC system used notions of *terroir* and locality in order to define what was considered authentic for a region. However, just as elites such as Austin de Croze and Curnonsky defined typical gastronomy for readers, the establishment of the AOC was the result of wealthy landowners defining quality and tradition for the entire region. In her article “Beyond *Terroir*: Territorial Construction, Hegemonic Discourses, and French Wine Culture”, Marion Demossier writes, “what emerges from this historical analysis of the establishment of the legislation in Burgundy is that despite the strongly unified image of Burgundy viticulture, the wealthiest landowners dominated the reorganization of the market, defining notions of quality, taste, and geographical origin and making sure that existing hierarchies were consolidated” (Demossier 690). A similar situation occurred in Champagne where the great *maisons* (names such as Veuve Clicquot, Ruinart, Heidsieck, Moët) defined quality for Champagne and what was typical for yields, production techniques and ageing.²⁰

²⁰ See Christian Barrère’s article “The Strategic Building of Typicality: Learning from the Comparative History of Three French Sparkling Vineyards” (2013)

Today, regionalist themes, such as the concepts of *terroir* and authenticity that were infused into AOC law, are now ingrained in the modern food and wine culture. Of Burgundy's wine culture today, Demossier writes, "A sense of permanence and fixity characterizes Burgundy and is even showcased through local wine tourism and the cultural *mise en scène* by selling authenticity, history, and tradition in a nostalgic fashion" (Demossier 688). Themes of regionalism, such as the *mise-en-scène* of local culture, the use of nostalgia and the importance of tradition and history are still important, not only to wine sales in regions such as Burgundy, but also to the sale of regional food products such as cheese or olive oil. These regional specialties continue to use regionalism to fashion themselves. In fact, as of June 26th, 2000, *foie gras du Périgord* had finally received AOC protection. According to the website of Foie Gras du Périgord, the AOC serves to protect "désormais la mention géographique Périgord et préserve les entreprises engagées dans la démarche qualité d'une concurrence rendue déloyale par l'utilisation abusive du terme Périgord" (foiegras-perigord.com).

Evidence of the effects of the cultural regionalism of the early 20th-century on food and wine can be seen as ingrained in modern culture. We often oppose food produced in modern facilities or big cities as inferior to the food produced on what we consider small, family-run farms. The success of the farmer's market in the later part of the 20th-century is a salient example that has found its way into American society. Modern consumers crave products that focus on quality, tradition and variety. A trend in farm-to-table restaurants in both France and America is to list the name of the farmer and the city or region where he or she farms. Restaurants such as Dan Barber's Blue Hill Stone Barns, located in Tarrytown, New York, boasts that it cooks as much of its menu as possible using ingredients found on the Stone Barns Farm. Guests are even invited to take a tour of the farm before or after their meal in order to enjoy the full dining

experience. Highlighting the producer and his location justifies its authenticity, in much the same way that products from *traiteurs* or restaurants in the early 20th century displayed the regional origins of the products they sold or placed on a menu, a practice unheard of before the advent of political regionalism.

In France, this tradition is also popular from small restaurants that use local ingredients to expensive Michelin starred restaurants in Paris, like L'Arpège. L'Arpège is run by Chef Alain Passard and features an all-vegetable menu grown in various parts of France. Passard boasts this connection to the earth on his website, stating, "Six jardiniers travaillent au potager de Fillé sur Sarthe. Trois personnes prennent en charge le potager de Bois-Giroult. Le petit dernier, le jardin des Porteaux, situé face à la baie de Mont St Michel accueille un verger. Pour le bien-être des jardins et aussi le travail de la terre, on peut y croiser, 2 ânes, 2 juments mais aussi des vaches, des poules, une chèvre. Je cultive mes légumes afin de pouvoir raconter une histoire de la graine à l'assiette...et aussi pour conjuguer la main du cuisinier et du jardinier, deux « métiers-passion » !" Thus, a connection to the earth and the use of local ingredients still define modern French cuisine. What is seen as a return to tradition in French cooking is directly related to the work of gastronomic regionalism.

The modern movement to "shop local" or for restaurants to use local products can be seen as an adaptation of a regionalist concept developed during the early 20th-century. When regionalist author Hubert Fillay (1879-1945) and folklorist Jacques-Marie Rougé (1873-1956) published their book *Trente ans de régionalisme* near the end of the interwar period in 1937, they insisted on the importance of encouraging local indulgence in regional products, such as in their home-region of Loire-et-Cher. In the spirit of regionalism, the authors created a society called La Ligue des Amis du Bon Vin de Loir-et-Cher in 1923. They wrote that the goal of this society was

as follows: “Il fallait encourager nos compatriotes à consommer au café, au restaurant, chez eux comme partout où ils se trouveraient, les bons vins honnêtes et parfumés du Loir-et-Cher” (Fillay and Rougé 147). Fillay and Rougé also wrote that part of the incentive in creating this society was the concern over the overproduction of wines of poor quality, which, they stated, encroached upon the sales of honest wines from local winemakers, one of the factors that led to the creation of the AOC in the interwar period, as we have seen.

In all works of the 20th-century until the outbreak of World War II, there is the idea of a French cuisine, often referred to as *la bonne chère* or *communauté stomacale* that has always existed. Croze wrote, for example, “La cuisine, évoluant lentement—moins que le style, mais plus que le langage—nous y retrouvons l’esprit des tendances et la caractéristique vraie des éléments qui forment une nation; cela tient au climat, à la configuration et aux productions du terroir, par quoi sont déterminés les besoins—donc les travaux et les usages—des habitants” (Croze, *Les plats régionaux* 7-8). Certainly what stands out in these texts is the idea of the glorification of regional culinary diversity that contributed to the greater idea of a national cuisine. This was not just a national cuisine, but one superior to all others because of its tradition for food. In *Gaietés et curiosités gastronomiques* Curnonsky wrote, « [...] Il m’a été donné de goûter à peu près toutes les cuisines de la planète, depuis l’admirable cuisine chinoise jusqu’à la redoutable cuisine américaine, sans parler (et cela vaut mieux !) de la cuisine espagnole, de la cuisine indienne et de la cuisine philippine. Ma préférence pour la cuisine française est donc fondée sur les meilleures raisons du monde, et des deux mondes ! » (Curnonsky and Derys 5). According to gastronomes, what set French cuisine apart from those of other countries were its superiority and its importance to French culture. Gastronomes glorified French cuisine as an art that was essential to French national identity.

Unlike other periods of French culinary history, gastronomic regionalism began the process of fixing gastronomy as national patrimony. In fact, in 2010, UNESCO declared the “gastronomic meal of the French” on its list of Intangible Cultural Heritage and in 2015 “The Climats, terroirs of Burgundy” on its World Heritage list. Indeed, themes of French regional cuisine that still exist to define the culinary genre today are words such as *terroir*, *authenticité* and *typique*. These themes, as we have seen, are the root of regionalism that influenced gastronomy during the early 20th-century until World War II. Thus, the advent of gastronomic regionalism was not only unique to the history of French cuisine, but continues to define French national identity to this very day.

In my dissertation I have shown how the fluid concept of cultural regionalism evolved during the early 20th century and how it became rooted in the idea of regional gastronomy. I argued that regionalism intersected with French gastronomy at the time and, far from being frivolous, played a defining role in the construction of what is currently referred to as French Cuisine. In my first chapter, I outlined the creation of regionalism and its manifestations in early 20th-century culture. Though many scholars choose to study political and literary regionalism, cultural regionalism was extremely important to French identity of the period. In my second chapter I introduced the most important gastronomes of the early to mid 20th century, such as Curnonsky, Austin de Croze, Maurice Des Ombiaux, Pampille and Marcel Rouff. I detailed their major works and what made their contributions to regional gastronomy unique. My third and fourth chapters were case studies on Savoie and Périgord. In the chapter on Savoie, I demonstrated that gastronomic texts on regions with recent or close ties to other countries felt the need to prove the Frenchness of Savoie by connecting their traditional foodstuffs to French cuisine. Périgord presented a different theme in which the region was portrayed through a mise-

en-scène of peasant life and nostalgia for a lost past. In addition, foods that were largely consumed only by the upper class were described as typical of everyday cooking and traditional of the rural populations. Though I showed that this portrayal was problematic, I also noted its importance in the categorization of regional cooking and what are considered staples of French cuisine. In my final chapter, I explored what types of regional restaurants existed in Paris and how they were presented to Parisians. In addition, I examined how Paris's cooking was categorized when it was listed in regionalist cookbooks. This analysis was especially pertinent as Paris was often characterized as "Other" in the regionalist discourse. Regionalist texts contrasted the corruption of Paris with the wholesome qualities of rural life. However, I highlighted both the importance of the adoption of Paris as a region in French cuisine and Paris's role in bringing regional cuisine to all of France by adjusting recipes to a more standard French palate and organizing events featuring gastronomic regionalism, such as the Salon d'Automne and the 1937 Paris World's Fair.

Though I restrict my study to Périgord, Savoie and Paris, there is much left to be said on other regions, especially those going through movements of regional identity during the early 20th-century, such as Bretagne and Alsace. These regions would be too complicated to study in a dissertation chapter alone and merit a complete analysis. In addition, the space of women in regional culinary writing continues to be a convoluted subject. Though I have shown that women such as Pampille (Marthe Daudet) wrote successful cookbooks, the sector of women's writing was largely reserved to the home and cooking for the family and was rarely respected as a profession in restaurants. Therefore, Pampille's book was written directly for fellow female cooks and not for professional, male chefs or male gastronomes, as was the case of writings by

Curnonsky, Croze or Des Ombiaux. Further research is yet to be done on the potentially rich contributions of specifically women's writing to gastronomy of the first half of the 20th-century.

Finally, I confine my study to the early 20th-century until the end of the interwar period. This period is important because of the creation and evolution of regionalism and how quickly it became ingrained in French identity. Regional cultural diversity was quickly praised and considered a fundamental contribution of France's unique identity. With the ease in transportation due to the invention of the automobile and the growing use of the railroad, gastronomes began exploring the provinces to categorize and praise France's rich culinary traditions. The Second World War changed France's political and social landscape significantly. The tight control of the Vichy government enacted centralization, which put an end to regionalist rhetoric. A period of economic growth, known as "Les Trente Glorieuses" which lasted roughly from 1946 to 1977, followed which also included rapid growth of the cities and further decrease in rural populations. Therefore, a future study is necessary to analyze the course of gastronomic regionalism after World War II and how a surge in regionalism during the 1960s and 1970s in turn influenced the gastronomic discourse.

APPENDIX – FIGURES

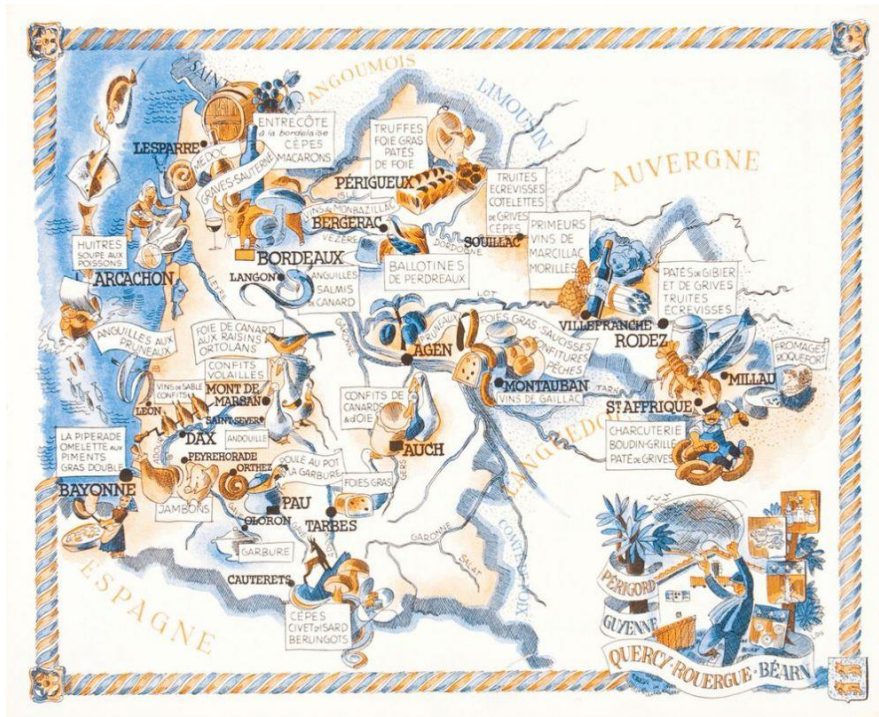


Figure 1 – Curnonsky’s gastronomic map of Quercy, Rouergue and Béarn.
Curnonsky, *Atlas de la gastronomie française*. Paris: L’Écu de France, 1938.

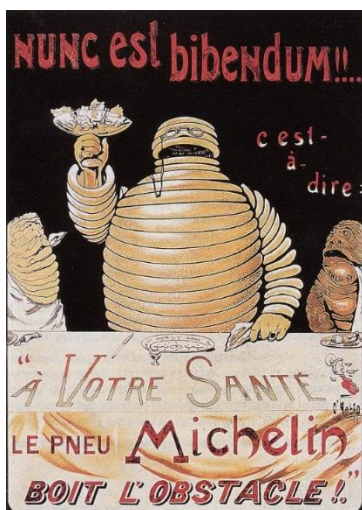


Figure 2 - Michelin Guide poster featuring Bibendum

Marius Roussillon. « Le pneu Michelin - Nunc est Bibendum ». 1989. Accessed on www.gaite-lyrique.net, January 5th, 2017.

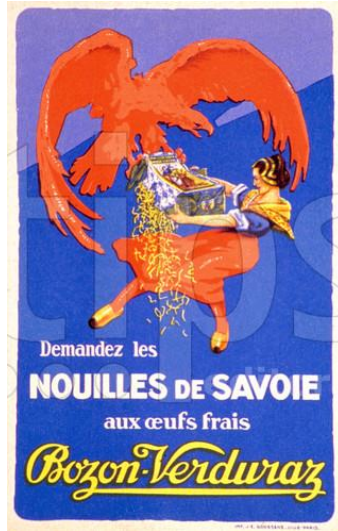


Figure 3 - Nouilles de Savoie – Bozon-Verduraz 1

« Demandez les nouilles de Savoie aux œufs frais : Bozon-Verduraz ». Paris : J.E. Goossens Lille, (1925?)

Source: www.icollector.com



Figure 4 - Nouilles de Savoie – Bozon-Verduraz 2

Cousyn, E.L. « Nouilles de Savoie aux œufs frais : Bozon-Verduraz ». Paris : Damour Chefs de Publicité (1925 ?).

Source: http://www.savoie.fr/aides-et-service-fiche/id_aide/383/profil/15/2758-infos-pratiques.htm

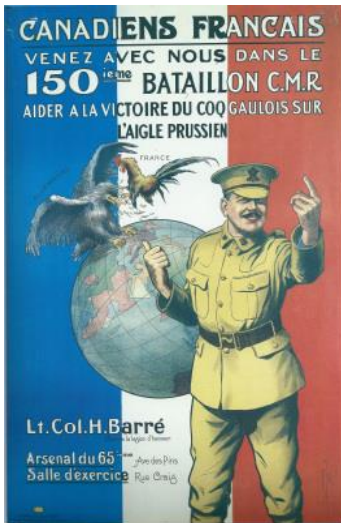


Figure 5 – Canadien français, venez-avec nous

Author unknown. « Canadiens français, venez-avec nous dans le 150^e bataillon C.M.R. » Paris, 1915 ?

Source : <https://camc.wordpress.com/2013/03/24/canada-ww1-recruitment-poster-part-2/>

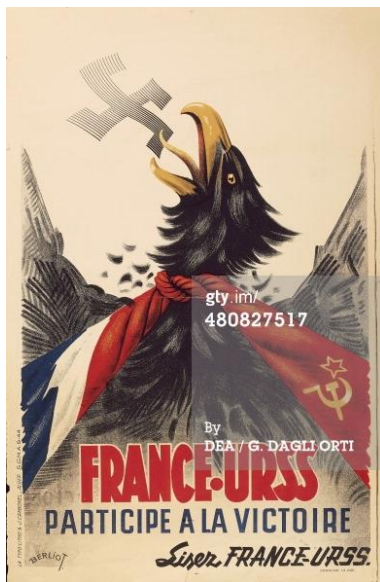


Figure 6 – France-URSS—Participe à la victoire

Berliot « France-URSS – Participe à la victoire ». Paris : Carbonel, 1944.

SOURCE : <http://www.gettyimages.com>



Figure 7 – Vache qui rit – La grande marque française

SOURCE : Rabier, Benjamin. *[Vache qui rit]. La grande marque française, gruyères de la Vache qui rit, les meilleurs en meules ou en boîtes*. Fromageries Bel, Lons-le-Saulnier (Jura). 1926. Gallica.bnf.fr

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